

Protecting Communities and Special Places

e-Newsletter September 20, 2013



"The U.S. is spending a water budget without understanding how much water is available or what the use of water in energy production will mean for local communities, agriculture, or other commercial uses."
~ Pam Solo, Civil Society Institute

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Draw the Line: Stop Keystone XL

September 21

Saturday, all across America, people will turn out to Draw the Line on Keystone XL in more than 200 rallies coast-to-coast.

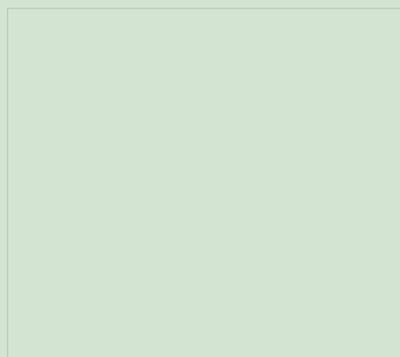
[Check here to find a rally near you!](#)

Water and Energy: Altering Our Current Collision Course

Summary of a report commissioned by the Civil Society Institute

From the first wooden waterwheels that powered the grist mills of the colonists to water turbines that powered the mills of the American industrial revolution, water has been an integral part of American energy production. Today, water's role in energy production has changed, but it is still a vital part of modern U.S. energy.

In a recently released report commissioned by the [Civil Society Institute](#), [Synapse Energy Economics Inc.](#) examines the multiple water-related issues facing the U.S. electricity industry. The report, [Water Constraints on Energy Production: Altering our Current Collision Course](#), looks closely at the relationship between water and energy production in terms of volume requirements, water quality, and a lack of data on water use and future availability. The study reveals that diminishing water resources are limiting the nation's energy supplies and that water quality is being threatened by power plant operations and fuel production. These findings indicate that policymakers must take action to address these major risks from energy-water interactions.



Water turbines once powered the Boott Mill Weave Room machines. Lowell National Historical Park, Massachusetts

IMAGE: National Park Service

The U.S. electric power system was built on traditional, water-intensive thermoelectric and hydroelectric generators that command enormous water requirements. The extraction and production of fuels for these generators - coal,

Keep It Wild Hike

September 22
10:00 a.m.

Bob Webber Trail
Wolf Run Wild Area
Tiadaghton State Forest
Route 414,
Cammal, PA 17723

[Look here for more information](#)

SHALE GAS OUTRAGE 2013

September 24-26

Philadelphia, Pa.
Keynote speaker:
John Fenton

[Find more information here.](#)

TAKE ACTION!

PETITION TO PRESIDENT OBAMA/GINA McCARTHY

Over the past year, the Obama administration has advocated for an "all of the above" energy strategy, including pushing for natural gas extraction. Despite clear evidence of water and air pollution that harms the families with extraction in their backyards, and a promise from the President himself to make drilling safe and cleaner, the Obama administration continues to turn a blind eye to the harm caused by oil and gas extraction.

[Sign the petition here](#)

**Need to contact
RDA? Call us at
888-332-1244**

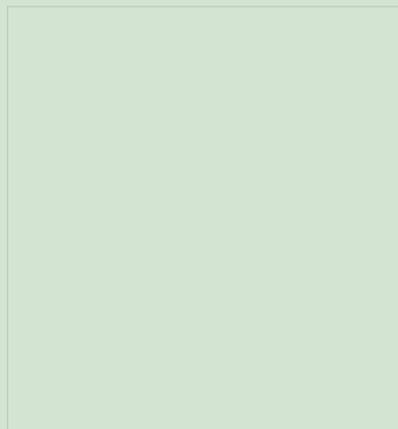
uranium, and natural gas - require large volumes of water and also threaten to contaminate water resources during the process. As water resources come under increasing pressure through demand from population growth, industrial use, agricultural needs, drought and climate change, water issues will increasingly become a limiting factor on U.S. energy production and a key obstacle to maintaining both electricity output and public health and safety.

According to the report, the amount of water available to meet the increasing needs of the United States is of growing concern. Consider the following:

- Thermoelectric plants withdraw 41 percent of the nation's fresh water, more than any other sector
- On an average day, water withdrawals across the nation amount to an estimated 85 billion gallons for coal plants, 45 billion gallons for nuclear plants, and 7 billion gallons for natural gas plants
- Coal mining consumes between 70 million and 260 million gallons of water per day
- Natural gas hydraulic fracturing requires between two and six million gallons of water per well for injection purposes

The report concludes that under current usage, water supplies will not be able to keep up with these demands. Other factors - climate change, water shortages, carbon capture and sequestration - will only serve to make matters worse.

Impacts on water from the energy sector are significant, states the report, and are likely to increase if the U.S. continues to rely heavily on current-style thermoelectric power plants. Negative impacts associated with fuel production and use include drinking water contamination from coal mining, uranium mining and milling, and natural gas production, while thermal pollution of rivers, lakes, and estuaries from discharged water from cooling systems disrupts aquatic habitats.



A drilling rig in Bradford County.
IMAGE: Ann Pinca

While the above factors foretell a coming collision between growing water demands and dwindling water supplies, not enough information is available to fully understand the challenges energy production faces. In the report, the authors identify several critical data deficiencies that need to be addressed to support successful energy planning and policy-making. Also included are recommendations based on the report's findings that continued reliance on current water-intensive electric generation technologies puts the burden of risk on consumers and regional economies.

The report maintains that energy policy and federal research/development funds should be used to support an electric generation mix that: minimizes risk associated with water dependency, fuel costs, and capital costs; produces the least amount of pollution; and addresses climate change cost-effectively. These criteria would provide policymakers a framework to systematically assess the design, construction and operational risks of grid-related technologies.

The report contains several recommendations for regulators and policymakers to consider in terms of future water needs and possible impacts when planning additional electric generation facilities. It recommends that: information about and regulation of the water quality impacts of fuel extraction and wastewater disposal

Senator Ferlo Introduces Legislation Calling for a Moratorium on Drilling

[Senator Jim Ferlo](#) (D-Allegheny) proposed a novel idea this week - why not take a break and study the environmental, social and economic impacts of drilling before we commit to drilling any more than the 14,000 wells that are already permitted?

Sen. Ferlo [introduced SB 1100 on Tuesday](#), which calls for an open-ended moratorium on natural gas drilling to allow time for the seven-member commission that the bill would create to thoroughly study the impacts of hydraulic fracturing in Pennsylvania and on its citizens.

Watch Senator Ferlo's [press conference here](#), and let him know you [support his legislation here](#). Then [contact your Senator](#) and ask for support of SB 1100.

The Right Question

Dr. Anthony Ingraffea says that decision-makers and the public are too focused on the "fracking" process when discussing the environmental impacts of shale gas removal. See what he has to say about asking the right question in this video.



IN THE NEWS

must be strengthened; calls for more information regarding the chemicals present in treated wastewater and hydraulic fracturing fluids, with tightened regulation of use and storage of these chemicals; and demands high standards in restoring or replacing previously existing ecosystems during mine reclamation.

There is no denial that compliance with the report's recommendations will increase the market price of fossil fuels and uranium, but the authors suggest the popular thought that low-cost energy "trumps" environmental protection is mistaken. When viewed in terms of the overall costs of widespread health and extensive damage to the environment, they conclude that energy efficiency and renewable energy are "bargains by comparison." The cost of compliance would shift the true cost of energy production to all users, instead of subjecting the host communities of fuel production to bear the real costs while others enjoy the benefits of cheap energy. As the report concludes:

"Once the environmental costs of conventional fuels are recognized, it becomes clear that energy efficiency and renewable energy are bargains by comparison. These clean alternatives cause little if any harmful environmental impacts. On a full-cost accounting basis, clean energy would win out as the least-cost solution and the solution that harbors the least risk, as our energy system would no longer threaten (or be vulnerable to) the quantity and quality of our water."

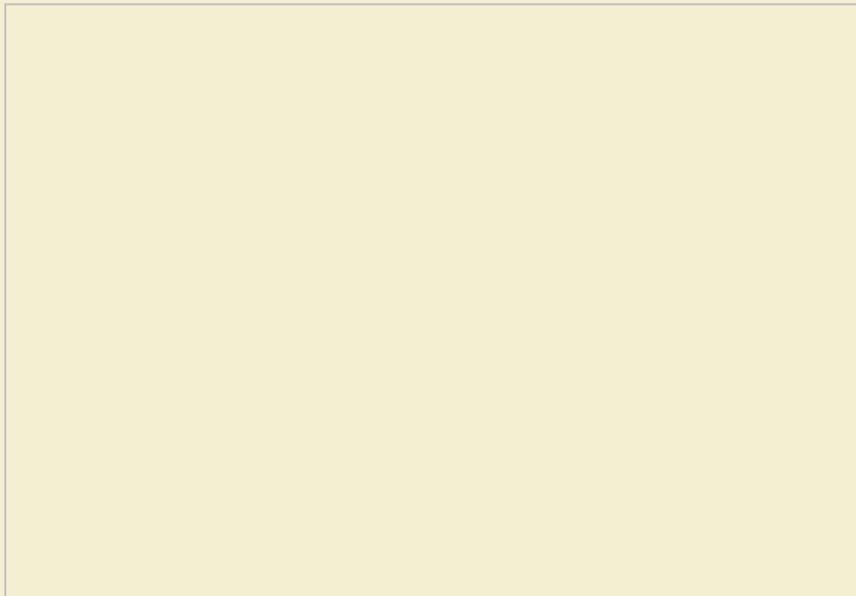
This summary was written by Ann Pinca

Corbett Nominates Chris Abruzzo for DEP, Ellen Ferretti for DCNR

Gov. Tom Corbett nominated Ellen M. Ferretti as Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and E. Christopher Abruzzo as Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Ferretti was named interim secretary of the DCNR in June; Abruzzo was appointed interim secretary of the DEP in April.

[Read the full announcement in the PA Environment Digest here.](#)



Marcellus Shale Earth First! Protests Drilling in the Loyalsock State Forest

Early last Friday, [Marcellus Shale Earth First!](#) made a Friday the 13th visit to Anadarko Petroleum Corporation's headquarters in Williamsport as an "omen of bad luck" for Anadarko's plans to drill for natural gas in the area of the Loyalsock

This Week's Scoops

Our sincerest empathies go to citizens in the flood-ravaged areas of Colorado. The devastation they are experiencing brings memories of Hurricanes Irene and Lee and the damage they brought to Pennsylvania. How really sad, though, that the Colorado folks now have to worry what was in the water that flooded their homes when well pads in the area flooded, tanks tipped and floated away, and chemical storage buildings flooded. Of course, those downstream from the Anadarko tank that spilled over 5,000 gallons of oil into the South Platte River know what's in their water now.

Meanwhile, as Chesapeake Energy continues to layoff employees, it was Round Two for HB 1576 in Pennsylvania, where Rep Jeff Pyle complained about those dam bats again - "a bazillion" of them this time.

The Marcellus Shale Coalition (MSC) says they are feeling a chill, and it's not because autumn is almost here. The MSC claims that the criminal charges filed against XTO for that controversial "spill" will have a chilling effect, and that this creates "an untenable business situation." XTO even said the charges could discourage environmental practices like recycling of wastewater.

Let's just hope those charges do what they should do: to let oil and gas operators know that allowing spills that contaminate soil and water in Pennsylvania is unacceptable and is what's truly an

State Forest known as the Clarence Moore lands. The protest marked the start of an Earth First! campaign to defend the Loyalsock State Forest from hydraulic fracturing development planned by Anadarko.

At the end of the morning's protest, it was announced that the first tree sitter was in residence in the state forest. A Day 6 blog report from the Loyalsock tree sitter spoke of deer, a porcupine, and an owl for neighbors. There was frost on the mountain, too, but "No worries, I have a warm home up here in the trees."

Keep it Wild on the Bob Webber Trail

September 22 at 10:00 a.m.

The Bob Webber Trail is an excellent hike to the Wolf Run Bald Vista, which looks out over the Pine Creek Valley. The 1.7-mile (x2) out and back trail offers two great vistas with a moderate to hard incline. This rugged and steep trail is located in Tiadaghton State Forest and is named for former DCNR employee Bob Webber, cofounder of the Black Forest Trail. The trailhead is at the Clark Farm/Utcer Station Recreational Parking Area, located along Route 414, 1.5 miles north of Cammal, Lycoming County.

Look here for additional information
Check us out at www.keepitwildrda.org



SHALE GAS OUTRAGE 2013

Join the Shale Gas Outrage, September 24-26 in Center City, Philadelphia. This year's event will include a **Water Drive** and the **Freedom from Fracking III Conference** featuring keynote speaker **John Fenton**.

The Conference theme is the **True Cost of Fracking** and will focus on the burdens of gas development in Pennsylvania and how we can get out from under them. Sessions will include:

- Understanding the economic costs of fracking
- Reports from people in impacted communities
- The crushing footprint of pipelines, compressors and other gas infrastructure
- Health effects of the frack attack and needed initiatives
- The need for a drilling moratorium and other action
- The gas industry in Philadelphia and the Delaware River's port system - LNG and more
- The right to a clean environment

The conference is free, but registration is required.
Look here for more information.

"untenable situation."

RDA Newsletter

[Join RDA](#)

We welcome your active participation and are in need of help for special events, publicity, research, and other projects. Contact us for details.

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, RDA relies on donations for the important work we do. In order for RDA to continue its valuable education and advocacy outreach in 2013, please consider a tax-free contribution to our efforts.

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Please note: The RDA newsletter includes reporting on a variety of events and activities, which do not necessarily reflect the philosophy of the organization. RDA practices only non-violent action in voicing the organization's beliefs and concerns.

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