



## MCWC Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation

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### TERRY SWIER ON THE ROAD FOR MCWC

In March of 2012, I received an email from Joy Keen, a former resident of Michigan, who is now living in Portland, Oregon, and friend of one of our loyal MCWC members. She is very familiar with MCWC's fight against Nestle in Mecosta County and asked if I would come to Oregon and tell the Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation story.

Joy has been fighting a proposed Nestle plant in Oregon for over 2 years. Nestle wants to build a plant in the scenic Columbia River Gorge close to the town of Cascade Locks, and the spring water it wants is on state (public) property. The coalition in Oregon has dragged out the process as long as they can, but the state has approved the first 2 of 3 necessary permits Nestle needs to obtain for Oregon water.

The people have not been able to convince the governor that Nestle is a bad partner, and not worth handing state resources over to for 20-40 low paying jobs. But their state has a similar unemployment level as ours so the promise of any jobs seems worth it to some people. Their coalition of several groups have been attending meetings with the governor's staff. They've sent in over 10,000 comment letters to the governor and his agencies.

We visited the area where Nestlé is hoping to withdraw spring water. Beautiful area with small waterfalls and streams. Before the Cascade Locks City Council Meeting, the local residents joined in a march that concluded at the meeting. Joy and I were both given the opportunity to testify. I told the council and the residents how Nestlé had announced its pumping would not cause any adverse resource impacts to the natural resources in Michigan and how it was proven in the three courts that harm would occur with Nestlé's pumping.

The coalition's big rally, over 200 people attending, was held in downtown Portland the next day on June 26th. I was one of four speakers at the rally. I have been told my visit injected the coalition with needed energy. Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation continues to meet, educate, and share our story with those who are facing Nestlé the same as we did here in Mecosta. It brought me back to 2000 when MCWC was organized to begin the David and Goliath battle with Nestlé. The state and town may be different but the problem is the same.

## **NOTES FROM ACTING PRESIDENT: August, 2012 ON FRACKING AND THE FUTURE**

Greetings from the mouth of the Platte River, Benzie County Michigan, in the part of Lake Michigan called the most beautiful place in America. The Sleeping Bear Dunes are within view, along with North and South Manitou Islands; all of it home to the endangered Piping Plover. The river is clear and clean, all the way down, past the Great Blue Herons, the Otters and the spawning grounds of the Salmon and Trout.

What will it take to save this for our children and their children into the seventh generation? What is our responsibility to those children, as well as the fish and frog children, the plant children? These are the questions I ask myself as I prepare to accept a leadership role in MCWC. This is an organization with a history of caring for these waters, fighting to protect them against corporate theft and the culture of greed. It is humbling to be able to serve this awesome group. We have a lot of work left to do if we are to save Michigan waters. It will take all of us, working at the grassroots, to turn our part of the world around and stop the destruction.

The latest threat to our waters is horizontal fracking. It's a deadly process developed to extract the last profitable bits of natural gas or oil from the deep shale. It's right up there with the tar sands of Alberta and the mountain top removal in Appalachia in terms of the massive destruction of land and water. Millions of gallons of fresh groundwater from your aquifers are pumped into each deep well at high pressure, down 1000 feet, then turned horizontal for up to a mile, mixed with sand and numerous toxic chemicals. Thousands of these are planned for Michigan. At least four are operating already. They use ten times the water used in the 11,000 existing oil and gas wells. That water is lost forever, Some stays underground and drifts in a toxic plume below your water table, until it reaches any natural cracks the earth may provide. Then it travels where it can. Most flows back to the surface and goes into retention ponds, then into lots of trucks and then into injection wells that are theoretically below your drinking water, until it hits one of those natural cracks, of course.

The industry says the water is safe, It just happens to also be too polluted to be treatable in waste water treatment plants and now has some naturally occurring radioactive material it picked up from inside the earth during fracking. The chemicals are proprietary secrets. Even your doctor can't tell you what they are. There are only problems with about 1 % of the wells in terms of spills, ground water contamination, etc. I've done the math on this. I once taught fourth grade. That means there are problems with 110 wells among the existing stock, according to the DEQ. And this is just the vertical wells.

How can any sane person support such a practice? There is no way to make it safe. Everything about it is suicidal. The only advantage is profits for the very few who take the gas and oil to the highest bidders on the world market. Why haven't we risen up to call a halt to fracking in Michigan? First of all, the industry profits from fracking, and they are able to pour bundles of money into telling lies about energy independence, "clean" energy, safe wells, local jobs, economic development, and more. The DEQ runs its department on money gained from giving out permits, so it doesn't debate the lies. Secondly, most people know nothing about fracking and don't know where to find out. They also don't know it's happening in their neighborhoods right now. That's where we come in. Our mission is to educate and advocate for water. A number of organizations have stepped up to the challenge and MCWC can also. We have already begun.

MCWC has joined with several other groups to sponsor events, circulate petitions, educate the public on the need for a total ban on horizontal fracking in Michigan and elsewhere. **See the calendar of events in this newsletter.**

We are currently working with the Committee to Ban Fracking in Michigan to gain enough signatures on a petition for a ballot initiative that will put a ban on horizontal fracking in the Michigan constitution if passed. It will also outlaw the wastewater injection wells. We have about 5 months to finish gathering signatures on the approved petition in order to get on the ballot in 2014. Unfortunately the initiative got started too late to make it on the ballot in 2012.

There is a great need for more people to circulate it, for groups to set goals, and for all of us to work together to raise our collective voices on this issue before it is too late. Please contact me if you are willing to help with this and I will get you petitions.

As I write this, the "man camps" are being set up in Kalkaska County. Yes, you read that right. The Encana work force doesn't live here of course. They will need housing as they arrive from out of state. Their meals will be catered by an outfit from Colorado. They will arrive, tear up 4 acres of state forest or farm land, dig and frack a new well, set up the gas flow so it can be shipped wherever the market dictates for the best price, and they will move on to the next well. The bean counters at corporate headquarters will keep track of the profits and we will be left to clean up the mess. Most of the mess can never be repaired.

Remember how Nestle crept into Mecosta two years before anyone knew they were there? They promised the same things the oil and gas industry does. They have bought the leases to mineral rights on state land in 23 counties, they have signed up as many private owners of mineral rights as they can, buying leases when they have to, and they have gotten their permits from the DEQ even when they fail the water withdrawal assessment tool that is supposed to protect our waters. We know what a joke that is.

So they are miles ahead of us already. Can we stop them before Michigan becomes a wasteland like Pennsylvania or Colorado are becoming? Let's hope so. My son just got married and is starting a family in northern Michigan. There's already a well near his home. It really scares me to see that methane burn off flame.

**Please let your Board know what you can do to help educate, agitate, organize and resist.** Use the petitions and the literature we have to organize resistance. Invite one of our speakers to talk to any local groups. Terry Swier, Don Roy or myself will gladly come, armed with literature, passion, and the film "Gasland" if you want it. We would happily talk to anyone about any water issue, in fact. The issues are ultimately all related. Set something up and call us. If you need more personal information on fracking, visit the websites of the groups we partner with, which will soon be linked to our new website. We are working on a ban on fracking with *Food & Water Watch*, *Ban Michigan Fracking*, *Don't Frack Michigan*, *FLOW Coalition*, *Council of Canadians*, and anyone else asking for a total ban. We are not working for "better" regulations because we don't think there is any such thing when it comes to fracking. We want it banned. Period.

Time for a drink of my wonderful well water. It's something everyone should have as a human right. I'm with you all the way to save it. I hope to meet some of you at the annual picnic or on the trail to a freshwater future.

Peggy Case  
Acting President. MCWC  
hildaheron@aol.com  
231-275-2244

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**We have openings on the Board of Directors for MCWC.** We are looking for people with a passion for protecting our water, some energy to give to maintain the organizing and educational capacity of MCWC, and creative ideas to take us into these difficult times we all face. If you are interested, and think you are one of these people, please contact Terry Swier, Glenna Maneke, Don Roy, Jeanne Peters or Peggy Case. We currently meet once a month and alternate between Mecosta and the Benzie County area. That can change, depending on who serves on the Board. Call Peggy Case at 231-275-2244 if you have further questions, or come to the annual picnic and talk to us there.

## ***Kathryn's Challenge***

MCWC's June 1st garage/bake sale was a success raising over \$1,300. We received the following letter from one of our members who is always at the sales and wanted to share it with the members.

"Over \$1,300, 11 people. What a good job at raising money. If you are truly a concerned member of MCWC, I would like to see the remaining 700+ members come up with a way to raise \$150 per member. You can do this either with a fundraiser or a \$150 donation. This would go a long way to pay off our environmental bill and legal bill for a complete victory. I was one of the 11 people who worked hard and long on the garage sale. I would like to challenge the remaining members. If you are truly concerned about our water in Michigan find a way to do the same. Raise \$150 per member.

A concerned member, Kathryn A. Mondrella

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Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation (MCWC) continues to work with other key organizations such as Food and Water Watch and Corporate Accountability in order to get cities and college campuses to ban or restrict the purchase of costly bottled water.

To date:

Over 50 universities and colleges in the US and Canada are part of the "Think Outside the Bottle" anti-bottled water movement to restrict or ban bottled water sales.

Over 100 cities, 5 states, and 16 members of Congress have cut spending on bottled water.

Source: Corporate Accountability, [www.stopcorporateabuse.org/](http://www.stopcorporateabuse.org/)

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## **CONTACT MCWC**

**Website:** Our revised website is almost finished, thanks to the diligent work of Ellen Schneider, Terry Swier and Don Roy. Check it out at [saveMIwater.org](http://saveMIwater.org)

**FACEBOOK!** Please find us and click on "Like" at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Michigan-Citizens-for-Water-Conservation>

## **WALK, PADDLE & ROLL / ANNUAL PICNIC - August 18, noon, Beulah Park**

The MCWC annual meeting and picnic will be held this year in Beulah, which is on Crystal Lake in Benzie County, at the picnic pavillion. We are having it in Benzie County for two reasons. Our **Walk, Paddle & Roll** fundraiser is scheduled for that day and it will begin at the Beulah park following the picnic. Also we thought we would give our members living north of Mecosta a chance to participate in a membership event. We hope Mecosta folks will carpool and meet your northern allies and friends. There is a swimming beach, and a pleasant town.

There will be a quick election, a brief annual report, a potluck picnic with **Glenna Maneke and Jeanne Peters** organizing the main food items. **Jim Olson** will update us on recent developments of interest to MCWC. Then you can send Terry, Glenna, Peggy, Jeanne and a few other folks on their way to bike the Betsie Trail and kayak the Betsie River. If you want to play in Crystal Lake or Lake Michigan, you can do so, then meet us for supper in Frankfort at the end of our event. Or you can ride and paddle with us. We would appreciate knowing if you can make it to the picnic, so we can plan food. Call 231-275-2244 or email [hildaheeron@aol.com](mailto:hildaheeron@aol.com) for directions and RSVP.

**To donate to MCWC's team for Walk, Paddle & Roll visit the webpages of**

**Terry Swier at <https://www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/terry-swier/wpr2012>**

**Peggy Case at <https://www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/peggy-case/wpr2012>**

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## **COMMITTEES ARE FORMING - WE NEED YOU!!!**

***WATER COMMONS/PUBLIC TRUST:*** Working to protect the Great Lakes as a Water Commons

**Contact:** Terry Swier: 231-972-8856 [tswier@centurytel.net](mailto:tswier@centurytel.net)

***FRACKING ISSUES:*** Educate and Agitate for a Total Ban on Fracking

**Contact:** Peggy Case: 231-275-2244, [hildaheeron@aol.com](mailto:hildaheeron@aol.com)

***FUNDRAISING:*** Plan events to support our Mission

**Contact:** Jeanne Peters: 231-275-2244, [jeanne18peters@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne18peters@gmail.com)

***MEDIA/SPEAKER BUREAU:*** Need an article – Need a speaker – Call Don for public outreach.

**Contact:** Don Roy: 231-591-2764, [donaldroy@ferris.edu](mailto:donaldroy@ferris.edu)

# STATE BETRAYS PUBLIC TRUST

*by Jim Olson, reprinted with authors permission from The Record Eagle*

Michigan's Great Lakes bottomlands and waters have been titled in the State under a public trust since joining the Union in 1837. Based on U.S. and state Supreme Court decisions, this trust prohibits the state from transferring title or control of these waters and bottomlands to private persons for primarily private purposes.

When Gov. Rick Snyder recently signed the "beach grooming" bill, he and the legislature transferred to waterfront landowners exclusive control to alter, grade, remove vegetation or otherwise change bottomlands belonging to the state and citizens.

For decades, no alteration or use of waters or bottomlands could take place because the legislature had not authorized them. In the 1950s, the Legislature passed the Great Lakes Submerged Lands Act, authorizing limited use by Great Lakes riparian land owners.

Under this act, land owners could only obtain a permit if the use would promote a public purpose and not impair the bottomlands, water, fish and fish habitat, or public uses thereof, such as swimming, boating, fishing, and recreation.

In the 1960s, the Michigan Supreme Court issued several important decisions reaffirming the Great Lakes Submerged Lands Act and declaring the Great Lakes and bottomlands a "high, solemn and perpetual trust," making them off limits for private alteration and use unless expressly authorized by the State according to public trust principles.

The "beach grooming" bill takes what is public and hands it over to private landowners who can now unilaterally decide what to do about conditions created by changing Great Lakes water levels.... this does not mean the public's rights in our Great Lakes can or should be turned over to private interests.

The Governor could and should have followed the law as the law demands, and required landowners to apply after a careful review supported findings of a real concern in the public interest and no harm to water, fish, or bottomlands due to the landowner's proposed actions.

Without these findings and express authorization, the law is void, and the public trust violated. Expedience trumps principle with our current Legislature and Administration.

What message are the Governor and Legislature sending to a thirsty world in the midst of climate change and looming water crisis?

...Fortunately, the flawed "beach grooming" bill should and can be fixed immediately by following the rules that apply to this important perpetual trust that protects the integrity of our Great Lakes now and for future generations. We must amend the bill to require authorization and findings to assure this sacred trust in the Great Lakes has not been broken.

If the Legislature refuses to fix the bill, then we citizens must ask the courts to declare this disregard of the public trust void.

It is our right and duty to do so.

## **GLOBAL FRACKDOWN: An International Day to Stop Fracking** **September 22, 2012**

MCWC has endorsed this event. We are looking for ideas from members for events we can organize locally on this day. Give us your ideas please. From Food & Water Watch:

Thanks again for having your organization endorse the Global Frackdown!

The event website is officially live

(<http://www.globalfrackdown.org/>). Your organization's information can be found under the "partners" tab in the orange bar across the top of the website. You can also find updated information about events that will happen in your area or create your own as well.

### **Calendar of Events sponsored or endorsed by MCWC**

June, 2012 - Terry Swier travelled to Oregon to share the MCWC story. (See article)

May through September - signatures gathered on ban fracking petition. Regular table presence at the Elberta Farmers Market with MCWC educational materials available.

July 24 - Peggy Case spoke for MCWC to "Plant it Wild," a group of native plant enthusiasts in Benzie County interested in water issues.

August 5 - MCWC one of several co-sponsors of an appearance in Traverse City by Cal Tillman, former mayor of Dish Texas, here to share his experiences with fracking.

August 18 - Walk, Paddle & Roll and annual picnic, Beulah Park (see notice above)

September 22 - Global Frackdown events (to be announced)

Add your water- related events to this calendar please. Send them in to [hildaheron@aol.com](mailto:hildaheron@aol.com) and we will get them on the website and in the next newsletter. We also now use Facebook to spread the word, with help from Monica Evans.

**We want your stories too. What have you been doing in relation to the mission of MCWC? Share your stories, and we will pass them along. Every little thing we do for the good of the whole makes a difference.**

## **Pasties for Sale – Get out of Cooking!!**

We have beef and vegetarian pasties available. Glenna and Roseanne try to keep some on hand, but call ahead to reserve yours.

For Mecosta and Big Rapids area orders, call Glenna Maneke at (231)972-0500, or email [manekegl@hotmail.com](mailto:manekegl@hotmail.com). For the Traverse City area, call Jeanne Peters at (231)275-2244 or email [jeanne18peters@gmail.com](mailto:jeanne18peters@gmail.com). These make a delicious, easy meal of real food!

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## **"WE TOLD YOU SO" Dateline: 2025, When many of us are gone!**

**Possible** Headlines (We hope these are never true)

TAXPAYERS FOOT BILL TO CLEAN UP ABANDONED FRACKING SITES

CANCER RATES SIGNIFICANTLY ABOVE NORMAL IN FIVE-MILE VICINITY OF FRACKING

ALL FRACKED UP: INJECTION WELLS, EARTHQUAKES, POLLUTED, UNTREATABLE GROUNDWATER: BRAVE NEW WORLD

NATURAL GAS FRACKING COMPANIES DESTROY PRIVATE PROPERTY VALUES (DOW DIOXIN DEJA VU)

MOST FRACKED NATURAL GAS SOLD ABROAD LAST TWENTY YEARS --- U.S. STILL COAL AND OIL DEPENDENT

BOOMING GERMANY APPROACHES 50% ALTERNATIVE ENERGY ECONOMY LETHARGIC MICHIGAN BARELY 20%

PROMISE OF MILLIONS OF FRACKING JOBS PROVEN FALSE DIGITAL MONITORING TECHNOLOGY REPLACES MOST WORKERS

NATURAL GAS "GOLD RUSH" OVER BOOM AND BUST GHOST TOWNS IN PA, ND, OH, MI AND CO

**Don Roy**, future reporter for the *Water Times*

**Get involved so our children won't have to see these headlines, ever.**

# TO CONTINUE THE FIGHT

Donations and memberships can be made online at: [www.saveMIwater.org](http://www.saveMIwater.org). Or mail your check along with the form below to:

**MCWC  
P.O. Box 1  
Mecosta, MI 49332**

We'd love to get you signed up as a sustaining member. We can't promise you fancy address labels, coffee cups or trinkets as a reward. We only promise to apply your money to the work of saving our waters into the seventh generation. You can have your pledge sent or transferred directly to the MCWC account. Contact Glenna Maneke at (231)972-0500 or [manekegl@hotmail.com](mailto:manekegl@hotmail.com) to arrange this

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!!**

**Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation  
P.O. Box 1  
Mecosta, MI 49332**

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Address _____
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Email _____
Individual _____ \$25
Family _____ \$40
Lifetime Individual _____ \$250
Lifetime Family _____ \$500
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