



WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE  
2017 ANNUAL REPORT

# Clean. Heal. Drink. Fish. Swim. Protect.

Waterkeeper Alliance has partnered with Givewith and Dell to remove plastics from our beaches, waterways and coastal areas. Each click on one of our collaborative online ads generates \$0.25 for Waterkeeper Alliance to help fund innovative plastic recovery facilities for Waterkeeper Organizations fighting plastic pollution - like this beach cleanup in Southwestern Mexico with Costa Grande Waterkeeper. Photo by Alfredo Blasquez.

BY THE NUMBERS. FLIP OPEN.



**30 MILLION**

**PEOPLE REACHED  
BY OUR EFFORTS AT  
STANDING ROCK**

**31**

**NEW WATERKEEPER  
ORGANIZATIONS  
& AFFILIATES**



Protecting more than

**2.5**  
**Million**

**Square Miles of Rivers, Lakes and Coastal Waterways**

For every \$1  
donated to  
Waterkeeper  
Alliance

**\$943**

was secured in cleanup  
costs, penalties,  
divestment and prevented  
fossil fuel infrastructure  
investment

These numbers valid for fiscal year 2017 (July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017)

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**Waterkeeper Alliance**  
strengthens and grows a global  
network of grassroots  
leaders protecting everyone's  
right to clean water.

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**WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE** holds polluters accountable. We're the largest and fastest growing nonprofit solely focused on clean water. We preserve and protect water by connecting local Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates worldwide. Our goal is drinkable, fishable, swimmable water everywhere.

Every day around the world, polluters are poisoning our waterways, and people everywhere are suffering the consequences. When a coal company discharges millions of gallons of toxic coal ash into a river, families who depend on that waterway as a drinking water source are the innocent victims. When a developer demolishes a forest of mangroves, it destroys fisheries and devastates the local economy. When hog farms dump untreated waste into a waterway, people and marine life get sick. These are just a few examples of the battles that Waterkeeper Alliance fights every day around the world on behalf of the common good and to protect everyone's right to clean water.

The Waterkeeper movement was started by a band of blue-collar fishermen on New York's Hudson River in 1966 because industrial polluters were destroying their way of life. Their tough, grassroots brand of environmental activism sparked the Hudson's miraculous recovery and inspired others to launch Waterkeeper groups around the world.

Today, Waterkeeper Alliance unites more than 300

Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates that are on the frontlines of the global water crisis, patrolling and protecting more than 2.5 million square miles of rivers, lakes and coastal waterways on 6 continents.

From Alaska to the Himalayas, the Great Lakes to Australia, the Waterkeeper movement defends the fundamental human right to drinkable, fishable and swimmable waters, and combines firsthand knowledge of their local waterways with an unwavering commitment to the rights of their communities.

Whether they're on the water tracking down polluters, in courtrooms enforcing environmental laws, advocating in town meetings or teaching in classrooms, the Waterkeeper movement speaks for the waters it defends – with the collective strength of Waterkeeper Alliance and the backing of local communities.

Waterkeeper Alliance ensures that the world's Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates are as connected to each other as they are to their local waters, organizing the fight for clean water into a coordinated global movement. **W**



Dear Waterkeeper Alliance supporter,

## POLLUTION, DIVERSION AND DROUGHT

have triggered a global water crisis that will be the central political, cultural and economic feature of our children's lives. The World Bank predicts that the looming world water cataclysm — already affecting every continent — is the principal challenge to organized civilization in this century.

The Waterkeeper model — first proven during the Hudson River's near miraculous restoration — has now become the preeminent tool for both individuals and grassroots groups fighting the global water crisis. Waterkeeper Alliance is growing exponentially with more than 300 Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates already patrolling and protecting waterways in 35 countries, on 6 continents. Thanks to your support, the Waterkeeper movement is the largest and fastest growing nonprofit solely focused on water. Demand for our

model is now outpacing our capacity to serve aspiring Waterkeeper groups across the planet.

For the past year we have been planning intensively to scale our successful model: we have critically assessed our organization, analyzed our movement's optimum achievable pace for global growth, and developed a strategic business plan for positioning ourselves over the next 20 years. Executing this plan will allow Waterkeeper Alliance to meet our founding vision of having community-based Waterkeepers safeguarding every waterway in the world. We will improve each local Waterkeeper's capacity to effectively pursue the goal of drinkable, fishable, swimmable waters worldwide. We will elevate the Waterkeeper profile as the go-to advocate on every important water issue. We have christened our plan "Project Osiris," in reference to ancient Egypt's all-important Nile River deity.

Project Osiris begins with large investments in training and support services for our more than 300 Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates, to enhance their work and bolster the skills needed to protect their waterways and communities. To broaden our base, we will strengthen and deepen our communications work; create

a robust science and technology department; expand our rapid response capability during man-made and natural disasters; enhance our presence in Washington, D.C.; and dramatically increase our legal capacity to enforce, defend, and strengthen laws. In addition to bolstering our movement, we have developed a strategic growth plan to recruit the brightest and best trained advocates on all habitable watersheds in the world.

We began our planning process by identifying the world's most iconic and endangered waters. We devised a plan for our network to grow responsibly to cover more than 7 million square miles of watersheds in the first 5 years, protecting more than 1 billion people. By year 10, we plan to cover more than 12 million square miles of watersheds, protecting more than 3.75 billion people. By year 20, more than 20 million square miles of watersheds will have a Waterkeeper group, and our movement will protect more than 8 billion people.

Project Osiris is a bold plan. Thanks to your help over the years, Waterkeeper Alliance is now ready to execute it. We know that true change will start from strong leadership at the local level. Our plan will unleash

an army of highly trained, committed, politically and technically skilled Waterkeepers, battle hardened and armed to fight for a world where clean water is the life spring of global prosperity, dignity and human aspiration. We are grateful to you for working with us to make this plan a reality. **W**

To clean water,



**Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.**  
President



**Marc Yaggi**  
Executive Director



# CLEAN WATER DEFENSE

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Recruiting Director Sharon Khan and Buddhist Drukpa nuns after a water quality monitoring training held in Nepal, at Druk Amitabha Mountain.



## THE HIMALAYAN WATER PROJECT

THE HIMALAYAN WATER PROJECT strengthens Waterkeeper Alliance's collective efforts in the region to ensure drinkable, fishable, swimmable waters worldwide by protecting one of the largest sources of water on the planet.

July 2016 marked the official launch of our initiative to protect the waters of the Himalayas, a source of fresh water for nearly half the world's population. In partnership with Live to Love International and **Himalayan Glacier Waterkeeper**, Waterkeeper Alliance staff, **Milwaukee Riverkeeper** Cheryl Nenn and Deputy Director of **Waccamaw Riverkeeper** Christine Ellis traveled to Ladakh, India to demonstrate pollution investigation and water quality monitoring techniques to Buddhist Drukpa nuns, monks, and youth.

Waterkeeper Alliance's President **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.**, Executive Director **Marc Yaggi**, and Recruiting Director **Sharon Khan** traveled to Ladakh in September 2016 for Naropa, a Buddhist pilgrimage that occurs once every 12 years in honor of the 11th-century patron saint of the Drukpa lineage. At Naropa, Waterkeeper Alliance was able to raise significant awareness about the state of the Himalayan glaciers: Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. addressed a crowd of 300,000 people, thousands of Waterkeeper magazines were distributed, and His Holiness Gyalwang Drukpa spoke extensively about our work to protect the waters of the Himalayas.

Recruiting Director **Sharon Khan** and Organizer **Min Zheng**, along with **Columbia Riverkeeper** Brett VandenHuevel and Deputy Director of **Waccamaw Riverkeeper** Christine Ellis, traveled to Nepal in March 2017 to train and organize our growing network of **Himalayan Waterkeepers, Affiliates**, and partners including over 200 Drukpa Kung Fu Nuns. While in Nepal, Waterkeeper Alliance was represented at the 2nd Nepal River Summit, where over 250 local stakeholders, youth, scientists, lawyers, government officials, and other international organizations gathered to develop a common understanding of the conservation and management of Nepal's Himalayan rivers.



PHOTO BY SHARON KHAN, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

## Stormwater

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A coalition, led by Waterkeeper Alliance and including Apalachicola Riverkeeper, Bayou City Waterkeeper, NY/NJ Baykeeper, Snake River Waterkeeper, Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, Lake Pend Oreille Waterkeeper, and others, reached an agreement with EPA and two industry trade associations in

August 2016 to settle a lawsuit challenging EPA's industrial stormwater multi-sector general permit (MSGP). Under the settlement, EPA will begin adding both improved monitoring tools and a number of clear, numeric targets and standards to the permit in 2020 that simplify the job of controlling water pollution for regulators, businesses and citizens. The agreement marks

the first time that EPA will evaluate setting numeric standards and practices for responsible stormwater retention at industrial sites. It also marks the first time EPA has agreed to propose restrictions on the use of coal tar sealants in the United States, a product that is poisoning ecosystems nationwide and exposing infants and children to a high risk of developing cancer later in life.

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## Unsafe Waters In NYC

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In April 2017, Waterkeeper Alliance initiated its first legal action against Scott Pruitt's EPA for failing to protect the health of people who swim, boat and fish in New York City waters – or who would if the waters were not contaminated with untreated sewage scores of times each year. The coalition of New York City and regional environmental organizations, including Hudson Riverkeeper and NY/NJ Baykeeper, asked a federal court to order EPA to adopt modern standards that protect New Yorkers' health unless the state promptly did so on its own. The official complaint was filed in June 2017.

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**“Bacteria and other pathogens introduced into New York’s waterways from sewer overflows and contaminated runoff make thousands of New Yorkers sick every year. Children, the elderly and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to these illnesses. Despite this human suffering, the federal EPA continues to allow New York State to utilize antiquated and inaccurate tests to determine whether waterways are safe for swimming, in gross violation of the Clean Water Act.”**

*– Daniel E. Estrin, General Counsel and Advocacy Director*

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# Free Flowing Rivers



**WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE** supports clean and free flowing rivers and waterways, including opposing new dams and diversions, mitigating dams when there is no other option and removing dams wherever possible.

Waterkeeper Alliance President **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** and Peru's **Marañon Waterkeeper** met with Peru's Minister of Environment and Minister of Energy and Mines to discuss hydroelectricity and the damming of Peru's rivers. In October 2016, the Minister of Energy and Mines announced that large hydroelectric dams in the Amazon are not a part of the new government's short-term agenda.

**Tonle Sap Lake Waterkeeper** in Cambodia co-facilitated a successful meeting on the impact of large scale hydropower dams and climate change on people's livelihoods at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Civil Society Conference.

The budget has been slashed for the Don Sahong and Xayaburi dam projects in Laos, but the Mekong River Commission is preparing to approve another dam project. **Tonle Sap Lake Waterkeeper** Senglong Youk said, "The Mekong River Commission has failed to properly implement its duties and has failed to address concerns and requests from Mekong communities and civil society organizations."

**Poudre Riverkeeper** Gary Wockner joined **Snake Riverkeeper** Buck Ryan at the Free the Snake Flotilla to support the removal of dams and the sustained restoration of the lower Snake River.

**Karnali River Waterkeeper** hosted an expedition on



PHOTO BY MARC YAGGI, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

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the Karnali River in Nepal to highlight the impacts of the proposed development of the world's tallest dam.

After an agreement to undam the Klamath River was signed last year, the Klamath River Renewal Corporation hired its first executive director, Mark Bransom, who has been meeting stakeholders throughout the Klamath Basin. **Klamath Riverkeeper** staff are working to keep Klamath River dam removal on track for 2020.

**Poudre Waterkeeper**, in Fort Collins, Colorado, has been fighting a large dam proposal for 14 years at the local, state and federal level. The Colorado State Senate rejected a bill that would have allowed the Northern Integrated Supply Project to run water through 12 miles of the Poudre River in Fort Collins and recapture it at the Timnath Reservoir inlet for storage east of Fort Collins.

**Futaleufú Riverkeeper** was part of the second

meeting for free rivers in Chile's San Fabián de Alico, Province of Nuble, Bio Bio region. They joined delegates and members of various organizations in issuing a public letter about protecting their rivers from hydropower projects.

**Dongting Lake Waterkeeper** celebrated the removal of a dam near Dongting Lake in Hunan Province, China. The demolition order shed light on the years of hardship they endured in protecting and restoring the lake to its former glory.

Executive Director **Marc Yaggi** traveled to Sweden to witness and discuss the impacts of dams on Sweden's rivers with **Swedish Baltic Rivers Waterkeeper** and **Älvråddarnas Waterkeeper**. While there, they celebrated the removal of an ancient sawmill dam on the Emån river — one our Swedish Waterkeepers have been fighting for over 10 years! **W**





**Into**





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# Democracy

WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE launched *Dive Into Democracy*, a weekly roundup of current attacks on America's clean water protections. Each week, we post a straightforward, up-to-date list of bills and policies that threaten Americans' right to clean water and include simple instructions on how to take action. Our goal is to have *Dive Into Democracy* be the place American citizens can go to get whatever they need to speak about clean water at their town halls or in any interaction with their elected officials. As of June 2017, actions have focused on topics such as toxic coal, free flowing rivers, regulatory rollbacks, pipeline permitting, industrial meat production and more.

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## EXXON DEBARMENT

Following the nomination of Exxon-Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State, Waterkeeper Alliance, represented by the Pace Environmental Litigation Clinic, submitted a petition to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) against ExxonMobil under its authority to suspend and or debar individuals and entities. Suspension and debarment actions prevent companies

and individuals from participating in government contracts, subcontracts, loans, grants and other assistance programs. The effect of suspension and debarment by a federal agency is government-wide.

Exxon's executives and scientists have understood that fossil fuels could cause catastrophic climate change since at least the 1970's. Despite having this

knowledge, Exxon ran robust propaganda campaigns and testified to Congress that the relation between fossil fuels and climate change was inconclusive. During this time, Exxon made hundreds of billions in profits while climate change impacts grew in severity. To this day, they continue to fund anti-climate change groups while making millions off American tax dollars; in fact, in 2015 alone, Exxon had over \$750M worth of federal contracts.

**“ExxonMobil kept its knowledge of climate change a secret while using lies to build a generation of climate change deniers. The company continues to push government policy that goes against proven science and exacerbates the greatest threat to humanity and America's national security. American tax dollars should not be making a morally bankrupt business richer. We must cut our financial support for this outlaw corporation.”** —Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., President

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## Opposing Scott Pruitt As EPA Administrator

Senate Democrats on the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works hosted a panel discussion in January 2017 to further examine the then-nominee for EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt's environmental record, and highlight his lack of qualifications to lead the agency. Waterkeeper Alliance's Senior Attorney Kelly Hunter Foster spoke as an expert witness; as the former Environmental Protection Unit Chief in the Oklahoma Attorney General's Office, she is uniquely familiar with Pruitt's dangerous environmental track record. Not a single panelist in the discussion with Senate Democrats was able to cite an action Pruitt took as Oklahoma Attorney General that produced a positive public health or environmental outcome. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee voted to approve Pruitt as EPA Administrator after the committee changed its rule so that minority members do not have to be present to vote; all of the committee's Democratic senators objected to Pruitt's appointment.





## Regulatory Reform

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Waterkeeper Alliance, along with 121 Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates, submitted comments to EPA in vehement opposition to the withdrawal, modification or revocation of any EPA regulation that results from its so-called Regulatory Reform Task Force evaluation under Executive Order 13777. More than 55,100 responses rolled in by the time the comment period closed — they were full of Americans sharing their experiences of growing up with dirty air and water, supporting environmental protections and pleading for the agency not to return the country to a more polluted era.

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**“It is EPA’s job to protect our health and our air, land and water from pollution. Period. It is not EPA’s job to eliminate environmental regulations for the sole purpose of reducing industry’s ‘burden.’ No one should be allowed to endanger or harm children, contaminate a community’s water supply or destroy a fishery to create more jobs, avoid paperwork or increase corporate profits.”**

*– Kelly Hunter Foster, Senior Attorney*

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## OFFSHORE DRILLING

In May 2017, President Trump released an executive order calling for a review of the 5-year offshore drilling leasing plan finalized by the Obama administration. The Interior Department initiated the process of rewriting the plan in June 2017, and it is expected that the Trump administration will be pushing to allow drilling in the Atlantic Ocean and expand it in the Pacific Ocean, Arctic Ocean, and Gulf of Mexico. Waterkeeper Alliance is monitoring this process and opposes any expansion of offshore drilling.

# WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

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Waterkeeper Alliance, Humboldt Baykeeper, Monterey Coastkeeper, Russian Riverkeeper, Snake River Waterkeeper, Upper Missouri Waterkeeper, and three partner organizations filed litigation against



EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers in May 2017 to overturn illegal exemptions in the Clean Water Rule, a 2015 regulation that redefined which waterways are protected against unregulated pollution under the Clean Water Act. These arbitrary exemptions, many of which were added at the last minute in an ill-advised attempt to appease aggressive industry opposition to pollution


control, would eliminate citizen and governmental authority to address discharges of toxic pollution into waterways that have been protected by the Clean Water Act since 1972. Practically, this means all a polluter needs to do to avoid regulation and enforcement is discharge pollutants into an exempt waterbody or far enough upstream. This is dangerous, as uncontrolled upstream pollution will move downstream —

endangering people and contaminating drinking water supplies, fisheries and recreational waters.

Our fight to maintain Clean Water Act protections for all U.S. waterways is ongoing in the Supreme Court, where we successfully opposed the current administration's efforts to indefinitely stay our litigation, and with the President, Congress and EPA, where the current administration is attempting to pass legislation and regulations to dramatically reduce the number of waterways protected by the Clean

Water Act — rolling back jurisdiction over vital waterways that have been protected throughout the 45-year history of the Act. Waterkeeper Alliance will continue its fight to preserve federal protection of our waters on these and any other new battlefronts opened by those who would profit from pollution at the expense of current and future generations. **W**





# CLEAN & SAFE ENERGY





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## PROTECTING PUBLIC LANDS FROM OIL AND GAS DRILLING

In April 2017, Waterkeeper Alliance joined **Colorado Riverkeeper** and partners in filing a lease protest for the first time, objecting to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) proposal to lease over 100,000 acres of public lands — many containing vulnerable and irreplaceable Colorado River headwaters — for

oil and gas extraction. Within days of that filing, we achieved a significant win when BLM withdrew more than a quarter of that acreage from its scheduled June 2017 lease sale, alleviating some of the biggest threats to the Colorado headwaters and the drinking water supplies of several adjacent towns.

**“BLM’s pending decision to open over 100,000 acres of public lands in the headwaters of the Colorado River to oil and gas leasing, and the inevitable impacts that fossil fuel extraction will have on the river, its tributaries and our climate, heads us in exactly the wrong direction. It will only hasten the collapse of this critical and fragile resource.”**

*— Kate Hudson, Western U.S. Advocacy Coordinator*

### FIGHTING DIRTY ENERGY DEREGULATION

In an unusual defeat for the current Congress’ anti-environmental agenda, Waterkeeper Alliance’s opposition to Congressional efforts to repeal BLM’s methane waste rule helped to achieve a significant

victory for the environment and our climate. The Senate’s 51-to-49 vote in May 2017 marked the first time since President Trump’s election that an attempt by Congress to overturn an Obama-era rule failed. This victory was the result of work by many stakeholders and

advocates, including Waterkeeper Alliance and local Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates, that mobilized broad opposition to this regulatory rollback on environmental, public health, and economic grounds.

## Taylor Energy

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In August 2016, Waterkeeper Alliance discovered that Taylor Energy had secretly objected to the public release of documents related to an oil leak from destroyed wells in the Gulf of Mexico that has been ongoing since 2004. Believing this to be a violation of the terms of the settlement agreement that Taylor Energy signed with Waterkeeper Alliance, **Apalachicola Riverkeeper**, and Louisiana Environmental Action Network in 2015, the groups, with the help of our counsel at Tulane Environmental Law Clinic, took Taylor Energy back to court to challenge the company's attempts to circumvent our settlement agreement. In September 2016, the judge ruled in our favor, finding Taylor Energy had not been following the plain-language terms of the agreement, and we drafted an addendum to the settlement agreement so as to avoid any confusion in the future. We continue to gather information on the oil leak, Taylor Energy's response efforts, and



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**“This [ruling] will ensure that Taylor Energy cannot attempt to avoid third-party review of documents it wishes to keep from the public under the guise of not understanding the terms of our agreement. Especially in light of reports by SkyTruth that the oil slick at Taylor Energy’s site appears to be growing larger, and the silence from the federal government on what should be done, it is imperative that the public has access to information on this ongoing disaster.”** – *Larissa Liebmann, Staff Attorney*

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the enforcement efforts through Freedom of Information Act requests, and make them publicly

available to citizens and scientists hoping to better understand what is happening at the site.





▶ CLEAN & SAFE ENERGY

# C T R O X I C A L



PHOTO BY JATAM EAST KALIMANTAN





PHOTO BY PETE HARRISON, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE





### Civil Rights

In a sweeping report sent to Congress and President Obama, the United States Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) blasted EPA for chronic failures to protect low-income communities and communities of color from dangerous pollution. The report substantiates the years of work by Waterkeeper Alliance and partner organizations to spur EPA to strengthen its policies under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and protect people from the toxic impacts of pollution from coal ash and industrial meat production.

“THE COMMISSION’S REPORT CONFIRMS WHAT WE’VE KNOWN FOR YEARS: GOVERNMENT IS FAILING TO PROTECT AMERICA’S MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES FROM DANGEROUS POLLUTION. WHETHER IT’S ARSENIC LEAKING OUT OF UNLINED COAL ASH DUMPS INTO DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES OR NOXIOUS FUMES FROM FACTORY FARMS MAKING PEOPLE SICK, THE COMMISSION FOUND A CHRONIC FAILURE BY EPA TO PROTECT PEOPLE.”

– PETE HARRISON, STAFF ATTORNEY


### Duke Energy

Waterkeeper Alliance continues to protect the public and the environment from Duke Energy’s pollution by filling gaps in government oversight and the company’s self-monitoring.

**Yadkin Riverkeeper** and Waterkeeper Alliance, represented by the Southern Environmental Law Center, reached a settlement with Duke Energy that requires the removal of all the coal ash from the unlined, leaking coal ash pits at Duke Energy’s Buck facility on the Yadkin River in Salisbury, North Carolina. Under the settlement agreement, Duke Energy must remove all the coal ash and either recycle it into concrete or put it in a modern lined landfill away from the Yadkin River and separated from groundwater and drinking water sources.

**Cape Fear Riverkeeper**, Waterkeeper Alliance, and partners reached a settlement with Duke Energy that secures up to \$1.5 million for water quality and conservation efforts in the lower Cape Fear watershed near Wilmington. Under this settlement, Duke Energy will place \$1 million in a fund to be used to improve water quality and conserve watershed lands in the lower Cape Fear Basin at and below Duke’s Sutton plant. Duke Energy will provide up to \$250,000 in additional funds for the effort through a dollar-for-dollar match for other funds raised by conservation groups. As a result, the effort is designed to invest \$1.5 million in the waters and





Samarinda in East Kalimantan, Indonesia is scarred by a growing number of abandoned open cut coal pits and piles of topsoil and mine overburden leaving vast areas prone to flooding and contamination of surrounding waterways with toxic cocktails of heavy metals and sediment.

PHOTO BY PAUL WINN, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

watershed lands of the lower Cape Fear watershed that are used and enjoyed by local communities. The federal litigation regarding the Sutton facility will be dismissed.

In December 2016, Waterkeepers caught Duke Energy asleep at the wheel, putting the public at risk again. During a site visit at Duke's Allen Steam Station, Waterkeeper Alliance and **Catawba Riverkeeper** discovered a rotting two-foot metal pipe discharging coal ash pollution to the Catawba River.

In 2015, Duke pled guilty to nine criminal violations of the Clean Water Act related to its mismanagement of coal ash at its North Carolina power plants. The plea agreements required Duke to pay \$105 million in fines and restitution and sentenced Duke to five years of probation. In April 2017, Staff Attorney **Pete Harrison** sent a letter to the court-appointed monitor overseeing Duke Energy's compliance with the terms of its probation. Based on a series of preventable, unauthorized

“AT BUCK, WE HAVE FOUGHT HAND-IN-HAND WITH LOCAL CITIZENS, AND FINALLY DUKE ENERGY IS REQUIRED TO RECYCLE THIS ASH FOR CONCRETE OR REMOVE IT TO SAFE STORAGE. THERE WAS A RIVERKEEPER WORKING AT EVERY ONE OF THE EIGHT SITES ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA THAT DUKE ENERGY HAS AGREED TO CLEAN UP.” – PETE HARRISON, STAFF ATTORNEY

PHOTO BY JATAM EAST KALIMANTAN



An Indonesian coal mine.

water pollution incidents — and Duke’s subsequent mischaracterizations of those incidents — the letter provides thorough and accurate information and alerts the compliance team that Duke Energy had failed to correct the mismanagement and negligence that led to the 2014 Dan River coal ash spill and numerous violations of the Clean Water Act at all 14 of the company’s North Carolina coal plants. The letter referenced several instances where Waterkeeper

Alliance responded to releases of toxic coal ash from Duke facilities, including our discovery of a coal ash discharge pipe that Duke had overlooked at a power plant near Charlotte and a dam failure and coal ash spills on the Neuse River following Hurricane Matthew. Again and again, Duke Energy mischaracterized facts and minimized the significance of the events.

#### Stream Protection Rule

Waterkeeper Alliance, along with **Cook Inletkeeper** and a coalition of local and national community and conservation groups, filed a motion to defend the national Stream Protection Rule against two lawsuits. The Stream Protection Rule would have required coal firms to clean up waste from mountaintop removal mining and prevent it from going into streams. The rule also would have updated the minimum standards to protect clean water and other natural resources threatened by coal mining operations across the nation, providing local communities with information they need about water contamination caused by nearby coal mining operations. Unfortunately, shortly after filing our motion, both houses of Congress voted to repeal the Stream Protection Rule under the Congressional Review Act (CRA).

### Effluent Limitation Guidelines for Power Plants

Waterkeeper Alliance filed its first lawsuit against the Trump administration's EPA in May 2017, challenging a rollback that could wipe out critical protections for cleaning up America's leading source of toxic water pollution: coal power plant waste. The federal lawsuit seeks to invalidate an April 2016 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency order that abruptly put an indefinite hold on a set of safeguards to control the amount of arsenic, mercury, cadmium, lead and other pollutants that spew from coal power plants into our public waters. By putting those protections on hold indefinitely, the Trump administration is allowing power plants to continue discharging toxics without any specific limits, using standards set 35 years ago.

### Impacts on Indonesian Food Security

Waterkeeper Alliance and Indonesian mining advocacy network JATAM released a report that names coal mining as the biggest threat to Indonesian food security. Contrary to Indonesian regulations, most coal companies leave mined land and water resources damaged and useless for food production. Due to the depletion of groundwater and surface water catchment caused by coal mining, villagers surrounding coal mines are forced to use mine pit water for washing, bathing, irrigation of crops and fish farming. Farmers using mine pit water report rice yields down 50 percent and fish production down 80 percent. The report estimates that 1.7 million tonnes of rice per year has been lost due to coal mining and 6 million tonnes of rice production is at risk from existing cultivated land each year.

### Save the Sundarbans

Waterkeeper Alliance continues to join **Waterkeepers Bangladesh** in the fight against the proposed Rampal coal plant in Bangladesh's Sundarbans forest — a World Heritage Site that includes globally important mangroves, endangered aquatic species, and a fishery that feeds hundreds of thousands of people — by supporting the release of two new international research reports:

#### *"Rampal Thermal Power Plant: Potential Air Pollution, Toxicity and Effects on Human Health"*

This report shows that the proposed 1320 MW coal-based power plant in Rampal will be one of the largest single sources of air pollution throughout Bangladesh, increasing the risk of stroke, lung cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases for adults and children. Even if the current air pollution level of Bangladesh is zero, the power plant alone will cause the premature death of 6,000 people and the low birth weight of 24,000 children.

#### *"Environmental Hazard Assessment of Coal Ash Disposal at the Proposed Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company Plant in Rampal, Bangladesh"*

This report found that it is inevitable that ash disposal from the proposed coal-fired Rampal plant would release toxic heavy metals into the waterways of the Sundarbans.

Waterkeeper Alliance and **Waterkeepers Bangladesh** will continue to fight against this dangerous project. **W**





# PURE FARMS, PURE WATERS



North Carolina is home to more than 2,200 swine CAFOs confining an estimated 10 million hogs, making it the producer of the second most hogs of any U.S. state.

PHOTO BY WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

## United States

The D.C. Circuit Court ordered EPA to close a loophole that has allowed hazardous substances released into the environment by concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) to go unreported, marking a major win in *Waterkeeper Alliance, et al. v. EPA*. The loophole was created by the Bush administration in 2008 and exempted CAFOs from the same pollutant reporting required of other industries to ensure public safety. This victory sent a reminder to the new Trump administration that Waterkeeper Alliance will continue to use the courts as an important independent evaluator of executive branch authority, and that the language used by Congress in enacting the statutes on which agency actions are based is a very real and very powerful limit on future agency actions.

## Washington

Waterkeeper Alliance and a coalition of public interest organizations representing tens of thousands of Washingtonians filed a legal challenge to the Washington State Department of Ecology's issuance of a revised CAFO general discharge permit under state law and the Clean Water Act, five years after the former permit expired. Faced with the opportunity to protect Washingtonians from industrial agriculture pollution, Ecology failed to comply with the law as required to address the four major sources of pollution from CAFOs: land application, lagoons, waste storage areas, and animal confinement buildings.

Instead, Ecology issued a problematic, two-tiered permit scheme that fails to protect our most important natural resource – clean water. A hearing on our legal challenges to Ecology's permits

will be held before the Washington State Pollution Control Hearings Board later this year. Joining us in the appeal are **Puget Soundkeeper Alliance**, Community Association for Restoration of the Environment, Friends of Toppenish Creek, Sierra Club, Center for Food Safety and **North Sound Baykeeper's** parent organization RE Sources for Sustainable Communities. We are represented by the Western Environmental Law Center and the law offices of Charles M. Tebbutt.

## New York

Waterkeeper Alliance, **Hudson Riverkeeper** and other groups filed a lawsuit against New York's Department of Environmental Conservation in the Albany County Supreme Court, demanding it strengthen a general water permit for large farm operations to bring it into compliance with the Clean Water Act.

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**“It is imperative that state and federal leaders stop bowing to industry pressure and start enforcing our clean water laws. Clean water and agriculture can go hand-in-hand, but not if we continue to allow agribusiness to pollute our nation's water with impunity.”**

*—Marc Yaggi and Brion Blackwelder, in the Sun Sentinel August 2016*

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# North Carolina



PHOTO BY WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

A North Carolina CAFO sprays untreated animal waste from its lagoons onto a nearby field prior to Tropical Storm Hermine.

## Tropical Storm Hermine

More than four hours after the National Weather Service issued its widely publicized Flash Flood Watch for Tropical Storm Hermine, Waterkeeper Alliance and **Cape Fear Riverkeeper** documented roughly 30 Duplin County hog CAFOs spraying untreated animal waste from their lagoons, with several spraying onto saturated lands, into wood lines and onto public roadways. North Carolina permits require all spraying of hog waste to cease four hours after issuance of a National Weather Service Flood Watch associated with a tropical storm system for a county. These

findings, along with similar complaints lodged before the storm, helped form the basis of our December 2016 administrative action against North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), alleging inadequate complaint response by the agency, notwithstanding indisputable evidence of permit violation. We are currently in settlement negotiations with the agency.

## Taylor Finishing

Back in 2012, Waterkeeper Alliance and Sound Rivers, Inc. (**Upper and Lower Neuse Riverkeepers'** and **Pamlico-Tar Riverkeeper's** parent organization) filed a citizen suit under the Clean Water Act and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) to stop illegal discharges of swine waste and the resulting surface water and groundwater pollution caused by the Taylor Finishing swine CAFO – a facility with the capacity to confine more than 14,000 swine located in Jones County. The Taylor Facility is generating and disposing of roughly 10 million gallons of swine waste each year. Waterkeeper Alliance has developed substantial onsite and offsite evidence demonstrating that the waste is being discharged through drainage ditches, groundwater transport and surface runoff into Long Branch Creek, a tributary of the Trent River which flows into the Neuse River.

Shortly after we completed onsite inspection and sampling of the facility after obtaining a federal district court order that was opposed by the



owners Donald and Annie Taylor, the Taylors filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization resulting in an automatic stay of the litigation. The Taylors also joined with NC Farm Families, an industry PR group, in a massive public relations campaign designed to malign Waterkeeper Alliance.

Waterkeeper Alliance and Sound Rivers responded by filing an adversary proceeding in the bankruptcy court arguing that our claims for injunctive and declaratory relief under the Clean Water Act and RCRA – i.e. our claims designed to bring the Taylor Facility into compliance with federal law by stopping and cleaning up these discharges – are not “debts” subject to discharge in bankruptcy. No court had directly addressed this precise legal issue in the context of a citizen suit, but we relied on principles derived from similar cases to support our position. The judge agreed with our legal arguments and, on May 31, 2017, the court issued an opinion granting summary judgment in our favor holding that our claims for injunctive and declaratory relief under the Clean Water Act and RCRA are not “debts” that the Taylor’s can discharge in bankruptcy.

This decision sets an important precedent that will deter polluters from attempting to use bankruptcy to avoid complying with environmental laws in North Carolina and across the country. We are now seeking to proceed with our case in federal district court.

### **Environmental Justice**

In October 2016, **Daniel E. Estrin**, Waterkeeper Alliance’s General Counsel and Advocacy Director, accompanied 12 citizens from North Carolina environmental justice communities on a visit to EPA headquarters in Washington D.C. to hold a

briefing for Members of Congress to hear first-hand accounts of swine waste devastation from the affected residents, most of them from minority communities, and to present a petition to EPA officials. The petition requested that EPA take immediate action to protect their communities from the dangerous impacts of industrial agriculture pollution, and was signed by over 95,000 concerned citizens. Larry Baldwin, **Crystal Coast Riverkeeper**, generously gave his time and energy to drive these wonderful and passionate citizens in a van from North Carolina to Washington.

Waterkeeper Alliance and **North Carolina Waterkeepers** launched a video campaign that captures the struggle of minority community members living with the impacts of industrial farm pollution. Titled “The True Cost of Industrial Meat Production,” the video series raises awareness of the environmental injustices being perpetrated against North Carolina’s most vulnerable populations and features powerful, first-hand accounts of community members, esteemed scientific experts, and local experts.

In January 2017, EPA’s External Civil Rights Compliance Office wrote a stern “letter of concern” to North Carolina DEQ stating that North Carolina’s failure to adequately regulate more than 2,200 industrial hog operations has a disparate, discriminatory impact on African American, Latino, and Native American communities in eastern North Carolina. The letter was sent in connection with EPA’s ongoing investigation into our federal civil rights complaint filed in September 2014. **W**





# Rapid Response



Over 900 gallons of sulfuric acid spilled into the Mulberry Fork, a tributary of the Black Warrior River. **Black Warrior Riverkeeper** Nelson Brooke documented hundreds of fish killed as a result of the spill.

*Photo by Nelson Brooke*



**St. Johns Riverkeeper** investigated Jacksonville's sewer system after millions of gallons of wastewater were released in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew.

*Photo by St. Johns Riverkeeper*



Waterkeeper Alliance and **Broad River Alliance, a Waterkeeper Alliance and MountainTrue Affiliate**, initiated Rapid Response following a coal pollution spill at Cliffs Power Plant in Cleveland County, NC.

*Photo by Pete Harrison, Waterkeeper Alliance*



**Cahaba Riverkeeper** worked alongside Colonial Pipeline personnel to minimize the impact and assess damage from the liquid gasoline pipeline spill in September 2016. "You're not often thankful for no rain, but in this particular incident it has been fantastic. It has given them an opportunity to clean up, and rain would only carry [fuel] to the river," said Riverkeeper David Butler.

*Photo by Cahaba Riverkeeper*



Waterkeeper Alliance initiated Rapid Response after a coal barge carrying 1,000 tonnes of coal sunk in Bangladesh's Sundarbans mangrove forest, marking the 5th time in the past two years that a vessel has sunk in the World Heritage Site.

*Map by Waterkeeper Alliance*



A creek turned chalk white after carburetor cleaner spilled from an Apollo Technologies plant in August 2016. **Chattahoochee Riverkeeper** took water samples after the spill and found naphthalene levels rising; Georgia's Environmental Protection Division had declared the cleanup complete weeks earlier.

*Photo by Cox Media Group*



▶ RAPID RESPONSE

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# HURRR MATT



**ICANE  
THEW**



**WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE** initiated a Rapid Response to Hurricane Matthew with our **North Carolina Riverkeepers**. The Hurricane impacted Waterkeepers in the Bahamas, Florida, Georgia, and North and South Carolina. A total of 1,045 fatalities resulted from the storm, with most deaths occurring in Haiti. We are thankful that all the members of our Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates survived the storm, albeit with some significant damage to homes, offices and boats. Rains from Hurricane Matthew created a 500-year flood that broke records on 17 rivers in

eastern North Carolina. The previous 500-year flood in the region was just 17 years ago during Hurricane Floyd. The flooding caused coal ash ponds, sewage treatment plants, industrial waste water plants, coal plant cooling ponds and industrial meat production facilities to flood and/or fail.

Our response primarily focused on aerial monitoring and reporting to the public about the environmental hazards that resulted from this historic storm and, more importantly, from the poor public policy decisions made by government officials that allowed enormous, open, unlined waste pits such as hog waste “lagoons” and coal ash “ponds” to be located within North Carolina’s floodplains. Waterkeeper Alliance’s photos and videos were shown on The Rachel Maddow Show and in many news articles including The Weather Channel, The Washington Post, Mother Jones, Esquire, and The Atlantic. CNN featured our before and after images as well, and our work caught the interest of The New York Times editorial board.

Our Hurricane Matthew Rapid Response concluded with the discovery of two coal ash releases from Duke Energy’s H.F. Lee Facility in Goldsboro, NC. The first discovery came just days after Duke failed to detect a school-bus-sized breach in the cooling pond dam at the H.F. Lee facility for upwards of 24 hours. The second discovery came on Tuesday after Waterkeeper Alliance Staff Attorney **Pete Harrison** and **Upper Neuse Riverkeeper** Matthew Starr found a substantial but undetermined amount of coal ash floating on the surface of the Neuse River in a layer over one inch thick.

Following the discovery of the coal ash spill at Duke Energy’s H.F. Lee Plant, Waterkeeper Alliance



PHOTO BY RICK DOVE, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

A North Carolina CAFO surrounded by floods after Hurricane Matthew.





An aerial view of Duke Energy's H.F. Lee facility.

PHOTO BY RICK DOVE, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

**“ENVIRONMENTAL  
ADVOCATES AND  
STATE OFFICIALS HAVE  
BEEN FLYING OVER  
REGIONS TO IDENTIFY  
OVERFLOWING LAGOONS  
WHERE FLOODWATERS  
HAVE BECOME MIXED  
WITH THE WASTE, A  
PUBLIC HEALTH HAZARD  
THAT COULD LAST FOR  
WEEKS AS BACTERIA  
FLOW INTO RIVERS AND  
STREAMS, POTENTIALLY  
SICKENING THOSE WHO  
COME INTO CONTACT  
WITH THOSE WATERS.”**  
—THE NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL BOARD

and **Upper Neuse Riverkeeper** submitted samples of the ash to scientists at Appalachian State University. The university used a scanning electron microscope to visualize samples of the spilled coal ash, and tested the particles for contaminants. The analysis detected dangerous heavy metals attached to the fly ash, including antimony and cobalt. Duke Energy had previously reported elevated levels of both these contaminants in groundwater monitoring wells located around the inactive ash ponds where the coal ash spill occurred. Throughout the week, Duke Energy attempted to characterize the ash as “not coal ash,” “inert” and “not inherently toxic.”

The conditions we observed in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew were shocking, and it will likely take years for North Carolina waterways to recover from the adverse impacts of the enormous volumes of toxic waste and nutrients that were unnecessarily released into the environment.

## FIELDS OF FILTH

**FOLLOWING THE STORM**, Waterkeeper Alliance and Environmental Working Group (EWG) released a new report, “Fields Of Filth: First Inventory Of Hurricane’s Impact On N.C. Factory Farms.” Hurricane Matthew’s rampage through North Carolina’s coastal plain flooded more than 140 feces-strewn swine and poultry barns, more than a dozen open pits brimming with hog waste and thousands of acres of manure-saturated fields. From aerial surveys and imagery, the organizations produced maps that provided the first publicly available, detailed look at the flooding’s impact on 36 CAFOs



along the Neuse, Black and Cape Fear rivers.

The maps are an ugly reminder of the recklessness of placing densely concentrated, confined animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, in a low-lying area deluged annually by tropical storms. As documented in last year’s “Exposing Fields of Filth” report, the 47 counties in the state’s Atlantic coastal plain are home to 96 percent of North Carolina’s hog CAFOs and more than a third of its chicken CAFOs. The Waterkeeper Alliance/ EWG analysis of the flood’s impact on the eight counties most heavily inundated, and of animal waste in the larger coastal plain, found:

*In Craven, Duplin, Green, Jones, Lenoir, Pitt, Sampson and Wayne counties, the flood partially submerged 10 industrial pig farms with 39 barns, 26 large chicken-*

*raising operations with 102 barns, and 14 open-air pits holding millions of gallons of liquid hog manure.*

*In the 47 counties in the larger coastal plain, CAFOs generate more than 9 billion gallons (96 percent of the entire state’s output) of liquid animal waste and over 193 million pounds (47 percent of the entire state’s output) of dry animal waste each year (see Table 1).*

*Within the 100-year floodplain of the coastal counties, 62 CAFOs house more than 235,000 hogs and 30 CAFOs house over 1.8 million chickens. There are 166 open-air waste pits directly within the 100-year floodplain, and another 366 within 100 feet of the area (see Table 1).* <sup>W</sup>

TABLE 1

OPERATIONS			
	Within Floodplain	Nearby Floodplain	Total
Poultry	30	16	46
Swine	62	47	109

ANIMALS			
	Within Floodplain	Nearby Floodplain	Total
Poultry	1,845,704	864,969	2,710,673
Swine	235,829	169,588	405,417

ANIMAL WASTE PRODUCED PER YEAR			
	Within Floodplain	Nearby Floodplain	Total
Poultry	18,567 tons	8,330 tons	26,897 tons
Swine	211,751,264 gallons	189,629,555 gallons	371,430,819 gallons

SOURCE: EWG AND WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE, N.C. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

**“IT’S BAFFLING HOW DUKE ENERGY COULD BE SO OBLIVIOUS TO SUCH AN OBVIOUS SPILL, AND HOW STATE REGULATORS CONTINUE TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY WHEN IT COMES TO DUKE’S COAL ASH PROBLEMS.”**

**—PETE HARRISON, STAFF ATTORNEY**



Duke Energy failed to identify a school bus-sized breach in a cooling pond dam at their H.F. Lee facility for as much as 24 hours before a local news helicopter spotted the collapsed dam and reported it to officials.

PHOTO BY PETE HARRISON, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE

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# STRIKE

STANDING WITH STANDING ROCK

# FORCE

..... FISCAL YEAR 2017



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# i

**IN AUGUST 2016**, Waterkeeper Alliance and 93 Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates worldwide sent a letter to Standing Rock Sioux tribal leaders expressing solidarity and unwavering support for efforts to stop the Dakota Access pipeline that threatens their land, water, public health and tribal rights. Organizing Director **Pete**

**Nichols** was one of five in a caravan to

Standing Rock to make the 18-hour journey, earning him a Yakama Nation flag and designation as a “Road Warrior” by Yakama Tribal Councilman Virgil Lewis. He was asked to speak by Yakama Chairman Goudy to the Standing Rock Sioux as part of the Yakama delegation. **Hurricane Creekeeeper** and **Savannah Riverkeeper** were also on-site to document the

events; **Hurricane Creekeeeper** John Wathen spent a considerable time at Standing Rock, staying through until the winter to document the violent retaliation against the peaceful Water Protectors.

In October 2016, Waterkeeper Alliance delivered a letter to the Obama administration calling for the immediate halt to the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline until a full, and rigorous, environmental review could be conducted for the full scope of the project. In addition, we called for a full assessment of the impacts to the spiritual and cultural resources connected to the indigenous tribes along the route, and asked that all indigenous, and human rights be respected. We also called on the Department of Justice to intervene to end the violence against peaceful Water Protectors who were simply acting to protect their waterways.

PHOTO BY RING OFF FIRE




PHOTO BY JOHN WATHEN



PHOTO BY JOHN WATHEN

Waterkeeper Alliance President **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** joined the fight at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in November 2016, meeting with Standing Rock Sioux Chairman David Archambault II and taking a tour of the camps. Mr. Kennedy denounced the State of North Dakota for deploying its police and military against peaceful citizens who

dare to stand up against the thuggery of corporate interests, and called upon President Obama to halt construction immediately. He also called for a full Environmental Impact Statement to assess the cumulative impacts, as required under the National Environmental Policy Act for a project of this size. **W**



The people of Standing Rock camped along the Missouri River in peaceful protest of the Dakota Access Pipeline to protect their homeland, historic and sacred sites and the drinking water of millions of Americans.





# Growth

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Waterkeeper Organization
  Waterkeeper Affiliate



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE

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In coordination with three federal agencies, Mexico's **La Paz Waterkeeper** and their parent organization, Red de Observadores Ciudadanos, organized an effort to catch boats fishing in no-take zones, which resulted in the boats' gear being confiscated.

*Photo by La Paz Waterkeeper*



The Bagmati River is flowing free of trash after 4 years of cleanup events organized by Nepal's **Bagmati River Waterkeeper** and community partners. The cleanups attracted over 2,000 participants every Saturday morning.

*Photo by Jason Houston*



**Ottawa Riverkeeper** completed the first-ever study of microplastic pollution in the Ottawa River watershed. Months later, Waterkeepers across Canada celebrated when the country officially banned the sale and manufacture of microbeads!

*Photo by Ottawa Riverkeeper*



**Loreto Coastkeeper** in Baja California Sur held a season of beach cleanups focused on microtrash—small pieces of trash such as cigarette butts, bottle tops, and other tiny, broken down bits of trash that can be ingested by wildlife—utilizing screens to filter the sand of all such debris.

*Photo by Loreto Coastkeeper*



**Lake Erie Waterkeeper** and partners sued EPA for their failure to protect communities and businesses from the harmful algal blooms that have plagued Lake Erie for years.

*Photo by NASA Earth Observatory*



The Stratford Community Farm in Connecticut was renamed "The Terry Backer Community Farm of Stratford," to honor the memory of our late, beloved **Long Island Soundkeeper**.

*Photo by John Kovach*



**Columbia Riverkeeper** and **Snake River Waterkeeper** filed the first lawsuit against Scott Pruitt's EPA to prevent massive, heat-driven fish kills.

*Photo by Russ Ricketts of River Snorkel*



In a precedent setting case for citizens rights, a federal court ruled in favor of **Quad Cities Waterkeeper** and Prairie Rivers Network, saying the dumping of concrete into the Green River by Ballegeer Excavation violated the Clean Water Act.

*Photo by Art Norris*

# WATERKEEPER MOVEMENT



**Alabama Waterkeepers** worked together to create an interactive map of the 1,271 sewage spills reported in 2016 as part of their effort to persuade state regulators that more oversight is needed regarding sewage spills.

*Photo by Nelson Brooke*



Face to face with local governmental officials on Xiangyang Radio Television, China's **Middle Han River Waterkeeper** Ms. Yun demanded officials fulfill their responsibility to protect the quality and quantity of the Han River.

*Photo by Middle Han River Waterkeeper Staff*



A Georgia judge sided with **Altamaha Riverkeeper** and other groups, saying Rayonier Advanced Materials is putting far too much pollution into the river. Altamaha Riverkeeper has been attempting to stop this pollution for 15 years.

*Photo by Altamaha Riverkeeper*



New York State and Entergy reached an agreement to shutdown two aging nuclear reactors at Indian Point by 2021. **Hudson Riverkeeper** president Paul Galloway said the decision marked "a new day for New York."

*Photo by Riverkeeper*



**Maule Itata Coastkeeper** in Chile held cleanups at 30 locations, with hundreds of volunteers collecting more than 4 tons of garbage as part of Chile's 6th National Beach and River Cleanup.

*Photo by Maule Itata Coastkeeper*



**Surma River Waterkeeper** and **Waterkeepers Bangladesh** celebrated the removal of public toilets on the Surma River that were releasing untreated human waste directly into the river.

*Photo by The Daily Star*



Maryland became the third state to ban fracking and first state with gas reserves to ban fracking through the legislature. **Waterkeepers Chesapeake** Executive Director Betsy Nicholas called the vote the "result of an incredible grassroots movement across Maryland."

*Photo by Robin Broder*

**"We need a comprehensive plan to deal with dams' impacts on water temperature, or we may be telling our kids stories about salmon instead of teaching them to fish."**

*— Miles Johnson, attorney for Columbia Riverkeeper*





After a decade of work by Alaska's **Cook Inletkeeper** to stop the proposed Chuitna coal mine, which would have strip mined through 14 miles of wild salmon streams, owner of the mine PacRim was sent packing in a spectacular victory for Alaska's fish, people, and climate.

Photo by Brandon Hill



**Miami Waterkeeper** and partners have filed a federal suit against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers alleging that the corps inadequately considered the risks to corals in approving the Port Everglades dredging project, and violated the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act process.

Photo by Colin Foord



**Futaleufú Riverkeeper** celebrated a happy ending to their tumultuous 20-year battle to save Patagonia's Futaleufú River in August 2016 when Endesa Chile, subsidiary of Enersis and part of Italian-controlled energy consortium Enel, formally relinquished all claims to Chile's iconic whitewater mecca and similar stakes in other Chilean rivers.

Photo by Kaaty,7



President **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.**, Trustee Lessing Stern, and Leadership Circle member Geralyn Dreyfous took our Deer Valley Skifest auction winners on a rafting/floating trip down Utah's Green River with **Colorado Riverkeeper** and **Green River Action Network, a Colorado Riverkeeper Affiliate**. They paddled Desolation and Gray canyons almost to the Colorado River confluence.

Photo by Ed Theil



**Puget Soundkeeper** celebrated a victory that will result in huge changes benefitting Elliott Bay and the Seattle waterfront. The settlement requires structural changes at Seattle's Pier 86 to stop stormwater discharge from the pier and to prevent spillage of grain into Elliott Bay, as well as \$699,000 for restoration and water protection efforts.

Photo by Puget Soundkeeper



The Organization of American States has called on the government of the Bahamas to protect the lives and personal integrity of five members of Save the Bays, including members of **Waterkeepers Bahamas**, who have been subject to threats of harm, harassment and intimidation because of their environmental advocacy against the government and private developers.

Photo by Waterkeepers Bahamas

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**“This Green River paradise is now threatened by a boondoggle meant to benefit a new generation of corporate villains. Utah's carbon titans are slicing up the plateau for tar sands oil and gas fracking.”**

— *Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., President*

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# Honors

We know the Waterkeeper movement is full of amazing advocates, so it's wonderful to see other entities around the world recognize their achievements. These are just a few of the accolades received in fiscal year 2017. Congratulations to all our Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates for being the best and brightest clean water advocates on the planet!

**Qiantang River  
Waterkeeper  
Hao Xin**  
Ecological Civilization  
Award from China's  
Ministry of Environmental  
Protection

**West Virginia  
Headwaters  
Waterkeeper  
Angie Rosser**  
Women in Conservation  
Award from National  
Wildlife Federation,  
National River Hero  
from the River Network

**Buffalo Niagara  
Riverkeeper  
Jill Jedlicka**  
Thiess International  
Riverprize from  
International  
RiverFoundation

**Beiyun Waterkeeper  
Wang Yongchen**  
Global Thinker Steward  
from Foreign Policy  
Magazine

**Choctawhatchee  
Riverkeeper  
Michael Mullen**  
Lifetime Achievement  
Award from Alabama  
Water Watch Association

**Coosa Riverkeeper  
Frank Chitwood**  
Group of the Year from  
Alabama Rivers Alliance

**Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
Cheryl Nenn**  
Volunteer Stream  
Monitoring Award from  
UW-Extension and  
Wisconsin Department of  
Natural Resources

**Waterkeeper Alliance  
Marc Yaggi and  
Daniel E. Estrin**  
Nicholas A. Robinson  
Award for Distinguished  
Environmental  
Achievement from Pace  
Environmental Law  
Alumni Association and  
the Haub Environmental  
Law Program

**Fundy Baykeeper  
Matt Abbott**  
T. B. "Happy" Fraser  
Award from the Atlantic  
Salmon Federation





PHOTO BY JUMA ENTERTAINMENT

**Deer Valley Celebrity Skifest – 25th Anniversary  
Deer Valley, Utah  
December 2-4, 2016**

The opening weekend event was held at the Montage Deer Valley and featured a gala and live concert by Dierks Bentley at the DeJoria Center. The entire weekend of events was televised in a national CBS special which reached 2.2 million viewers.

PHOTOS BY JUMA ENTERTAINMENT



# Events

**Art for Water®  
Sotheby's, New York, New York  
February 6, 2017**

Waterkeeper Alliance presented an art benefit at Sotheby's New York. This event, chaired by Jeff Koons and Ed Ruscha, featured live and silent auctions by over 60 artists.



PHOTOS BY SAMANTHA MANDEZ/BFA.COM



**Audi FIS Ski World Cup 2017  
Squaw Valley, California  
March 10-11, 2017**

Squaw Valley hosted its first FIS Ski World Cup since 1969. With an eye toward Squaw Valley’s environment and the threats posed to it by climate change, Waterkeeper Alliance and Protect Our Winters created an evening benefit event and a Pro/Am Ski race to coincide with the historic weekend.



PHOTO BY SANTA BARBARA CHANNELKEEPER

**SPLASH Series**

Waterkeeper Alliance announced its 7th Annual SPLASH Event Series, presented nationally by Toyota. A record 16 events were approved for the 2017 season that brought out thousands of participants.

**Blue Water Series  
Boston, Massachusetts  
May 11, 2017**

Waterkeeper Alliance along with Boston Properties held a ceremonial lighting of The Prudential Tower and hosted a cocktail reception as part of the Blue Water Series. Waterkeeper Alliance’s Executive Director Marc Yaggi, and President Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., gave remarks regarding our vital work. The entire day featured an onsite experience of Toyota’s fuel cell vehicle, the Mirai.

PHOTO BY RICH POLK / GETTY IMAGES



**Keep It Clean®  
Avalon Theater, Los Angeles,  
California  
April 20, 2017**

Toyota and Paul Mitchell sponsored the third “Keep It Clean” live comedy event to benefit Waterkeeper Alliance at the Avalon Hollywood Theater in Los Angeles. This entertaining and hilarious evening featured comedy by The Roastmaster General Jeff Ross, Sarah Silverman, Tig Notaro, Zach Galifianakis, Bill Burr, Calum Worthy, Nick Kroll and Garfunkel and Oates.

PHOTO BY PRUDENTIAL CENTER BOSTON







# Bio





# n i c

PHOTO BY BIONIC



**WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE** and partner BIONIC are joining forces to defend marine environments around the world from the estimated 5-12 million tons of plastic pollution flowing into our oceans each year. The partnership was born in 2015 when BIONIC approached **Nicoya Peninsula Waterkeeper** in Costa Rica with the idea to build a plastic recovery operation in their watershed. Thanks to their successful collaboration, BIONIC and Waterkeeper Alliance have launched the Ocean Plastic Recovery Initiative to build plastic recovery facilities with Waterkeeper Organizations around the world

Waterkeeper Alliance's Ocean Plastic Recovery Initiative shines a light into how industry marries purpose and profit by creating a dynamically positive environmental impact. The Ocean Plastic Recovery Initiative unites a Waterkeeper Organization's innate knowledge of their waterway and community with advanced raw materials manufacturing technology, offering a first-of-its-kind solution to the harmful effects of marine plastic debris.

Waterkeeper Alliance, with aid from BIONIC,

works with local Waterkeeper Organizations to build fully-developed operations that recover plastic debris from local marine and coastal environments.

The resulting infrastructure includes recovery receptacles and logistics, organized large-scale cleanup operations, hiring of additional organization staff, and the build-out of a recovered debris processing facility within the watershed. The processed materials are then provided to BIONIC to be made into everything from innovative high-strength yarn to polymer. BIONIC's commitment to unrestricted donations, calculated at






the fair market value of the commodity provided by the local Waterkeeper, serves as a new and reliable revenue stream for the Waterkeeper Organization, affording them vital funding necessary to expand and grow in their mission to protect their watershed from polluters.

The role of industry is simple: demand. As the use of recycled ocean plastics increases, consumers must understand that not all recycled material is created equally. All of the recycled marine and coastal plastic debris collected through our Ocean Plastic Recovery Initiative is fully traceable and

its infrastructure fully transparent. With more than 300 Waterkeeper Organizations and Affiliates around the world, the initiative remains nimble and ever expanding.

BIONIC is a raw material engineering company, producing high performance textiles and polymers out of recycled plastic. Since 2013, BIONIC has been actively engaged in the recovery and up-cycling of plastic from coastal communities and marine environments around the world. For more information on BIONIC, please visit: [bionic.is](http://bionic.is). 





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Harper Simon

Dr. William E. Smith  
Tore Steen  
Don Thompson  
Joe Tomlinson  
Alexandra Weed

*The Waterkeeper Alliance Board of Directors is a 13-person board comprising 6 members elected from the Waterkeeper Council, 6 members elected from the Trustee Council and a President elected by Waterkeeper Alliance membership.*





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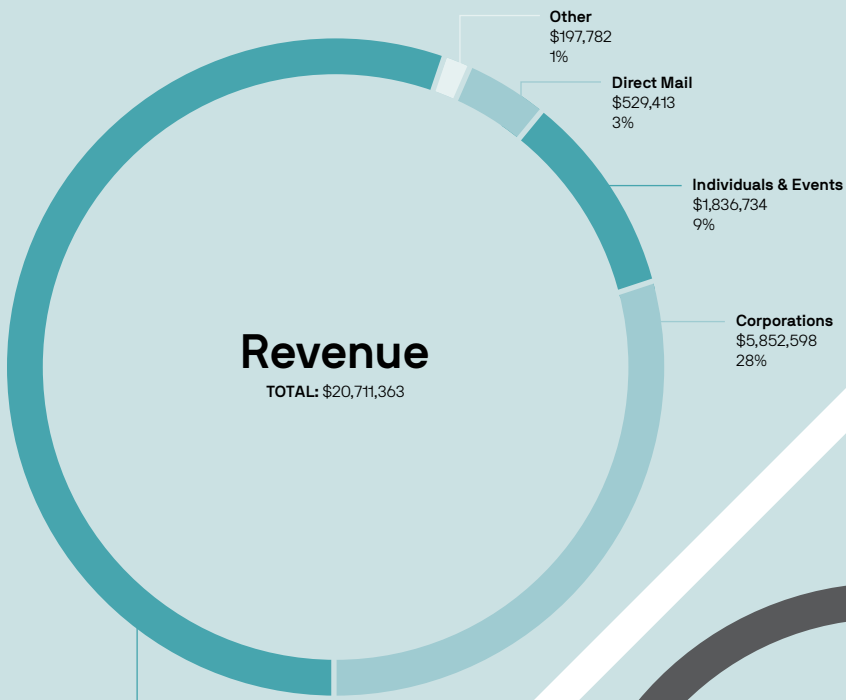


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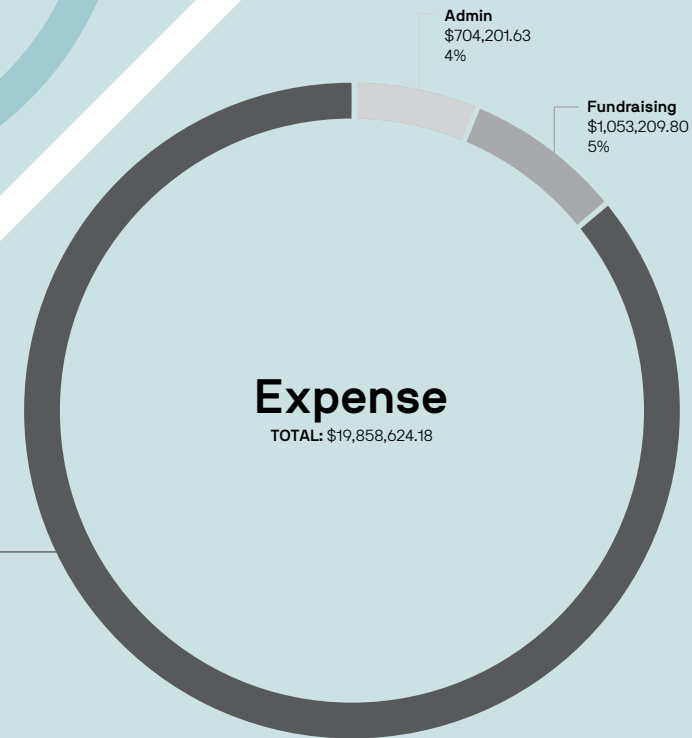


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\*These are draft, unaudited financials for fiscal year 2017 (July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017). Please visit [waterkeeper.org](http://waterkeeper.org) for up to date audited financials.





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Waterkeeper Alliance is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3), member supported organization based in New York, NY. We are governed by a 13-member Board of Directors and are supported by member contributions, foundation grants, corporate sponsorship, events, and other income. Our most recent audited financial statements and IRS 990 forms can be found on our website. For additional tax and financial information, please contact our Finance & Operations Director Rachel Cook at [rook@waterkeeper.org](mailto:rook@waterkeeper.org)

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