



# Riverlovers Currents

Volume 25, Number 2, February 2012

## Message From The President

Winter, where are you? Playing hide-and-peek? Something to ponder about.

The first documentary in our series from PBS, "American Eagle" was well received, with one of our founding members exclaiming "This is the best movie you ever showed—you get a gold star". Thank you Terry.

The EagleFest is coming soon! Mark your calendars for this annual event at Croton Point Park on Saturday, February 4, (inclement weather date Sunday, February 5). This is a popular wintertime event, and it runs from 9am to 4pm. Riverlovers will once more be serving home-cooked and donated soups and baked breads at the Nature Center for volunteers and vendors from 11am to 2pm.



We need volunteers to bring soups and breads, and to help serve. We also need volunteers for the Outreach Table from 9am to 4pm. Riverlovers can get lots of exposure, since large crowds are expected. Call Warren at 739-9028 if you can help out at the Outreach Table or call Gunnar at 432-3112 if you can help with soups at the Nature Center.

The next Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse is on February 11<sup>th</sup> and features The Ebony Hillbillies. Please make sure to post the flyers to help spread the word about some really great entertainment that everyone can enjoy, and at the same time help out our "mother ship" Clearwater. Once again we will be distributing our *Riverlovers Currents* at the Coffeehouse. This is a well-attended event of like-minded people sharing our thoughts for a better environment.

Our next meeting is on February 17, and we will screen "Gasland," a film by Josh Fox. The film focuses on communities negatively impacted by natural gas drilling and hydrofracturing. See our December 2011 and January 2012 issues for articles on Fracking. This is a must-see film!

For the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, we will show "Earth, the Operator's Manual" hosted by geologist Richard Alley. I'm very enthusiastic about this film. From the dvd jacket: "We have manuals for the things we value, like our cars and computers. So why not a manual for the most complex operating system of all—the Earth?" I brought the companion book to the meeting and Beverly was inspired to read the postscript to the assembled Riverlovers, briefly stating how the world of the future might sustain 10 billion smiling people.

For the April 20<sup>th</sup> meeting we will show "Power Surge". Are we finally on the brink of a clean energy revolution? That's quite a line-up, and I hope you will be able to join us at these monthly Potlucks.

Earth Day is April 22. Let's see if we can have an Outreach Table, if Westchester County holds its annual celebration at the Kensico Dam plaza. Stay tuned.

## Heavy Lifting For Clean Water

According to the Associated Press, advocates who want to keep natural-gas drilling out of New York State are sending clean water to a northeastern Pennsylvania village.

About a dozen households in Dimock, Pa., have been scrambling to get safe drinking water after a gas driller blamed for polluting the aquifer halted daily water deliveries. Residents there say drilling made their water unfit to drink. Houston-based Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. says it's safe.

Actor Mark Ruffalo and local elected officials gathered at City Hall in Manhattan in early December before shipping the New York water to the beleaguered households. They called on New York Governor Andrew Cuomo to visit Dimock. Cuomo's administration is considering issuing permits for hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking." The natural gas industry says the technique, which involves blasting chemical-laced water into the ground, has been used safely for decades.

The EPA, however just issued a report about fracking wells in Colorado, concluding that contamination of wells was due to the gas drilling. The governor needs to come to his senses, and protect us from the "rape the land at any cost" barbarians. We need to let him know the price is too high to pay.

## Carbon Pollution—Who's Doing It?

The United States accounts for over a sixth (17.84%) of the total world carbon pollution. However, four of the world's biggest emerging economies—Brazil, South Africa, India and China—account for over a third (33.5%).

While Americans constitute just over 4% of the world's population of 7 billion (and counting), we currently use about 28% of the world's energy resources. Even though China is rapidly catching up to us in this area, there's no excuse for us being the wasteful energy hogs that we have let ourselves become. That's something we could do something about, in so many ways!

## NY's Top 10 Fracking Defects

According to Environmental Advocates of New York, these are only 10 of the problems with New York's fracking draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement:

1. New York State failed to analyze fracking's true costs. New Yorkers are concerned about the potential costs of fracking, including costs to already overburdened local governments, but Governor Cuomo and the DEC have failed to provide an analysis of the true costs of fracking for communities or the state. The socioeconomic impact analysis provided to the DEC omits critical information about fracking's fiscal impact on communities in terms of infrastructure, schools, and other costs.

2. New York State failed to analyze health impacts. Despite direction from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, calls from health professionals and the insistence of New Yorkers, the DEC has failed to include an analysis of public health impacts or to meaningfully incorporate the Department of Health into the fracking review. This is despite the fact that fracking-related air pollution and potential water contamination have serious effects on people—especially the elderly and children, and communities downwind and downstream of drilling operations. There is growing evidence of negative health impacts related to gas extraction in other states. Just yesterday, a coalition of more than 250 doctors and health care professionals petitioned Governor Cuomo to request that an independent school of public health conduct a Health Impact Analysis for fracking.

3. New York State failed to ban any chemicals. New Yorkers have made no bones about it—they want their water and communities protected from fracking fluids. Yet state leaders do not propose to ban any of the toxic chemicals used in fracking fluid, even those known to be serious human and animal carcinogens. Nor has there been any study of the cumulative effect of exposure to the hundreds of dangerous chemicals used in the fracking process that could be discharged as solid waste and wastewater, if fracking is permitted. While the proposed public disclosure component has been strengthened, telling New Yorkers what toxic chemicals will be used is not the same as protecting them from negative health impacts.

4. New York State failed to look at fracking comprehensively. Governor Cuomo failed to approach gas development in a comprehensive manner. As the industry would be overseen by several state agencies, including the Public Service Commission, Department of Agriculture and Markets, Department of Health and others, there is no single agency with a clear mandate to protect the public. Governor Cuomo is the only person who has the power to coordinate multiple agencies' efforts and protect New Yorkers.

5. New York State failed to undertake a cumulative impact analysis. The state has spent enormous resources to develop the economy of upstate New York by attracting new high tech industries, by developing tourism, protecting agricultural lands, endangered species and historic sites, and encouraging land use compatible with these goals. The impact of gas drilling on these investments must be analyzed. Governor Cuomo is the only person who has the power to protect New Yorkers from the full array of impacts from gas production and infrastructure development.

6. New York State failed to provide long-term protections for drinking water sources. New Yorkers have called for banning drilling above and through aquifers that provide millions of citizens with drinking water. Yet the draft Statement and draft regulations still allow drilling in potable water supplies. The draft proposes to put some areas off limits to drilling, but upon closer examination, many of the restrictions have sunset dates and some protective buffers only call for site-specific individual environmental review, rather than clear restrictions.

7. No plans for disposal of hazardous fracking wastes. There are no wastewater treatment plants in New York State designed to treat wastewaters from high-volume fracking operations. The draft review and proposed regulations are unacceptably vague with regard to what will become of the billions of gallons of toxic waste that will be produced in New York State once these operations are commenced.

8. New York State failed to protect critical drinking water infrastructure. The state proposes a buffer around New York City drinking water infrastructure in which only an additional review would be required and upon which projects could be permitted—not a formal ban. The proposed buffer is only one-quarter as long as a typical horizontal well bore, too close to the sensitive, aging infrastructure that provides the city with drinking water. There are no proposed buffer requirements for Syracuse.

9. New York State failed to respect communities' local land use and zoning laws. Home rule powers to control land use and industrial development through zoning and police powers have long been established in the State. Governor Cuomo and the DEC must respect local laws and ordinances.

10. New York State is ignoring New Yorkers' concerns and fast-tracking regulations. Despite repeated requests from residents, environmental and citizens groups, and local officials to slow down the state's environmental review and rule-making related to fracking, Governor Cuomo and the DEC recently issued proposed rules for regulating industrial gas drilling even before completing the legally required environmental review process. Insufficient time has been allowed for comments and insufficient hearings have been set. If regulations are issued before the review of environmental impacts is complete, such regulations are more likely to be insufficient to protect people and the environment.

These are ten good reasons why Governor Cuomo should not permit fracking in New York. Our state can't afford to put short-term gas profits ahead of the long-term health of our water resources and our communities.

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### Nature's Laws

Because of the First Law of Thermodynamics we cannot get something for nothing, and because of the Second Law, almost every action of man has some undesirable impact on our environment or life-support system. As a result, there is ultimately no completely technological solution to pollution on a spaceship—although technology can help. A continued increase in the number of passengers and their levels and wasteful patterns of the use of energy and materials must insure a continuing decline in the quality of life and threaten survival for a large number of the passengers. We should take heed.



# What's Happening When

Sundays at the Beacon Sloop Club, **Farmers' Market** 10am-4pm. Local cheeses, eggs, pasta, bread, lamb, mushroom spring rolls, fruits and vegetables.

Feb 4, Sat, 9am-4pm, **Hudson River EagleFest 2012, at Croton Point Park.** Riverlovers will again be serving home-cooked and donated soup and bread to EagleFest volunteers and vendors at the Nature Center from 11am to 2pm, and help is needed to bring and serve the soups. Volunteers for the Outreach Table from 9am to 4pm are also needed. See story on page 1 for more details.

Feb 11, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse featuring The Ebony Hillbillies.** At Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Open seating. Advance tickets (\$17.50) are available at [www.BrownPaperTickets.com/producer/5602](http://www.BrownPaperTickets.com/producer/5602), or at door (\$20). Proceeds benefit Walkabout & Clearwater. Refreshments available. Free parking. Sing with the Walkabout Clearwater Chorus at its informal Teachabout starting at 6:45 pm. Info: [www.WalkaboutClearwater.org](http://www.WalkaboutClearwater.org) or call 914-946-1625.

Feb 17, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Potluck featuring a showing of "Gasland"**, at Croton Point Nature Center. Don't miss this celebrated expose on the dangers of fracking. Info: [www.Riverlovers.org](http://www.Riverlovers.org).

## EPA Proposes Fracking Regs

Under a court deadline to propose updated standards for hydraulic fracturing, commonly called fracking, the EPA is proposing new regulations aimed at limiting air pollution from oil and natural gas drilling operations. These will be the first standards for wells that are hydraulically fractured, and they result from a lawsuit filed by environmental organizations. The court ruling required final action to be taken by February 28, 2012, and this is a first step.

The proposed regulations will trim emissions of smog-forming volatile organic compounds by about 25%, but in new and updated gas wells using fracturing technology, the discharge reduction will be closer to 95%. The fracking technique involves the injection of huge quantities of water, along with sand and a number of chemical additives, many of which are toxic, into shale rock formations to release trapped hydrocarbons.

The practice has been tied to an increase in smog pollution in rural areas, such as eastern Wyoming and Pennsylvania, where gas drilling has been booming. EPA estimates the rules will reduce nationwide emissions of both volatile organic compounds and greenhouse gas methane by 25%. That's long overdue, but it's only a first step.

What's just as important is the rescinding of the removal of these drilling operations from regulation under the Clean Water Act during the Bush administration. This legacy was due to Dick Cheney's efforts behind closed doors, and now we need to clear both the air and the water.

## Pay your dues now—support our river! \$25 Individual & \$35 Family

It costs \$7.60 a year to send you the *Riverlovers Currents*. Please consider adding at least that much to your annual dues. Support your Newsletter and the river! Thanks to our efforts, as Lorre Wyatt wrote and Pete Seeger has sung, "The river may be dirty now but it's getting cleaner every day."

### Here's how to join Riverlovers...

(the local Clearwater Sloop Club in the Northern Westchester-Putnam County area)

### Application for Riverlovers Membership

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal \_\_\_ New \_\_\_ Additional Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send check (\$25 individual, \$35 family) for 2012 to:  
Riverlovers, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

I want to have *Riverlovers Currents* delivered electronically.

Send to this e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Yes! I Also Want To Join Clearwater

Please sign me up in the following membership category:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Individual \$40   | <input type="radio"/> Mariner \$500         |
| <input type="radio"/> Family \$55       | <input type="radio"/> Sailing-Master \$1000 |
| <input type="radio"/> Contributor \$100 | <input type="radio"/> Benefactor \$5000     |
| <input type="radio"/> Sponsor \$200     | <input type="radio"/> Student \$10          |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please include check payable to Clearwater, or charge by credit card

- |                            |                          |                                |                            |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Visa | <input type="radio"/> MC | <input type="radio"/> Discover | <input type="radio"/> Amex |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: Clearwater, Inc.  
724 Wolcott Avenue  
Beacon, NY 12508

Your Clearwater membership gets you the *Navigator* and other benefits, along with being part of Riverlovers' "parent" organization representing individuals and Sloop Clubs up and down the Hudson Valley "working for the River."

## Riverlovers - Who We Are

Riverlovers, Inc. is a chartered Sloop Club of the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc., an environmental non-profit membership organization whose most visible symbol is its member-owned and operated 106-ft. sloop "Clearwater." As a local affiliate, Riverlovers' purposes are:

- Maintaining an active Sloop Club in the Northern Westchester-Putnam County area;
- Meeting the needs and interests of individuals through a variety of interest groups, including monthly Potluck dinner meetings with varied programs, environmental education and awareness, boats and sailing, concerts and festivals;
- Organizing trips and recreational activities, seminars and workshops, learn-to-sail programs and Clearwater visits;
- Research, education and action to protect our rivers and our environment;
- Working for access and effective land use along the Hudson River and its tributaries;
- Boating projects on the Hudson River, to reach out to the surrounding community for educational and recreational purposes.

We invite you to join us. Contact our interest group coordinators, or write to Riverlovers, Inc., P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Together we can do a lot!



## Interest Group Coordinators

Interest Group	Coordinator	Phone
Envir. Education	Bill Flank	238-8240
Membership	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112
Newsletter	Bill Flank	238-8240
Newsletter Distribution	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Outreach		
Photographer/Archivist	Beverly Dyckman	739-5057
Potluck	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
Publicity		
ShadFest	Robin Fox	271-6088

Web Page: [www.riverlovers.org](http://www.riverlovers.org)

### Riverlovers Officers

President:	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
Vice Pres. (programs):	Robin Fox	271-6088
Secretary:	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396
President-Emeriti	Eric Marshall	827-3696
	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112

### Newsletter Submissions

Please send news articles and other items of interest to Riverlovers Currents, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Include your name, address, and phone number. Names can be omitted on request.

Back issues of *Riverlovers Currents* are available at our web site: [www.riverlovers.org](http://www.riverlovers.org)

Newsletter Committee: Editor, Bill Flank; Associate Editor, Mel Fitting

February Newsletter Contributors: Warren Lindholm

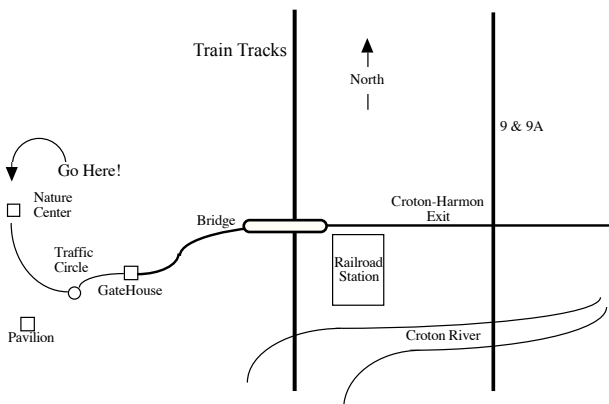
## Riverlovers Monthly Potluck with a showing of "Gasland"



**Riverlovers, Inc.**

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520



**Friday, February 17, 2012**  
**6:30pm**  
**Croton Point Nature Center**