



SPECIAL EDITION OF  
*freshwaterVoices*

WINTER 2016

# Contributions In Action

## Protecting Our Drinking Water

**W**ater is a basic necessity of life.

In this publication we want to highlight one of the most basic uses for our water—**drinking water**. Your donations allow Freshwater Future to help people and communities keep drinking water safe all around the Great Lakes.

Water it seems is everywhere—in the form of big lakes, flowing rivers, inland lakes and flowing from our taps. But is the water we use for our drinking water supplies all safe?

The sad news is that our drinking water sources are not always safe. Throughout the Great Lakes there are many threats, like industrial and agricultural activities, that impact our water every day.

As one of the most water rich places in the world, we believe everyone deserves safe drinking water. Freshwater Future is finding ways to ensure our water stays safe for our 40 million residents who rely on the Great Lakes for their water.

Inside we share three stories, highlighting how your support makes a difference. The stories are all different, yet they all share a common goal of protecting drinking water around the Great Lakes States and Provinces.



**What is High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing, or Fracking?**  
*Through providing simple drinking water tests for homeowners in close proximity to permitted fracking wells, we offer residents a peace of mind and control over knowing what is in their waters.*

**What is Your Bacon Worth?**  
*Through advising and providing grant funds, citizens are empowered to address threatening issues, like hog farming practices.*

**The Shallowest of All Lakes**  
*Through working with partners in both the US and Canada, we are continuing to ensure Lake Erie algae is addressed in a positive, productive manner.*





## STAFF

### ANN BAUGHMAN

Associate Director  
ann@freshwaterfuture.org

### APRIL WEPPLER

Program Manager  
april@freshwaterfuture.org

### BONNIE DANNI

Fiscal Specialist  
bonnie@freshwaterfuture.org

### CHERYL KALLIO

Policy Director  
cheryl@freshwaterfuture.org

### JILL RYAN

Executive Director  
jill@freshwaterfuture.org

### BECCA TURNER

Program Associate  
becca@freshwaterfuture.org

### JESSICA WAGAR

Data and Technology Specialist  
jessica@freshwaterfuture.org

### NANCY GOUCHER

Manager, Partnerships  
nancy@freshwaterfuture.org

### TONY MAAS

Manager, Strategies  
tony@freshwaterfuture.org

Main Office: (231) 348-8200

## FRESHWATER FUTURE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### GARY BELAN

American Rivers

### CHRIS GRUBB

Great Lakes Citizen

### HOLLY HUGHES

Great Lakes Citizen

### KRISTY MEYER

The Ohio Environmental Council

### MICHELLE PARKER

John G. Shedd Aquarium

### KAREN REINBOLD

DePaul University

## FRESHWATER FUTURE CANADA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### GARY BELAN

American Rivers

### GLEN DALE

Great Lakes Citizen

### HOLLY HUGHES

Great Lakes Citizen

### TIM MORRIS

Great Lakes Citizen

### LINDSAY TELFER

Canadian Freshwater Alliance

### TRACEY COOKE

Invasive Species Centre

### SARAH KERTON

Great Lakes Citizen

# High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing What is It?

**A long term for a way to get oil and gas from the ground. Freshwater Future helps homeowners know their water is safe, even when drilling is nearby.**



Tracy knew that living in rural Northern Michigan required sacrificing some conveniences such as paved roads and internet. But oh the benefits—quiet, safe places for kids to explore, wildlife, dark skies, clean air and clean water.

When Tracy learned a high volume hydraulic fracturing (fracking) well was permitted on state owned land near her home, she was worried. How would this industrial activity impact her home and neighbors? Would the drilling make her once quiet neighborhood seem like an industrial park? Would it contaminate her clean drinking water?

Unfortunately, hundreds of cases of drinking water contamination resulting from fracking activities have been documented—the cause varies including spills and leaks, chemical contamination, methane migration, waste pit leaks, problems with injection wells, and wellbore casing failure. In Pennsylvania alone, the State Government admitted that 243 drinking water sources were contaminated from fracking related activities.

As a result of this threat, Freshwater Future developed our Fracking Well Testing Program to help residents like Tracy living near permitted fracking wells. Our program offers homeowners testing of their drinking water by a certified lab before fracking occurs near their home, and continued monitoring after fracking has occurred. If drinking water becomes degraded, the homeowner will have the tests as tools for recourse.

**Thanks to support from donors like you, Freshwater Future is helping people keep tabs on the health of drinking water.**

The fracking boom is not over in the Great Lakes region. Freshwater Future will continue to provide tools for grassroots groups, communities and citizens around the Great Lakes to protect their waters from the impacts of fracking activity.





## What is Your Bacon Worth?

**How one community group loves its food and is working to ensure it is produced in a safe way.**

**A**s an avid cook, you would think that a new farm coming to town would be good news. But for Mary, of Farms not Factories, she was worried.

The new farm was a proposed Concentrated Animal Feed Operation (CAFO) in Ashland County, Wisconsin. Mary started questioning county officials about whether it was true. Once it was confirmed, Mary became outraged that this type of factory farm would be allowed, and wondered how it would change the place her family calls home.

This area has historically had farming, however the huge scale of this CAFO is unprecedented in this area.

Large factory farms with thousands of livestock produce more than bacon—they generate huge amounts of manure and wastewater. Because of their large scale, CAFOs have the potential to contribute pollution such as phosphorus and nitrogen as well as pathogens, hormones and antibiotics to our waters.

This proposed CAFO is eight miles from a bay on Lake Superior, the same bay from which Ashland, Wisconsin gets its drinking water—the water that supports Mary's family.

Using grant funds from Freshwater Future as well as help through our Insight Program, Farms not Factories is reaching residents and visitors about the threats of CAFOs.

Because of Farms not Factories the spotlight and importance of protecting drinking water has been elevated.

"I was an ordinary person totally freaked out about what was going to happen to my community—it was very scary.

You got us on target and on message and showed us that we can handle this in a way that makes sense.

Freshwater future is like the ballast that helps right the ship."

Mary Dogherty  
*Farms Not Factories*



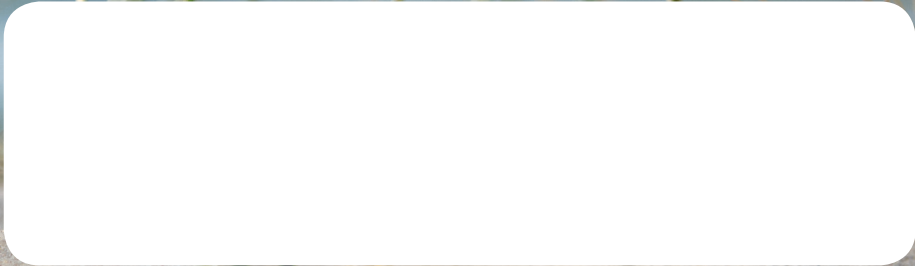
People of all ages are helping Farms not Factories celebrate the valuable resources clean water provides. Check out their uplifting video at [wordsforwater.com](http://wordsforwater.com).



P.O. Box 2479  
Petoskey, MI 49770

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PETOSKEY, MI  
PERMIT #15



## The Shallowest of All the Lakes

**Toxic algae blooms threaten Lake Erie drinking water—it will be a big job to fix, but recent progress can lead to success.**



**E**leven million people in Canada and the U.S. rely on Lake Erie as their primary source of drinking water. In 2014, 500,000 of them could not drink that water, or even bathe with it, all because of toxic algal blooms.

Many people don't realize how precarious the situation is when it comes to keeping this water safe to use. But when we have a drinking water crisis, it serves as a wakeup call, starting a flurry of activity.

With all of this sudden activity, there is a risk that the various players dive in without knowing what everyone else is doing. Freshwater Future plays a crucial role in coordinating among groups working in the region on this issue. We're making sure that we share information, avoid duplication, and leverage the advancements made in one community to secure similar wins in every community.

**Working together we are making progress. Here are some recent successes on reducing toxic algae:**

- In June, the Governors of Michigan and Ohio, along with the Premier of Ontario signed a document promising to reduce nutrient pollution—the main cause of Lake Erie's algae blooms—by 40% by 2025.
- Ontario recently adopted the Great Lakes Protection Act, which was supported by the conservation movement in the US and Canada. It could help reduce water pollution and improve opportunities for community engagement.

**Thanks to your donations, Freshwater Future will keep working on:**

- Ensuring governments develop effective and timely plans for addressing algal blooms, and that those plans are robust.
- Building momentum for action by working to educate and engage residents on the issue.
- Continue to find new partners to work with, such as farmers, charter boat captains, commercial fisherman, tourism associations, and more.

**Thank you for being a part of the movement.  
Together we have the power to save Lake Erie.**