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Community Watersheds Clean Water Coalition, Inc.



# The Not-So-Hidden Purpose of the 2014 New York State Energy Plan

This Energy Plan cleverly promotes the increased use of natural gas as the mainstay of New York State’s energy system. . “Electric and natural gas delivery infrastructure is the secure backbone of the energy system. Allowing consumers to easily connect to efficient, affordable, reliable, and increasingly clean energy sources.” (page 22, Volume I). Nowhere does the Plan define, in any precise terms, what is meant by “clean energy sources”. This vagueness allows the reader to assume that natural gas is a clean source, besides renewables such as solar, wind and hydropower.

A footnote on page 107 of Chapter 4, Volume II finally gives somewhat of a definition of “clean energy”. “In the context of this report, the clean energy economy is defined as ‘economic activity that produces goods or delivers services designed to increase energy efficiency or generate renewable energy’.”

Under Volume II – Sources, Impact of Wind Energy (page 58), the Plan includes the following: “The development of energy projects, particularly wind projects, can impact wildlife during both construction and



By Marian Rose, PhD,  
Director

operation of the facility. Environmental impacts from new wind energy development include habitat disturbance or destruction during construction of turbines and transmission lines; and potential mortality of birds and bats from collisions with the tower and turbine blades.” And on page 61: “The development of miles of access roads and utility ROWS at

a wind project can split valuable habitat that have a significant impact on the species dependent on that habitat.” And, again: “The permanent loss of agricultural land can result from construction of access roads, wind turbines, and other greenfields generation facilities.”

Ironically, these remarks on the destructive aspects of windpower follow a picture at the head of the chapter, that depicts an idyllic – looking clean farm with wind turbines in the background. Interestingly, there is no mention whatsoever, of the significantly larger destructiveness of shale gas extraction which underlies the production of the Marcellus natural gas that NYS is already importing from Pennsylvania.. We hope that the Plan’s endorsement of the use of shale gas is not a forewarning of its extraction in NYS.

Readers are invited to send comments, articles, feedback by email to [fumir@aol.com](mailto:fumir@aol.com) or by conventional mail to:

CWCWC, P O Box 484  
Bedford, NY 10506

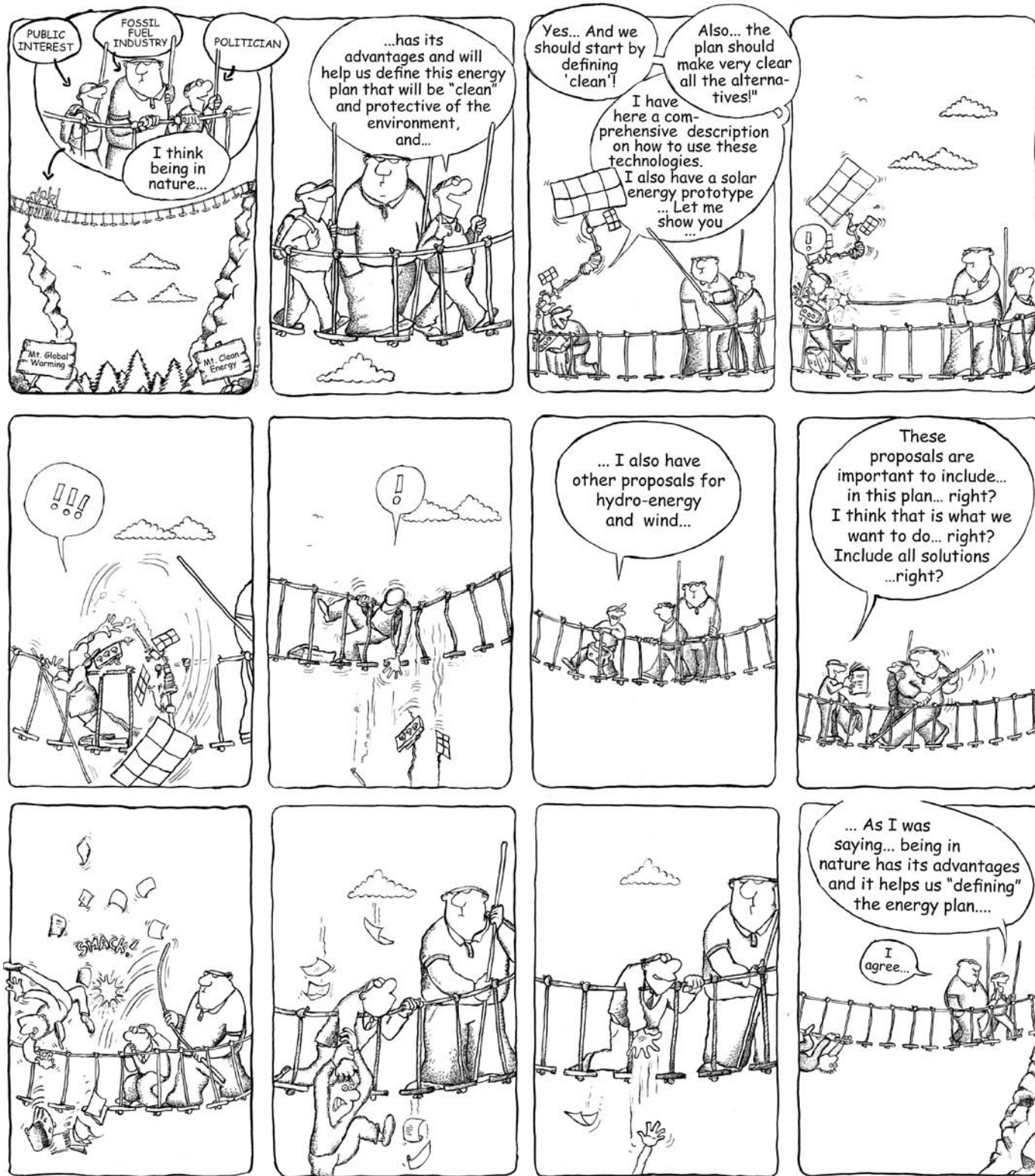
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Marcellus shale gas is interlaced with significantly large quantities of radon, the highest cause of lung cancer among non-smokers and the second highest among smokers.

## Common Decisionmaking Process?

by Dura



# 2014 CWCWC Annual Meeting



*CWCWC Annual Award recipient James Bacon, Esq. with his wife Elise and President Emeritus and founder Marian Rose*



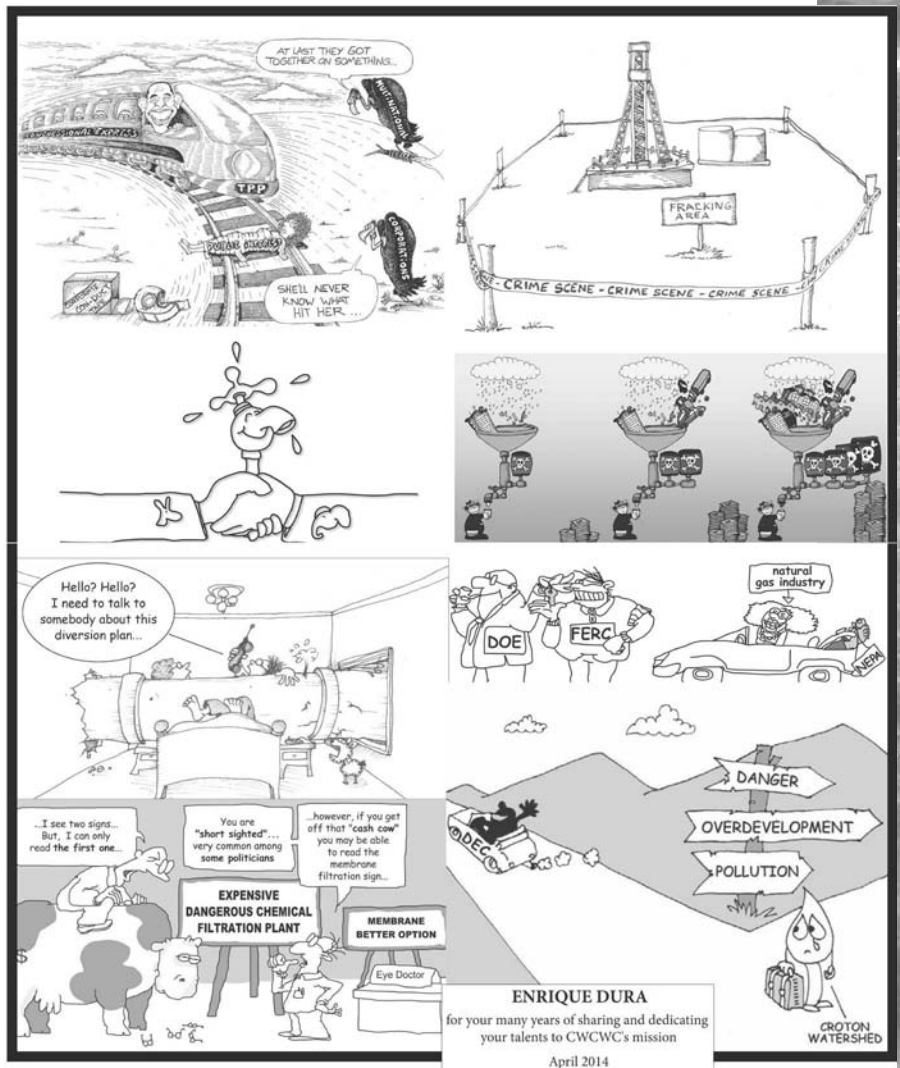
*Suzannah Glidden,  
Treasurer  
CWCWC*

Postponed for inclement weather since January, we received a perfect spring day on April 9 for our Annual Meeting at the Purchase Friends Meeting House. We were pleased to welcome Westchester County Legislators Peter Harkham, long a friend of CWCWC, and newly elected Catherine Parker who shared with us their political histories and present

committee involvements with Peter chairing Labor, Parks, Planning & Housing, and Catherine Environment and Energy.

Several member group representatives presented interesting talks about their current activities and special awards were given to long-standing associates. Honored were James Bacon, Esq., and Enrique Dura. It was a delight to finally give tribute to Jim Bacon who has been with us from the very beginning and has been our treasure both as our attorney and an exemplary human being. Enrique wows us with his amazing cartoons which he voluntarily places in our newsletters. These illustrations give meaning and depth to the stories which reach beyond words.

Display tables accommodated literature from different groups and a wonderful assortment of salads, main dishes and desserts were provided by local farmers which were relished by all and made the evening festive. Social networking of colleagues re-connecting with one another and brainstorming over dessert for possible solutions to local challenges deepened the bonds that unite us.



*An excellent illustrated history of our Coalition*

# Croton Water Filtration Plant Ten Years Later Filtration For The Croton – A Travesty And Boondoggle



by Fay Muir  
President  
CWCWC

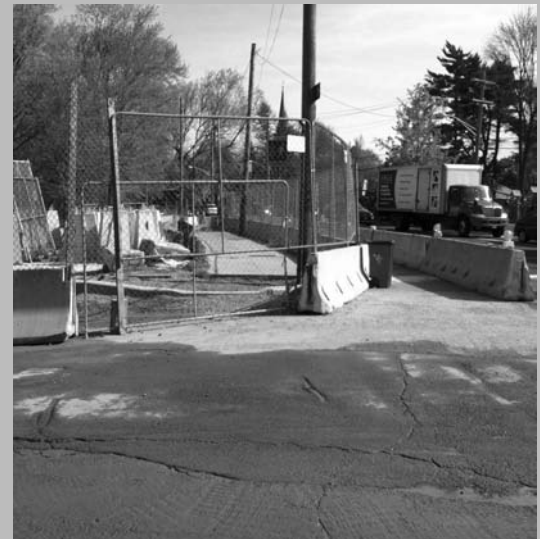
Mandated by the Department of Health under the direction of US Environmental Protection Agency, the NYC Department of Environmental Protection planned a water filtration plant for the Croton Watershed System.

Alienation of parkland in the Bronx for siting the facility began with a shotgun vote at 3:45 a.m. on the last day of the Assembly session of 2003. Promised to Bronx residents was almost \$200 millions in parks improvements. Ten years later, we find these were just promises delayed and broken.

Originally budgeted at \$770 millions, the actual cost of the filtration plant to water rate payers today stands at \$3.5 billion in 2013 and who knows what the final cost will be.

However, the terrifying cost remains to be seen, in the environmental degradation of our water of life. The immediate environmental cost was the alienation of 9 acres of public land in Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx in 1993 for ten years to be used for construction and staging. One million cubic yards of rock and soil were excavated with countless mature trees and wetland destroyed. The Croton Water Filtration Plant is one of the largest construction projects the city has ever attempted.

Our coalition formed to oppose this because we believe water treated with many chemicals is not 'filtration'. Sierra Club and local



*The runaway, unwise development in a watershed, especially in Putnam County will no doubt increase when the plant is operational. Compounded by threats of pipelines for 'fracked' gas along with compressor stations, LNG storage tanks, 'bomb' trains and barges carrying tar sands crude*



environmental groups joined us in fighting this filtration plant on the basis that it is not needed and that outdated methods of filtration were proposed. Cheaper, more effective membrane technology would reduce the size and cost by half or more. The asthma and other health problems of the Bronx were multiplied due to the heavy industrial traffic hauling chemicals and construction materials to the plant, as well as debris and dust from building it. We called it a boondoggle back then, and a travesty now. Does this surprise anyone!!!

Hazen and Sawyer designed and oversees construction to deliver timely sitework and meet all mandate-driven deadlines. The plant was slated to be on line in 2012 and nevertheless remains under construction as of now. Just the blasting and hauling for the hole in the ground (this was supposed to be an underground facility), continued for over 18 months for the main building. In addition, tunnels from the site to the aqueduct as well as tunnels to the distribution system were excavated and over 60 trees were destroyed to create a separate ramp from the Major Deegan Expressway to accommodate the industrial construction vehicles. Twenty-five additional projects were supplementary to support the massive facility. At the time of design it was to be the largest filtration plant ever built anywhere.

At the very bottom of the site is the 9-foot-diameter, 8,000-foot-long tunnel that will connect the plant with the aqueduct that delivers water from reservoirs more than 60 miles away. Bernard Daly, the site's executive construction manager, stood in the middle of the tunnel in 2012 and tried to explain the immensity of the project he oversees. Daly explained that the tunnel is about to be sealed off, the first of the final stages of construction that would end in another 24 months or so but, when only completed is 46 of 67 projects, agreed to be completed 3 1/2 years before, a problem remains.

Water bills for homeowners have since skyrocketed by more than 160% and promised Bronx park projects in compensation for the lost acreage in Van Cortlandt Park are way behind schedule. There are 8 parks projects



disputed by the community as eligible under this mandate. The photos show what the Mosholu entrance to Van Cortland Park looks like now instead of the bucolic beauty before construction began.

There is a link between the housing affordability crisis in the Bronx and rising operating costs – especially the cost of water and sewer rates and their impact. The cost of water has been a major factor in rising housing costs since all water costs must be absorbed by ratepayers, and is affecting property owners and renters alike. The croton filtration project reeks of corruption by our politicians and unions. There should be an independent study tracking local and widespread opposition, contractor fraud, and budget overruns. The EPA has fined the city \$5 million for delays on the project for the past several years. The NYC Department of Environmental Protection in conjunction with US Environmental Protection Agency is to determine a new completion date for the project, but would not confirm if a supplement to the court-issued consent decree is being negotiated. The current consent decree has a completion date of October 2011; alienation was approved for 10 years. Once the plant is on-line, there is the cost of maintenance – considering how the estimate of construction costs were out-of-line with reality, what can we expect to be the current maintenance cost and its effect?

*Originally budgeted at \$770 millions, the actual cost of the filtration plant to water rate payers today stand at \$3.5 billion*

The plant's been accused of safety hazards, the Manhattan District Attorney's office reached a \$10 million settlement with Siemens Electrical for violating city contracts that required the company to hire minority or women-owned construction firms. Siemens was also found guilty of submitting false documents that it employed a licensed master electrician at the site. After the DA's office announced the settlement, The Croton Filtration Monitoring Committee (CFMC), a community-based group that oversees the project, its chair Robert Fanuzzi, wrote to DEP Commissioner Carter Strickland seeking assurances that safety conditions at the plant had not been compromised by the defective



workmanship uncovered by DEP's on-site integrity monitor. Strickland wrote to the CFMC saying that "at no time was the health and safety of the workers or public at risk at the plant." Strickland noted that despite Siemens' false representation of a master electrician, the quality of the electrical work was not impacted. However, additional allegations of code violations have surfaced since Strickland's response including a letter drafted by Robert Solomon, a former Siemens construction manager alleging dangerous conditions at the plant. Members of CMFC were assured that the safety issues were remedied

Start-up and testing recently began in 2013 on one part of the Croton Water Filtration Plant, the rest of the plant's testing was slated for April 2014, but a solid operational date is nowhere in

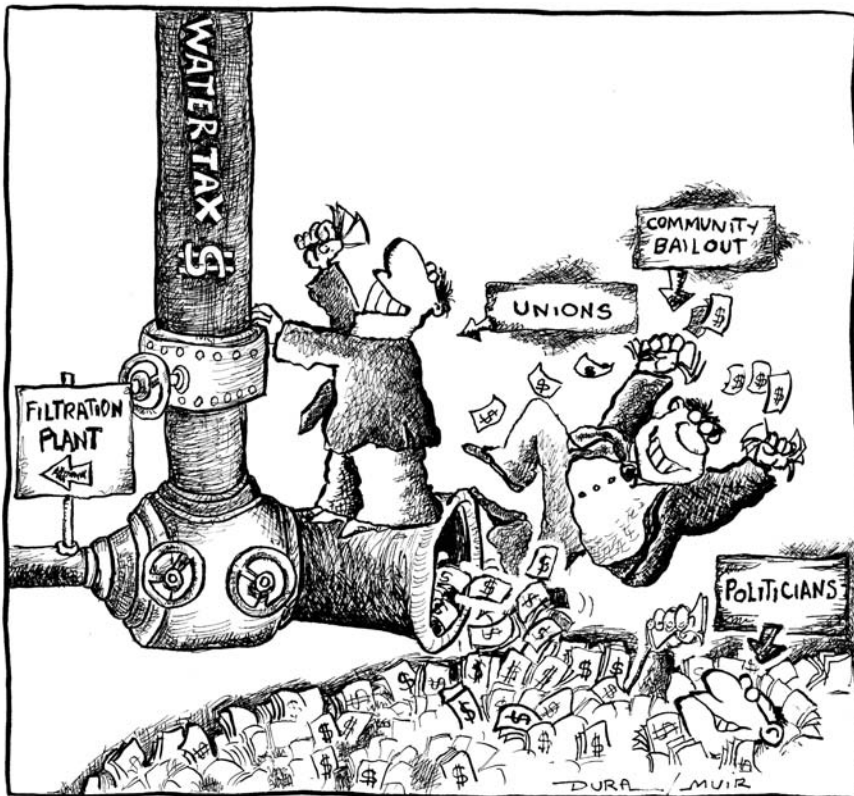
sight. Testing of water from the recently filled Jerome Park Reservoir's north basin began on Dec. 9, 2013. The reservoir had been empty since construction on the filtration plant began. The jogging path around the reservoir has been inaccessible to the public since construction began. Also construction and staging areas around the Bronx "education mile" which includes Bronx High School of Science, Walton High School, Lehman College and PS96 have been exceedingly disruptive to student access, street traffic and residents. Of special note is the St. Patrick Home for the Aged. The community is requesting that a pedestrian bridge over the Major Deegan Expressway be built because access from the VC Park's Mosholu gate is now exclusive to the filtration plant and a second entrance is proposed for the plant only. This pedestrian bridge will mainly benefit Woodlawn and Riverdale but Norwood, which suffers the most construction impacts, not so much.



*Mosholu entrance to Van Cortlandt Park where visitors are forever barred from entering due to construction of the filtration plant.*

It is unfortunate that the problems at the water supply source which was predicted because the

water will be 'filtered' are, in fact, being realized. The runaway, unwise development in a watershed, especially in Putnam County will



no doubt increase when the plant is operational. Compounded by threats of pipelines for 'fracked' gas along with compressor stations, LNG storage tanks, 'bomb' trains and barges carrying tar sands crude; NY's environmental future could be inexorably altered. Our coalition is hopeful that our latest lawsuit will be victorious and create a concise and positive sea change. We also hope there will be updates to modern technology for the future of the filtration plant.



**Our Water, Our Future**  
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**Community Watersheds Clean Water Coalition Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Group/Coalition Membership \$50/year | <input type="checkbox"/> Students/Seniors \$10/year      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership \$25/year          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$_____                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership \$20/year      | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Contribution \$_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal                              | <input type="checkbox"/> New Membership                  |

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Make checks payable to Community Watersheds Clean Water Coalition, Inc. or CWCWC, Inc. and mail along with your membership form to:

Treasurer, CWCWC, Inc., PO Box 484, Bedford NY 10506