



Clean Water Currents

Winter 2022 • Volume 50, No. 2

The Clean Water Action Newsletter

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!

The Celebration Continues!



This year, the Clean Water Act and Clean Water Action turned 50 — a milestone worth celebrating! As you may guess from our name, Clean Water Action (founded in 1972 shortly after the Clean Water Act was passed), was formed to protect our water and our health. Our founder, David Zwick, helped write the Clean Water Act, and, a few years later, the Safe Drinking Water Act. Both landmark laws safeguard our water to this day.

On October 19th, we held our National *Cheers to 50 Years* event to celebrate this incredible milestone. It was nothing short of amazing. Even though it was virtual again this year, the Remo Platform made guests feel as if they were in the room together. If you attended, you know that we had a powerhouse line-up of speakers including Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Senator Stephanie Chang, and Lt. Governor of MI Garlin Gilchrist who provided videos to share during the event! Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib joined us live with a riveting message. Attendees also heard from Winnie Zwick, the daughter of our late founder David Zwick. Positive reviews were shared by our guests and speakers. As we head into 2023, it is our desire to have an in-person celebration, with a hybrid option.

continued on page 2

Celebrating 50 Years *continued from page 1*

The birthday might be over, but the celebration continues. Another way we are celebrating is by lifting voices of former staff, current colleagues, allies, and elected officials in the Clean Water movement through #CleanWater50Stories. [Read and watch some of these incredible stories here.](#) Do you have a story you'd like to share? [Submit your story here.](#)

If you were not able to attend the event, be sure to check out our “First 50 Years” video that walks you through our history, vision, and mission. Visit the

[Clean Water Action YouTube](#) channel to view this video and others commemorating our important work.

Finally, thank you to our sponsors and the Enfield Wine Company for providing two selections from their vineyard in California to make our wine tasting a success.

Stay on this journey with us. We know that with your support, the next 50 years will be even better.

Bob Wendelgass Sends a Clear Message to SCOTUS: *Keep the Clean Water Act Intact!*

On October 4th, Clean Water Action President and CEO Robert (Bob) Wendelgass spoke at a rally in front of the Supreme Court about the importance of protecting all of our water. On the first day of the term, the Court heard oral arguments in [Sackett v. EPA](#), a case in which our water quality is at stake. Bob spoke about the importance of protecting all of our water, including small streams and wetlands. He noted that these water bodies are critical parts of our natural water infrastructure, which filter out pollutants before they reach our drinking water sources. Powerful special interests have been working for decades to make it easier to pollute and destroy our vital water resources and Clean Water Action will continue to make sure people's voices are heard in favor of a strong Clean Water Act. Read or watch Bob's speech [here](#).



October 4, 2022 — Clean Water Action President and CEO Bob Wendelgass speaks at rally in front of the Supreme Court.

Source Water Collaborative Launches Clean Water Act Interactive Infographic

Clean Water is a proud member of the Source Water Collaborative. [Check out the updated interactive infographic](#) on how to engage in Clean Water Act programs to protect your drinking water source!



REI — Remove PFAS from Your Products!

Clean Water Action is pushing major outdoor retailer, REI, to remove PFAS from their products. We need to get these chemicals out of our products to keep them out of our water. PFAS, often referred to as “forever chemicals”, are a class of human-made chemicals that are persistent in the environment and also highly toxic. Thousands of the chemicals are used in a wide range of products and industrial activities, and are linked to cancers, reproductive problems, weakened immune systems, and other health effects.

We are working to convince REI that PFAS are not just bad for human health and the environment, but also bad for business. ► [Add Your Voice - Act Now!](#)



The Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (BIL) — One Year Later

In his March State of the Union address, President Biden said “We are going to have an infrastructure decade.” This prediction has begun to come to fruition for America’s water systems. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (BIL) was signed into law on November 15th of 2021, and promises to dramatically improve drinking water, stormwater, and wastewater systems. This unprecedented investment in water infrastructure baked into the act has the potential to transform communities that have long been overlooked. It can also support innovation in preventing water pollution, improving climate resiliency, and more.

Through the act, \$50 billion will be allocated across 5 years to improve water quality. Much (\$23.4 billion) of this new funding will be administered through the state revolving fund (SRF) programs. The SRFs are partnership loan programs between the federal government and the states, tribes and territories (states). The purpose of the SRFs is to provide water quality projects with low-interest loans. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides the funds (through capitalization grants) and eligibility guidance. States administer the programs and provide the loans to projects. The low-interest loans provided through the SRF programs have

long been the sole source of funding that many communities have access to so that improvements can be paid for.

[Clean Water Action has been working](#) at the state and federal level to ensure that the new funding is implemented equitably and with appropriate levels of technical assistance for potential borrowers. These are areas the SRF programs have struggled with in the past. Clean Water Action has been providing technical comments to investment authority administrators at the state level, ensuring that the funding is reaching communities with the greatest need first. We are also working with EPA officials to provide guidance to the states on how best to implement the new funding.

As we’ve seen through the recent water crisis in Jackson, Mississippi, increased funding is not the only answer to more equitable water systems. It is important that infrastructure improvements occur in communities that traditionally have been underinvested or ignored. Historically disadvantaged communities, especially those in Black, Latino and Indigenous communities must not be left behind with this new opportunity. Clean Water Action is putting in efforts to ensure that doesn’t happen.

Continue to Stand With Us to Demand Environmental Justice for All

Addressing the legacy of environmental injustice is a top priority of the Biden administration. Clean Water Action is monitoring Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and White House activities and will continue to support important innovations like [Justice40](#), a government initiative to ensure that at least 40% of program benefits go to disadvantaged communities. We will be providing input to the Administration, particularly around water pollution and drinking water programs.

[The Environmental Justice for All Act](#) (H.R. 2021), introduced by Representatives Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) and Donald McEachin (D-VA), aims to address decades of environmental injustice and cumulative impacts of pollution. H.R. 2021 would amend the

[Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) to strengthen people's ability to sue for intentional discrimination, particularly on the basis of environmental concerns. This would allow uniquely susceptible groups to have increased protections against unlawful environmental, or other, discrimination. The bill would also amend the Clean Water Act to better protect communities from water pollution by requiring consideration of both existing water quality and of the "potential cumulative impacts" of pollution before a permit could be issued or renewed. [Clean Water Action has supported the Act since February](#); in July the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee passed the bill for further consideration to the full House. We will continue to urge Representatives to support this bill. [▶ Add your voice - click here to send your own message now!](#)

Exciting Election News

Based on outcomes of the November elections, we are optimistic that Clean Water Action's work this election season will open the door for more water victories in the coming year.

On the federal level, it's clear that control will be divided, with the US Senate controlled by Democrats and the House of Representatives by Republicans. The bad news is that means that very few bills will get passed for the next two years. The good news is that the Biden Administration should still be able to advance new protections for our water and more action on climate change.

At the state level, the progress was even more exciting. We won new pro-environment majorities in the Michigan state House and Senate, the Minnesota state Senate, and the Pennsylvania state House — in Michigan for the first time since 1982. We helped elect (or re-elect) pro-environment Governors in each of those states, along with new environmentally-friendly

Governors in Massachusetts and Maryland. The result will be exciting opportunities for new progress in those states — and many others too!

Clean Water Action staff and volunteers, and the Clean Water Voters we were able to reach were all part of the winning team in each of those states. We knocked on doors — 250,000 in Michigan alone — called and texted voters, sent thousands of emails and postcards, and promoted our endorsed candidates in newspapers, over the airwaves, and on social media.

Our efforts once again confirmed that **PEOPLE POWER WORKS!** Mobilizing people to support pro-environment candidates works. And educating voters about candidates' records works too.

Thanks to everyone who voted and to everyone who volunteered to make calls, deliver flyers, or talk to

your neighbors. Your activism powered our wins. Now, our focus shifts to next year, looking to new avenues for federal, state and local action to protect our water, our health and our environment! Stay tuned for more details.



THE ELECTION IS BEHIND US BUT...
[Did your elected officials vote with you? Check out our Scorecard!](#)

We're Making Year-End Giving Easy.



Here are a few ways you can give this holiday season:

- **Tax-Deductible Giving.** If you've already supported Clean Water Action in 2022, consider making a gift to [Clean Water Fund](#) before year-end. **Gifts to Clean Water Fund are tax-deductible***, and many of our supporters feel able to give more generously when they donate to Clean Water Fund.
- **Multiply Your Impact.** Many businesses will match gifts made by their employees. But the donation has to be made payable to [Clean Water Fund](#) to qualify for the match. Matching gifts are a great way to double or triple the impact of your giving this December.
- **Make an Impactful Gift.** Tap into the power of your [IRA \(Individual Retirement Account\)](#). Your financial advisor can help you arrange a Qualified Charitable Distribution to Clean Water Fund, which can allow you to be much more generous and provide significant tax benefits to you.
- **Clean Water Stock Gifts Rock!** Despite 2022 market declines, many people with longer-term investments own equities (stock or mutual fund shares) that are worth far more today than they were even a few years ago. Selling those holdings to make a cash donation could result in capital gains taxes. But by making a stock gift instead, those capital gain taxes are avoided. Both Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund can receive [gifts of stock](#), and stock gifts to either can yield significant capital gains tax savings. Gifts of stock to Clean Water Fund have the added advantage of being tax-deductible, above and beyond any capital gains savings. Be sure to allow time to allow your stock gift to happen before December 31, so the benefits can count for the current tax year. Contact us for help arranging your gift, development@cleanwater.org
- **Cryptocurrency:** Clean Water Fund can also receive cryptocurrency gifts, and such gifts can also offer significant tax benefits to the donor. Learn more or donate at cleanwater.org/crypto
- **Donor-Advised Fund (DAF) and Foundation Grants.** If you have a DAF or family foundation, now is the perfect time to support Clean Water Fund with a grant. Most foundations and DAFs require that your gift or grant be made payable to Clean Water Fund (501-c-3) (tax ID 52-1043444). [Learn more here!](#)

► [Check out our complete Top 10 Ways to Support list here!](#)

*Gifts to Clean Water Fund, a 501-c-3 nonprofit (tax ID 52-1043444) are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Gifts to Clean Water Action (a 501-c-4 nonprofit) support our grassroots campaigns to strengthen and defend clean water protections and are not tax-deductible.

MAKE A SPECIAL GIFT TODAY: CleanWater.org/YearEnd

Clean Water Currents

Winter 2022 • Vol. 50, No. 2

1444 Eye Street NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005
Phone 202.895.0420 | Fax 202.895.0438 | cwa@cleanwater.org
[@cleanH2Oaction](https://twitter.com/cleanH2Oaction) | Facebook.com/CleanWaterAction

CURRENTS is published by Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund.
Reproduction in whole or part is permitted with proper credit. © 2022 All rights reserved.