



# EARTHWORKS

## Earth Notes

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### EARTHWORKS 2.0

If you're interested in the latest, the greatest, the saddest, the baddest, the best and the worst of how mining, digging and drilling impacts communities and the environment, you now have three new choices.

**EARTHblog.** EARTHWORKers are now bloggers. On EARTHblog you'll find in-depth analysis of recent events. You'll find interesting extraction-related news of the day. And you'll find links to the efforts and campaigns of EARTHWORKS and our allies. EARTHblog is the place to get the full scoop on what's going on at EARTHWORKS.

**Twitter.** If you prefer your news in 140 characters or less, join us on Twitter.

**Facebook.** If you're on Facebook, become a fan of EARTHWORKS. Become a fan! Add us to your home page -- help spread the word among your friends.



### Take Action!

*Put the "Clean" back in the Clean Water Act.*



Salmon.  
Now threatened by the 'Clean' Water Act

A recent Supreme Court Ruling poses a severe threat to our nation's lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands, and reverses over three decades of responsible mining policy.

**Please send a quick message to protect our clean water from toxic mine waste.**

### Support EARTHWORKS



[bbb.org/charity](http://bbb.org/charity)

## EARTHWORKS working to keep Chuitna coal in the ground

[Coal mine developers](#) are working through the federal and state permitting process to build what would be Alaska's largest coal mine near the Chuit River on the Upper Cook Inlet. PacRim Coal, a Delaware registered company, hopes to extract 300 million tons of coal from the mine over 25 years from over 30 square miles of intact fish and wildlife habitat that support thriving populations of wolves, salmon, bear, and other wildlife.

[Richard Bass, owner of Snowbird Ski Resort](#), and William H. Hunt, of Texas oil and silver market fame, are the two investors in PacRim Coal.

The proposed mine would directly impact both the local environment and economy. Coal would be mined through 11 miles of salmon spawning and rearing habitat with no assurance of restoration, while an average of 7 million gallons of waste per day will be dumped into the Chuit watershed and Cook Inlet. Salmon are an important piece of the local economy, and many commercial fishermen in the area would be displaced by the development.

The negative impacts of [mining Chuitna coal](#) are not just local. Given the nature of the coal in the deposit, it would likely be burned to produce electricity, with most of it being shipped into Asian power plant markets. PacRim estimates that 12 million tons of coal will be mined annually at Chuitna, which would result in 54 billion pounds of greenhouse gas being emitted each year as the coal is burned.

EARTHWORKS is working with residents who would be impacted by the mine, Alaska groups, and national groups to ensure that this coal stays in the ground. [\[Learn More\]](#)

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## Legislation introduced to regulate hydraulic fracturing

[The U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives introduced legislation this summer to close the "Halliburton Loophole" in the Safe Drinking Water Act.](#) This is a momentous step forward for citizens and communities living with the impacts of oil and gas development. Representatives Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) spearheaded the effort in the House, and Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) was the Senate sponsor. The bill (H.R. 2766 and S. 1215) is called the ["FRAC" Act - the Fracking Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals Act of 2009.](#)

Despite the widespread use of [hydraulic fracturing](#) (known as "fracking"), and the risks to drinking water supplies, the EPA does not regulate the injection of fracturing fluids under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The oil and gas industry is the only industry in America that is allowed by EPA to inject known hazardous materials -- unchecked -- directly into or adjacent to underground drinking water supplies.

The passing of the FRAC Act will ensure that hydraulic fracturing is subject to the Safe Drinking Water Act and that the chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing are disclosed to the public. With its passage, the EPA and our state oil and gas agencies can finally take up the work of disclosing, monitoring and phasing out those hydraulic fracturing products and chemicals that are most dangerous to our water resources. [\[Learn More\]](#)

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### [Donate with confidence!](#)

The Better Business Bureau and Charity Navigator have given their *highest ratings* to EARTHWORKS

### [Recycle your cell phone from home!](#)



Cell phones contain toxic metals that can pollute the environment and threaten human health.

When recycled responsibly, these metals can be put back into circulation, decreasing the need for new metal mining.

## Well frack! EPA investigation strikes nerve with oil & gas industry

[Some Pavillion, Wyoming landowners have water that smells and tastes like gasoline.](#) It's cloudy, and particles float in it. It didn't used to be this way.

Traditionally an agricultural community, the people of Pavillion now live with and amongst exactly one new industrial activity - EnCana's gas development in the Pavillion/Muddy Ridge field. A few years back, [EnCana](#) bought out earlier drillers and ramped up production.

Today, Pavillion residents wonder if EnCana, or buried waste from earlier operators, is causing contamination to their drinking water wells.



In March -- after years of pleading for assistance from every possible State agency, public official and public interest group -- the EPA took samples of Pavillion's municipal and private water wells. The range and level of potential contamination meant the area qualified for Superfund monies.

[August 11th, EPA released their finding at a public meeting.](#) EPA's verbal and written reports stated clearly that eleven domestic water wells are contaminated. The contaminants include methane, hydrocarbons, and a variety of toxic chemicals.

Public response to EPA's initial findings of this contamination is striking a nerve with the oil and gas industry - and how...

[\[Read the full story on EARTHblog.org\]](#)

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## EARTHWORKS testifies before Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Last month, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on S. 796, the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act. The bill, introduced by Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) would finally reform the outdated 1872 Mining Law. Cathy Carlson, Policy Advisor for EARTHWORKS, [testified](#) at the hearing on the need to protect clean water and communities from the destructive impacts of mining. In addition to EARTHWORKS' testimony, Secretary Ken Salazar also testified at the hearing. He laid out the Obama administration's commitment to reforming the 1872 Mining Law, as well as their support for S. 796. [\[Learn More\]](#)

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## My mother told me there'd be days like these: State Department permits dirty oil sands pipeline

Despite thousands of your letters, tens of thousands more from others in the U.S. and Canada, and [flying in the face of a growing host of military experts](#)

[and research showing the contrary](#), Secretary Clinton decided that Enbridge's Alberta Clipper dirty oil sands pipeline is in the U.S. national interest. [Presidential Executive Order 11423](#) allows the Secretary to permit the pipeline ONLY if she judges it's in the national interest.

The Alberta tar sands is the world's largest energy project, ultimately covering an area the size of Florida. And it produces [the world's dirtiest, most expensive, and arguably most dangerous oil](#). And if the [Alberta Clipper pipeline](#) is actually built, 450,000 more barrels of it, per day, will be burned in the U.S. - releasing five times as much greenhouse gas as conventional oil.

#### **THE FIGHT IS NOT OVER**

Although this permit is definitely a setback - both in the fight against dirty oil and for the clean energy economy, the fight is by no means over for the Alberta Clipper or against dirty oil sands.

As Sarah Burt of Earthjustice said, speaking as part of the [dirtyoilsands.org](#) international network fighting the expansion of the oil sands,

*"The State Department has rubber-stamped a project that will mean more air, water and global warming pollution, particularly in the communities near refineries that will process this dirty oil. The project's environmental review fails to show how construction of the Alberta Clipper is in the national interest. We will go to court to make sure that all the impacts of this pipeline are considered."*

[\[Read the full story at EARTHblog.org\]](#)

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