



OTZINACHSON

Hurricane Katrina Leaves Toxic Soup in its Wake

***Statement of Darryl Malek-Wiley,
Sierra Club Louisiana Grassroots Environmental Justice Organizer***

"In addition to being a human and economic tragedy, Hurricane Katrina is an environmental disaster of unprecedented proportions. Although the extent of the environmental devastation remains unknown, it is clear that the flooding has brought a toxic soup to

New Orleans: At least two hazardous waste sites are underwater, at least two oil refinery sites in Chalmette are shut down and possibly flooded, and throughout the city gas stations and natural gas pipelines are flooded and leaking into water-soaked neighborhoods. In addition, bacteria and fecal matter contaminate the flood waters

(Continued on page 4)

The Boondoggle that is Eminent Domain

By David Hafer

The recent Supreme Court decision on eminent domain deserves a storm of protest. Unfortunately, the focus of criticism has been on political labels rather than on the historic and environmental ramifications of the issue.

In reality, the recent decisions on eminent domain has not created anything really new. The decision rendered in *Kelo v. New London* will simply accelerate a process that has been going on for over a century. The decision also strips a way a façade that eminent domain exists for the public good, opening the process to new levels of political corruption.

The U.S. Constitution grants government powers of eminent domain but this authority was rarely exercised until the 20th century. In theory, eminent do-

main, is supposed to give government the right to take private property for the purpose of creating something in the best interest of the general public.

However, eminent domain enabled federal and state government to seize millions of acres of private land for the sake of building dams, nuclear power plants, military installations and the interstate highway system.

Ostensibly, this is all done for the public good, but the basic reality of eminent domain authority is that it enables government to seize private property, turning it into boondoggle projects benefiting special interests that can exert considerable influence over the political process. In other words, the little guy gives up his home and land so that big money interests with politicians in

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QUOTE

*Because we
don't think about
future generations,
they will
never forget us.*

—Henrik Tikkanen

Message from the Chair: Work and Celebrate

Enthuse thyself! From its beginning, the Sierra Club has been an upfront advocate of encouraging people to develop and deepen a conservation ethos by getting them into an outdoor experience. Believing that where the feet go / the heart follows, the Club bodies forth this philosophy by sponsoring a wide variety of exceptional local, national and international volunteer led outing opportunities. These trips are a wonderful way to invigorate and reinvigorate the spirit, and to do it in the company of other good folks who care about the earth and the issues.

Ed Lawrence, Chair

OTZINACHSON

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 portant to preserving the
 integrity of our
 environment and keeping
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 and healthy.*

*Without you, we can not
 fight for what is right!*

Otzinachson Group Sponsors WVIA Documentary on Susquehanna River

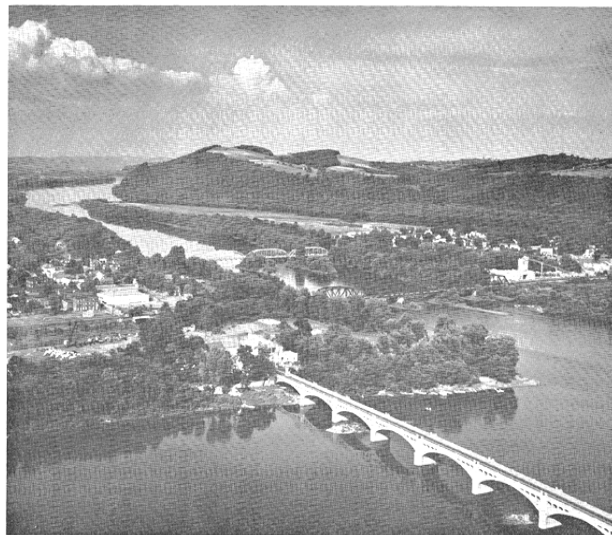
The Otzinachson Group is proud to be a sponsor of the soon to be released WVIA documentary entitled *Undreamed Shores: a filmic journey on the Susquehanna River*.

The following is an excerpt from a WVIA article written by Greg Matkoskey. Learn more about this documentary at www.wvia.org.

For generations the Susquehanna River has flowed through the daily lives of the Valley's residents, providing water to drink, mobility, as well as a place to deposit pollution. Indian tribes reluctantly yielded the river to settlers nearly 300 years ago, when the Susquehanna defined the American frontier. As the Susquehanna River Valley moves into the new millennium, the time has come for a bold new look at a dynamic old river. Using today's technology, it becomes possible to take a powerful journey back to Susquehanna's geologic origins, and revisit the important historical events involving colorful personalities who were drawn by the river to make its valley their home.

Undreamed Shores: a filmic journey on the Susquehanna River is a one-hour television presentation produced by United Studios of America (USA) that promotes the heritage and history of the Susquehanna River Valley from Lock Haven on the West Fork, Wilkes-Barre on the North Fork, and Selinsgrove on the river's Main Stem. The production combines narration by an on-camera "storyteller" with documentary content, drama re-enactments, digital animation and satellite imagery to "experientially" define how the river and the people who settled in the Valley affected each other. The production also employs regional folk music and a cinematic orchestral underscore to enhance the range of seasonal footage, including spacious bird's-eye aerial vistas and intimate boat's-eye waterline perspectives of life and lore along the Susquehanna's shores.

Through a unique cinematic visualization of the under-appreciated relationship between the Susque-



THE SUSQUEHANNA

Photo and article content courtesy of WVIA

hanna River and its Valley's history and heritage, *Undreamed Shores* focuses on how the people of this region created and sustained distinctive cultures over diverse landscapes, and how their traditions and values were powerfully shaped by the river. The film moves as a journey with a storyteller down the river over the four seasons, with numerous stops along the way to hear stories about people and events that reflect major themes of the river's heritage—human enterprise that brought both triumph and tragedy, and forms the foundation for the region's future.

By disseminating the rich historical significance of their unique folkways, communities throughout the Susquehanna River Valley can be stimulated with awareness, understanding and a new appreciation of a shared heritage. Distribution of this story through broadcast television, courseware and book publication also provides a clearinghouse of information that invigorates the education and knowledge resources that are crucial to the growth of the people who live in these communities. *Undreamed Shores* can serve as a catalyst for change that helps the Susquehanna River Valley position itself for a key role in the state's future. It renders the region's past with an eye to its future so it can direct its own common destiny.

**Help Otzinachson support this brilliant documentary.
Send donations c/o Otzinachson, P.O. Box 65, Lewis-
burg, PA 17837.**

**Visit Our the Otzinachson website to stay informed of
important environmental issues impacting your community!
<http://pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/Otzinachson/>**



Hurricane Katrina Leaves Toxic Soup in its Wake (cont'd)

and mosquito-borne and other disease threatens.

"Once again, as in many environmental disasters, the most vulnerable population is bearing the largest burden - the poor and children who lacked the resources and capacity to leave New Orleans before the storm.

"Since the 1950's, Louisiana's coastal wetlands have been a sacrifice zone for oil and gas exploration and production to supply America's energy needs. Instead of providing a healthy buffer for storm surge, our coastal wetlands and Gulf beaches have been decimated again and the extent of damage is currently unknown.

"Most climate scientists are now saying with certainty that global warming is occurring, and that humans are playing a major role by releasing pollution that creates a heat trapping blanket around the globe. As the planet warms, the World Metrological Organization says we can expect more violent and extreme weather, like hurricanes.

"Hurricane Katrina spotlights the danger of our dependence on oil, and how fragile our reliance on it is. This one event has seriously affected the production, refinery capacity, and price of oil in the United States. We can decrease the effect of future disruptions by reducing our dependence on oil, not putting up more rigs and

The Boondoggle (cont'd)

their pockets, reap the benefits.

The legacy of eminent domain authority manifests itself in a century of ruinous boondoggles ranging from an energy guzzling interstate highway system that addicts us to imported oil to urban "renewal" projects that destroy historic ethnic neighborhoods. Without eminent domain authority, the freeway system would probably not exist. We would still travel by train. The air would be much cleaner and our cities more livable.

Thanks to eminent domain authority, countless acres of farmland are paved, forests leveled, streams polluted and sacred native American sites violated and turned into a sprawling wasteland of dead concrete and asphalt.

If we are to protect our homes and save what is left of our unspoiled land, we must persuade Congress to impose stringent curbs on the ability of government to trash communities for the benefit of greedy developers.

How You Can Help!

Hurricane Katrina has left hundreds of thousands of people homeless. But thousands of people throughout the region are stepping up to offer free shelter to those in need. (www.hurricanehousing.org)

Donate to the American Red Cross (www.redcross.org)

Visit www.networkforgood.org to learn about the various charities that are working to deliver help to the region.

Volunteer! visit the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network to find opportunities to engage in ongoing relief efforts and prepare for future disasters.

Help feed the victims in Louisiana and Mississippi by donating to www.secondharvest.org.

drilling our special places. The fact is, we cannot drill our way to oil independence - the United States is responsible for 25 percent of the world's oil consumption, and yet we have less than 3 percent of the world's oil supplies. Additionally, the current lack of refinery capacity is the result of a conscious decision by the oil industry in the 1990s to limit supply to increase profitability - and they have succeeded. Exxon is the most profitable company in the world, and just last quarter posted profits of \$7.84 billion.

"Still, America, Louisiana, and the Gulf Coast have an opportunity to be visionary and think well into the future in our recovery efforts. In rebuilding New Orleans and the Mississippi and Alabama Gulf Coast, we can help make America more energy independent by using green building practices that emphasize energy conservation and use renewable sources of energy. We can ensure that the neighborhoods that we rebuild are transit-oriented and people-friendly. And, we can rethink how toxic chemicals are stored and shipped through our communities.

"This is also an opportunity to take people who have no hope and give them jobs to rebuild their future while they rebuild their communities. "



Save Our Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act is our nation's most important safety net for wildlife, plants, and fish that are on the brink of extinction. Yet, by October 2015, the Endangered Species Act as we know it could cease to exist -- that is, if House Resources Committee Chairman Richard Pombo (R-CA) has his way. A leaked copy of legislation he helped to draft specifies that the act would "cease to have any force and effect," and all "permits, licenses, and other authorizations" created under the act would "terminate and not be enforceable."

For more than 30 years, the Endangered Species Act has worked to save the rarest members of America's wildlife heritage, including helping to rescue the bald eagle from extinction. Yet in spite of polls that show that nearly 90 percent of Americans support the act, re-writing the Endangered Species Act is a "top priority" for the Resources Committee, according to Chairman Pombo.

A new study by conservation biologists, reported in the June issue of the scientific journal *Natural History*, indicates that the longer a jeopardized species has been protected under the Endangered Species Act, the more likely it is to have increased its numbers. In addition, addition, species with protected critical habitat are more likely to be showing improvements than those without designated critical habitat.

The success of the Endangered Species Act is undeniable. Of the more than 1,800 plants and animals listed since 1964, only nine species have gone extinct. That's a 99% success rate! Without the Endangered Species Act, 227 species would likely have been lost forever, according to the *Natural History* report.

Source: www.earthjustice.org

Contact Senators Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum and demand they vote to preserve the Endangered Species Act.

Senator Rick Santorum
Class I 511 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON DC 20510
(202) 224-6324

Senator Arlen Specter
Class III 711 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING WASHINGTON DC 20510
(202) 224-4254

Biotech Crops use MORE not less Pesticide

*The Union of Concerned
Scientists Reports*

By Ed Lawrence

For years, the biotechnology industry has claimed reduced pesticide use as a major benefit of genetically engineered (GE) crops, which comprise more than half the corn, soybeans, and cotton grown in the United States. However, a recent study found that the most widely planted GE crops use more pesticide than conventional crops.

The study, commissioned by UCS and conducted by agricultural economist Dr. Charles Benbrook, found that herbicide-tolerant crops (the predominant GE crop) require significantly more pesticide than conventional varieties. Since 1996, when GE crops were first introduced, herbicide-tolerant crops have required 122 million pounds more pesticide than what would have been used if conventional varieties had been grown instead. This amount was only slightly offset by lower pesticide use on crops engineered to produce their own insecticide.

Learn more at www.ucsusa.org

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They will be available at the John East-
lake talk and slide show on February
22nd and by mail from Roy Fontaine, 3
Kirkland Estate, Watsontown,
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The Inspiration ~ Ava Rippon

Her hair is the color and texture of corn silk

Her gentle inquisitive eyes are the color of the clear blue sky

She stands enthralled and visibly impressed by the towering corn stalks...reaching for the sky

She should be awestruck...she should be amazed...she should be safe here in the Sheltering arms of Mother Earth....and for this brief snap shot in time...

She appears to be....
But no.

As much as I wish that her innocent and growing body was being nourished by the sunlight, clean air pure restorative water and organic nutrients , natural vitamins and minerals...all the life sustaining gifts that the Earth has always given to all the inhabitants of the Earth... free...

As our birthright.

I see my grand daughter here today and I am transported back to my own childhood.

With my own grandfather in another corn field...miles and years away...

Now I am the grand parent and like my beloved grandpa , I am a lover of all things natural...animals rocks, rivers, streams, plants and children.

I am pleased to know that I can now share these loves and lesson of nature

that my grandpa gave to me... but I am heavy at heart

I know, as she will someday learn, that these cornfields are very different from the ones in my memories.

They are poisoned, genetically modified, infused with insecticide and awash with herbicides. These old farm lanes and paths are polluted the streams are biologically altered...forever

OUR BODIES AND ARE SOULS MUST HAVE THE SUSTENANCE THAT ONLY THE EARTH CAN GIVE

This is why we must reclaim our Earth as our inheritance and as our responsibility

We the people must become the Stewarts and protectors of our only home...and the only hope for our children and all living things,

A poem by Dodie Rippon-Lovett for Ava

Editor's Bookmark Picks:

Center for American Progress
www.americanprogress.org

Air America Radio
www.airamericaradio.org

What Would Jesus Drive?
www.whatwouldjesusdrive.org

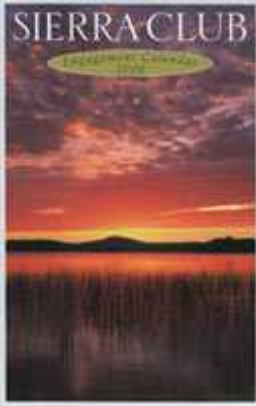
Drive Green! Canada's Environmental Guide to Driving
www.atl.ec.gc.ca/epb/factsheets/drive.html

Fact Check
www.factcheck.org

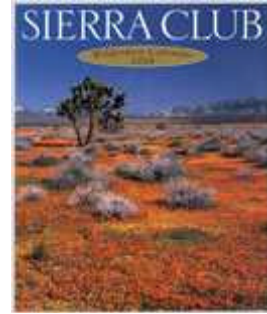
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*See Inside Back Cover
For details & order form.*