CLEAN WATER.

ACT NOW.
Meet Our Team

Waterkeeper Alliance connects and supports local Waterkeeper organizations to provide a voice for waterways and their communities worldwide.

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WELCOME TO WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE’S ANNUAL REPORT for fiscal year 2012. I’m looking out at the Hudson River from our offices in Lower Manhattan, and thinking about the history of the Waterkeeper movement. We trace our roots back more than 40 years to a group of blue-collar fisherman on the Hudson River who decided to use the law to stop polluters from destroying their river and their right to clean water. Those ordinary citizens did an extraordinary thing – they restored the Hudson River to its former grandeur and made it an icon for ecosystem revitalization. The great work of those fishermen and the organization they created, Hudson Riverkeeper, were crucial to the establishment of the Clean Water Act, and also spawned 200 other Waterkeeper organizations across the globe. We carry forward their vision for swimmable, drinkable, fishable waterways worldwide.

Unfortunately we are facing fierce and furious threats to this vision. The Clean Water Act turned 40 in October 2012. This historic legislation is responsible for protecting and restoring waterways across the United States and is a template for water-protection laws around the world. Today, however, it is under intense attack by industrial polluters and their cronies in Congress.

Waterkeeper Alliance, Waterkeeper organizations, and our partners have mobilized to fight off these attacks and to advance our mission that protects everyone’s right to clean water. In just the last year:

• We secured a new rule that will reduce mercury emissions from the oldest and dirtiest U.S. power plants by 91 percent, and we continue to stave off attempts to derail the rule.
• We are holding the coal industry accountable, enforcing the law against coal mining operations with more than 50,000 violations of the Clean Water Act. And, as the Waterkeeper movement grows rapidly around the world, we are ramping up our ability to oppose the U.S. coal industry’s plans to expand abroad. While we have been successful at dramatically reducing demand for coal in the United States, the industry now looks to sell coal in the developing world, where regulations are lax and demand is booming. Like the tobacco corporations, coal companies view the developing world as their final market frontier. The fight is moving from U.S. soil to other nations and Waterkeeper Alliance will be there.
• We continued to defend the Gulf of Mexico against the oil industry, and have initiated enforcement against an oil company that has been discharging oil into the Gulf since 2004.
• We are forcing industrial factory farms to comply with clean water laws and internalize the costs they impose on the public, and we are advocating for government agencies to implement a stronger regulatory system for these polluters.
• Through a tremendous expansion of social-media outreach and through water-based recreational activities like our national Splash events, we are building an army of active and informed citizens who support everyone’s right to clean water.
• We are enhancing your recreational experiences with the Waterkeeper Swim Guide – a smartphone app and website that informs users where the closest beaches are, which ones are safe for swimming, and which have unreliable monitoring data.

Our organization and its reach have grown significantly over the past year, and thanks to your help, we exceeded our budget goals. We can’t do all of this work and more without your wonderful support and we count on your continuing help throughout the coming year, as attacks on clean water are renewed in the United States and abroad.

To clean water,

Executive Director
Who We Are

Waterkeeper Alliance unites more than 200 Waterkeepers who are on the frontlines of the global water crisis patrolling and protecting more than 1.5 million square miles of rivers, streams and coastlines on six continents. Waterkeepers use grassroots advocacy to defend the fundamental human right to swimmable, drinkable, and fishable waters.

Part scientist, teacher, and legal advocate, Waterkeepers combine firsthand knowledge of their waterways with an unwavering commitment to the rights of their communities and to the rule of law. Whether on the water, in a classroom, or in a courtroom, Waterkeepers speak for the waters they defend – with the backing of their local communities and the collective strength of Waterkeeper Alliance. Waterkeeper Alliance ensures that the world’s Waterkeepers are as connected to each other as they are to their local waters, organizing the fight for clean water into a coordinated global movement.

Our vision is for swimmable, drinkable, fishable waters worldwide
Celebrating 40 years of Clean Water

To commemorate the Clean Water Act’s 40th anniversary, Waterkeeper Alliance has launched “CWA 40” to engage all U.S. Waterkeeper organizations and their partners to celebrate and promote the Act and its original mission of making all U.S. waters swimmable, drinkable, and fishable. Clean Water is a basic human right. In 2012, we also mobilized citizens across the globe to protect this right.

During this 40th Anniversary year of the Clean Water Act, we asked the public to join Waterkeeper Alliance in spreading the message of clean water and healthy communities to Congress and beyond.
Swim Guide

Every year, residents of the United States and Canada make two billion trips to roughly 4,000 beaches, spending billions of dollars on this recreation. Unfortunately, however, water quality at many beaches in North America is declining. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently estimated that up to 3.5 million people will become sick after swimming at their favorite beach or swimming hole this year. Despite nearly 40 years of Clean Water Act successes, polluted runoff, sewer overflows, and other human-caused problems continue to threaten many of North America’s most cherished waters, from Lake Ontario to the Gulf Coast, Malibu to Montauk Point.

The Waterkeeper Swim Guide was created by Lake Ontario Waterkeeper to get people excited about their lake, river, bay or coastline and to remind them that clean water is a right not a privilege. The Swim Guide is a Smartphone app and website (theswimguide.org) that tells users where the closest beaches are, which ones are safe for swimming, and which have unreliable monitoring data. Because beaches are also excellent indicators of how our democratic institutions are holding up, (i.e. if you can’t safely swim in your area, chances are that someone is breaking the rules) the guide describes the laws and policies and sampling procedures that apply to beaches, drawing attention to the areas where beach quality data is not collected, is unreliable, or is not being released. Just in time for summer 2012, Waterkeeper Alliance launched the Swim Guide in New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Florida, Alabama, Chesapeake, and California, adding to the guide’s existing stock of beaches in the Great Lakes, Alberta, British Columbia, and Quebec.
Clean Water Act Success Stories from Waterkeepers

40 years, thousands of victories, here are a few from 2012:

When anti-water legislation reared its head multiple times in the state legislature, PUGET SOUNDKEEPER, representing Waterkeepers Washington, effectively killed several bad bills that sought to delay needed protections by up to three years or in one case make them nearly completely voluntary. Ultimately a compromise piece of legislation passed. Under the deal, western Washington permits will come out on time with two provisions to be delayed 6-18 months. Although the implementation of eastern Washington permits were delayed an extra 12 months, the permits were still issued on time. For the first time Washington state will have a standard for green stormwater infrastructure to help control polluted runoff from both new development and re-development sites.

In February, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board approved a permit, developed by California’s ORANGE COUNTY COASTKEEPER, requiring the regional metal recycling industry to implement Best Management Practices to reduce polluted runoff from their properties. The main goal is to give scrapyard operators achievable standards and clear guidelines on how to treat or eliminate polluted runoff from their sites. With the approval of this unique sector permit, Coastkeeper expects that, in the future, similar sector-specific regulations will be adopted statewide.

The KANSAS RIVERKEEPER has been successfully challenging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the permit renewal of 14 commercial dredge permits for sand. The Kansas River was named the “10th Most Endangered River” by American Rivers in 2012 because of a proposed 50% increase in dredging. Several new permits could re-open sections of the river previously closed due to dredging damage. This troubling aspect emerged as access to the river, was increasing and the Kansas River Water Trail becoming part of the National Water Trails System. With the help of media and staff scientists, Kansas Riverkeeper released findings documenting riverbed damage in dredged reaches, probably responsible for excessive bank erosion both upstream and downstream from dredge sites. Kansas Riverkeeper Laura Calwell is optimistic that her group's efforts will result in a public hearing.
With a goal of restoring water quality and protecting public health from the impacts of coal mining in eastern Kentucky, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE, KENTUCKY RIVERKEEPER and a coalition of public interest groups won an historic settlement with one of the largest producers of mountaintop removal coal, International Coal Group, and Kentucky’s environmental agency over thousands of water pollution violations and years of false reporting by the company and insufficient enforcement by the state. It is the first time a Kentucky state court has allowed affected citizens or environmental groups to intervene in a Clean Water Act enforcement case brought by the state.

In January, attorneys from the Southern Environmental Law Center filed a lawsuit on behalf of the Catawba Riverkeeper to require that South Carolina Energy & Gas clean up a power plant coal-ash pond and related pollutants, in particular arsenic, that were seeping into the waters of the Catawba-Wateree River. On May 29, United States District Judge Joseph Anderson ruled in favor of CATAWBA RIVERKEEPER and denied SCE&G’s motion to dismiss, rejecting their claim that private citizens and organizations had no right to challenge SCE&G’s pollution leaking from its coal ash pond. In August, SCE&G agreed to a binding settlement requiring the closure of its ash pond and switching to dry-ash handling in the future. It is hoped that this agreement will serve as a precedent for the closure of four ash ponds operated by Duke Energy on the Catawba River.
Clean & Safe Energy

**COAL:**
Almost always located adjacent to public waterways, coal-fired power plants consistently abuse the surrounding environment and communities, fouling the water and sickening the people. In the United States alone, more than 600 coal plants pollute nearby waters in many ways, including high-heat thermal discharges from cooling water systems, carcinogenic heavy metals from coal-pile runoff, and toxic discharges and leachate from coal combustion waste ponds.

Coal mining destroys mountain streams and sickens communities downstream. Even as natural gas prices continue to plummet, reducing U.S. demand for coal, the coal companies are increasingly setting their sights on Asian markets that are hungry for “cheap” energy. Proposed coal export terminals and railways in the Pacific Northwest and Southeast would suffocate entire neighborhoods along the way with toxic dust and water pollution.

Polluter-friendly environmental regulators often ignore the problems, allowing the pollution to continue unchecked for decades. Even more troubling, residents of nearby communities and others who use the waters around coal-fired power plants, coal mines, and coal export infrastructure are often unaware of the risks they are exposed to because of the lack of government oversight and the unavailability of reliable water-quality data.

Waterkeeper Alliance is taking action by using an array of strategies at the local, regional, and national levels to hold coal-burning polluters accountable. This year, we:

- Forced the US EPA to adopt the MATS Rule - first-ever limits on mercury and other toxic air pollution, which wind up in our waters.
- Blocked a coal-corrupted state agency from letting mountaintop removal coal mining companies off the hook after we busted them for falsifying water-monitoring data. We got one of the companies to agree to a settlement which provides for ongoing independent monitoring of the pollution reports, and we’re still chasing two other companies that refuse to accept responsibility.
- Set groundbreaking precedent establishing the public right to participate in government oversight of the coal industry in Kentucky.
- Began a massive investigation of illegal water pollution from coal ash ponds at power plants across the southeastern U.S.
3,200,000
sick days

540,000
restricted activity days

130,000
asthma attacks

4,700
heart attacks

4,200-11,000
hospital and emergency room visits

2,800
cases of chronic bronchitis

2,000
premature deaths

- Exposed groundwater contamination from power plants in North Carolina and filed a legal action to force the state to regulate them
- Teamed-up with several Waterkeepers in the Pacific Northwest to oppose new coal export terminals in Washington and Oregon.

**FRACKING:**
Chemicals in fracking fluid and wastewater can severely pollute drinking water supplies, pollute the air, damage the environment, cause fish kills, and pose a serious risk to human health through disposal of wastewater and leaching into drinking water supplies. This year, we’ve begun to develop our resources to address water pollution issues associated with fracking, including training advocates at River Rally 2012.

We are organizing communities, educating the public and participating in a broad-based coalition in opposition to fracking.

**GULF & OIL:**
We filed a citizen suit under the Clean Water Act to compel the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue a rule on chemical oil dispersants. EPA’s current rules – which failed to ensure that dispersants would be used safely during the 2010 Gulf oil disaster – do not fulfill the requirements mandated by the Clean Water Act.

More than 5,000 petitions were sent by residents across the Gulf Coast region urging EPA to use its authority to initiate comprehensive testing of oil dispersants and to create regulations that include safety criteria and identify acceptable quantities for use. But EPA still has not created a new rule that will ensure that dispersants will be used safely in the next disaster.

Waterkeeper Alliance and several Gulf Coast Waterkeeper organizations filed suit in Federal Court against Taylor Energy Company LLC under the citizen suit provisions of the Clean Water Act and Resource Conservation Recovery Act for ongoing violations stemming from an oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico that has continued to flow for more than seven years.
Clean Water Defense

U.S. clean water and public health laws are being threatened by government action and special-interest lobbyists who want to strip our right to swimmable, drinkable, and fishable waters. Waterkeeper Alliance’s Clean Water Defense work is focused on fighting off attempts to weaken the Clean Water Act and other environmental laws, and on promoting stronger legal safeguards for the nation’s water resources.

- Waterkeeper Alliance joined forces with the Natural Resources Defense Council and a broad coalition of environmental groups to address the devastating public health, economic and water-quality problems caused by nitrogen and phosphorus pollution that is affecting drinking water, fisheries and recreational waters in 49 states.
- The Alliance filed litigation against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to force the adoption of numeric nitrogen and phosphorus water-quality criteria for surface waters across the country and to implement cleanup plans for the 3,000-square-mile, oxygen-starved dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico caused by nutrient pollution.
- The Alliance filed litigation to force EPA to implement appropriate treatment technology at sewage-treatment plants and to include limits on the amounts of phosphorus and nitrogen allowed in discharge permits.
- In June, Waterkeepers across the U.S. reached out to key legislators to stop the attack on the Mercury Air Toxics Standards Rule, which limits pollution from coal-fired power plants.
- Waterkeeper Alliance joined a national coalition to oppose EPA’s proposal to weaken existing regulations that prevent unsafe levels of bacteria pollution in recreational waterbodies and beaches.
- Waterkeepers in the Pacific Northwest and across the country worked to ensure continued regulation and permitting of polluted stormwater discharges from pipes, ditches and channels along logging roads, consistent with the 2011 Ninth Circuit decision in North-west Environmental Defense Center v. Brown.
- The Alliance joined with seven national environmental organizations to support EPA’s efforts to appropriately define “Waters of the United States” under the Clean Water Act and oppose efforts to limit the protections of the Clean Water Act to a small subset of America’s waterbodies.
Industrial factory farms, also known as concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), are large complexes where hundreds to thousands of animals are confined and raised in small areas. CAFOs produce over 300 million tons of waste per year—twice the amount of waste produced by the human population of the U.S! But whereas there are sewage treatment plants that deal with human waste, the animal waste produced by CAFOs is not subjected to any treatment. Further, there are often hundreds of CAFOs located within a small watershed such that pollution from these facilities commingles to cause devastating effects on downstream waters. Animal waste from CAFOs often leaches into groundwater from unlined waste-storage lagoons, and is discharged into adjacent waterways. Here are some of the things Waterkeeper Alliance is doing to stop factory-farm pollution:

- Filed litigation against an industrial-scale swine CAFO located in the Neuse River Basin of North Carolina to stop continuing illegal discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus and bacteria and clean up the existing contamination at the facility.
- Filed litigation against Perdue Farms, one of America’s largest poultry producers, to stop illegal discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus and bacteria into the Chesapeake Bay from one of its contract poultry CAFOs.
- Successfully opposed efforts by Sanderson Farms to locate additional poultry processing facilities in North Carolina without conducting an adequate environmental review.
- Intervened in continuing litigation in North Carolina to oppose efforts by a 3.4 million-bird chicken CAFO to avoid regulation and permitting of its pollutant discharges pursuant to the Clean Water Act. Discharges from this CAFO are polluting the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, Pungo River and other local waterways.
- Filed opposition to a Georgia proposal to substantially weaken its existing regulatory program for CAFOs, which is already less stringent than required by the Clean Water Act, and to do away with the existing regulatory standards and permitting requirements for dry-waste poultry CAFOs. The Alliance is investigating illegal discharges of nitrogen, phosphorus and fecal bacteria at numerous CAFOs in the Cape Fear, Catawba, Neuse, Pamlico-Tar, Waccamaw, and Yadkin River Basins of North Carolina under an expanded campaign with local and national partners to enforce the Clean Water Act and challenge instances where the state and federal government failed to take action.
- The Alliance is opposing efforts by the EPA to avoid collecting basic information about the location and operation of CAFOs throughout the U.S as required by our Consent Decree with the agency. EPA is resisting regulation of CAFOs despite acknowledging that at least 58 percent of CAFOs are not permitted as required by the Clean Water Act and that agriculture, including CAFOs, is the leading source of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution in U.S. surface waters.

Photos by Rick Dove

Fish kill in North Carolina.
Raw Sewage from a CAFO facility.
Kemp Burdette, Cape Fear Riverkeeper (right), and volunteer sample leachate from runoff of chicken litter.
Larry Baldwin, NC CAFO Coordinator (left), and Neuse Riverkeeper CAFO team.

Pure Farms, Pure Waters

Tons of waste per year generated from industrial factory farms.
Clean Water: Act Now

Swimmable, Drinkable, Fishable waters worldwide

At the 2012 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Waterkeeper Alliance called for the United Nations to recognize, support and establish in law the rights of ecosystems and species to exist, thrive and evolve. This includes recognition of the rights of waterways to flow with clean water, so that they can support people and the natural world.

- From Portland to Beijing, Waterkeepers around the world defend clean water and advocate for clean and safe energy.
- In Australia, Upper Hunter Waterkeeper helped to rally nearly 10,000 community members as the New South Wales government considered new legislation for mining and gas proposals.
- Hann Baykeeper in Senegal mobilized nearly 400 community members and attracted seven major news stations to say ‘ENOUGH!’ to a canal that overflows with human wastewater and pollutes Hann Bay.
- After identifying floating garbage as a major environmental threat, Iraq’s Upper Tigris Waterkeeper secured a commitment from municipal authorities in the town of Dukan to extend garbage pick up to residents who live along a considerable stretch of the river in that town.
- Buriganga Riverkeeper in Bangladesh is enforcing court instructions for the placement of demarcation pillars to prevent illegal encroachment and pollution of the river.
- Vyatka Riverkeeper in Russia is campaigning against the construction of a polluting steel plant on the bank of a local pond that provides household-water supplies.
- Morava Riverkeeper in the Czech Republic conducted hydromorphological monitoring of selected river reaches to provide data in compliance with the European Union’s Water Framework Directive.
- Ottawa Riverkeeper in Canada paddled into numerous communities with expert teams of photographers, scientists and youth volunteers to share knowledge and plan projects to improve the river’s health and ecological diversity.
200 Waterkeepers
6 continents 21 countries

- In Casanare, Colombia, Rio Pauto Waterkeeper, Rio Cravo Sur Waterkeeper and Rio Meta Waterkeeper involved citizens in their monitoring and surveillance activities, increasing awareness of local environmental problems and identifying polluters.

- Bocas de Ceniza Waterkeeper in Barranquilla, Colombia, joined with Cartagena Baykeeper to form a partnership with the local environmental agency to educate 600 citizens on the culture of water.

- Los Cabos Coastkeeper played a lead role in developing the “General Law for the Integral and Sustainable Administration of the Mexican Coast.”

And welcome to Waterkeeper Alliance:

- Black Reef Coast Waterkeeper and Middle Huai River Waterkeeper in China, Futaleufu Riverkeeper in Chile, Rio Ozama in the Dominican Republic and Rio Supia Waterkeeper in Colombia!

- In Baja California, Mexico, Tijuana Waterkeeper’s community clean-ups enlisted 5,000 volunteers who helped dispose of 40 tons of solid waste from creeks, rivers and beaches.

- Maule Itata Coastkeeper Rodrigo de la O Guerrero in Chile organized more than 600 volunteers at 16 sites in 9 regions to clean and restore beaches and coastal areas along more than 25 kilometers of coastline.

Annual Events

Advocacy and citizen action are the cornerstones of the Waterkeeper movement, and to educate people on the need for clean water, and raise funds from our valuable and generous supporters, Waterkeeper Alliance hosts a variety of events throughout the year. These events draw the attention of leading environmental experts, celebrities, philanthropists, educators, civic leaders and citizen activists. They include: public environmental activities in specific communities; high-visibility networking events; salon-like occasions that focus on education and awareness; and an annual conference attended by Waterkeeper members from around the world. Waterkeeper Alliance events can be focused on an individual community, a broader region, a particular event or issue, or a global concern.

The new Waterkeeper Alliance SPLASH Event Series, sponsored by Toyota in partnership with KEEN, is a national program that engages local citizens and clean water enthusiasts in water-related activities, such as swimming, kayaking and sailing. The goals of the SPLASH events are to support local Waterkeeper organizations, and promote greater awareness of the value and importance of clean water and the need to protect our waterways.

Art For Water, held on March 5th, was an auction to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act. The Art For Water auction raised more than one million dollars to enable us to continue our fight in communities around the world for the basic right to clean water.
Annual Conference

This past May, for the first time ever, Waterkeeper Alliance and River Network joined forces to organize and host the 13th annual River Rally. The event, held in Portland, Oregon, was very successful in advancing our vision for swimable, drinkable, fishable waters worldwide:

- We trained more than 750 people from 44 U.S. states and 15 countries to build new momentum toward addressing the challenging water issues that confront our planet. Our participants represented 343 non-profit organizations, 35 local, state and federal public agencies, 3 foundations and 25 companies.

- We advocated in downtown Portland against the export of coal through the Pacific Northwest to Asia. Our rally drew more than 1,000 attendees and great press coverage, raising visibility around the issue in the Pacific Northwest.

- We recognized the best in our profession and encouraged all to strive for excellence through the River Hero awards. Four of the six people selected for River Hero Awards by their peers were Waterkeepers.

- We organized a water summit with leaders from numerous water-focused NGOs to increase collaboration in the water advocacy field.

- We hosted environmental notables EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, Alexandra Cousteau, and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. as our excellent keynote speakers.
A new approach to journalism from the fastest growing environmental group in the world.

EcoWatch

EcoWatch is a global non-profit news organization that covers issues relating to water, air, food, energy and biodiversity. In 2012, Waterkeeper Alliance partnered with EcoWatch to unite the voices of the grassroots environmental movement and mobilize millions of people to engage in democracy in pursuit of a sustainable future.

The site showcases original content in its Insights column from leading national voices in the environmental movement, including EcoWatch’s advisory board members—Wendy Abrams, Ed Begley, Jr., Lester Brown, Laurie David, Paul Hawken, Randy Hayes, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Phil Radford, Laura Turner Seydel and Harvey Wasserman.
Due to damage from Hurricane Sandy, we were unable to complete our audit at the time this report went to print. Our projected FY12 revenue is: $4.6 million. Our projected FY12 expenses are: $3.4 million. Our FY11 revenue was: $4,087,580. Our FY11 expenses were: $3,936,226.
Waterkeeper Alliance is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), member supported organization based in New York, New York. The Alliance is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors and is supported by member contributions, foundation grants, corporate sponsorship, events, and other income. The FY13 budget, commencing on July 1, 2012, is $4,678,592 in expenses and $4,979,435 in revenue. Our most recent IRS Form 990 can be viewed by visiting www.Waterkeeper.org For a complete copy of Waterkeeper Alliance’s most recent audited financial statement, contact Rachel Cook at 212.747.0622 x112. Contact Waterkeeper Alliance to make a difference.

Buzzards Baykeeper Mark Rasmussen is fighting to restore the bay’s legendary fishery. Photo by Marc Yaggi.