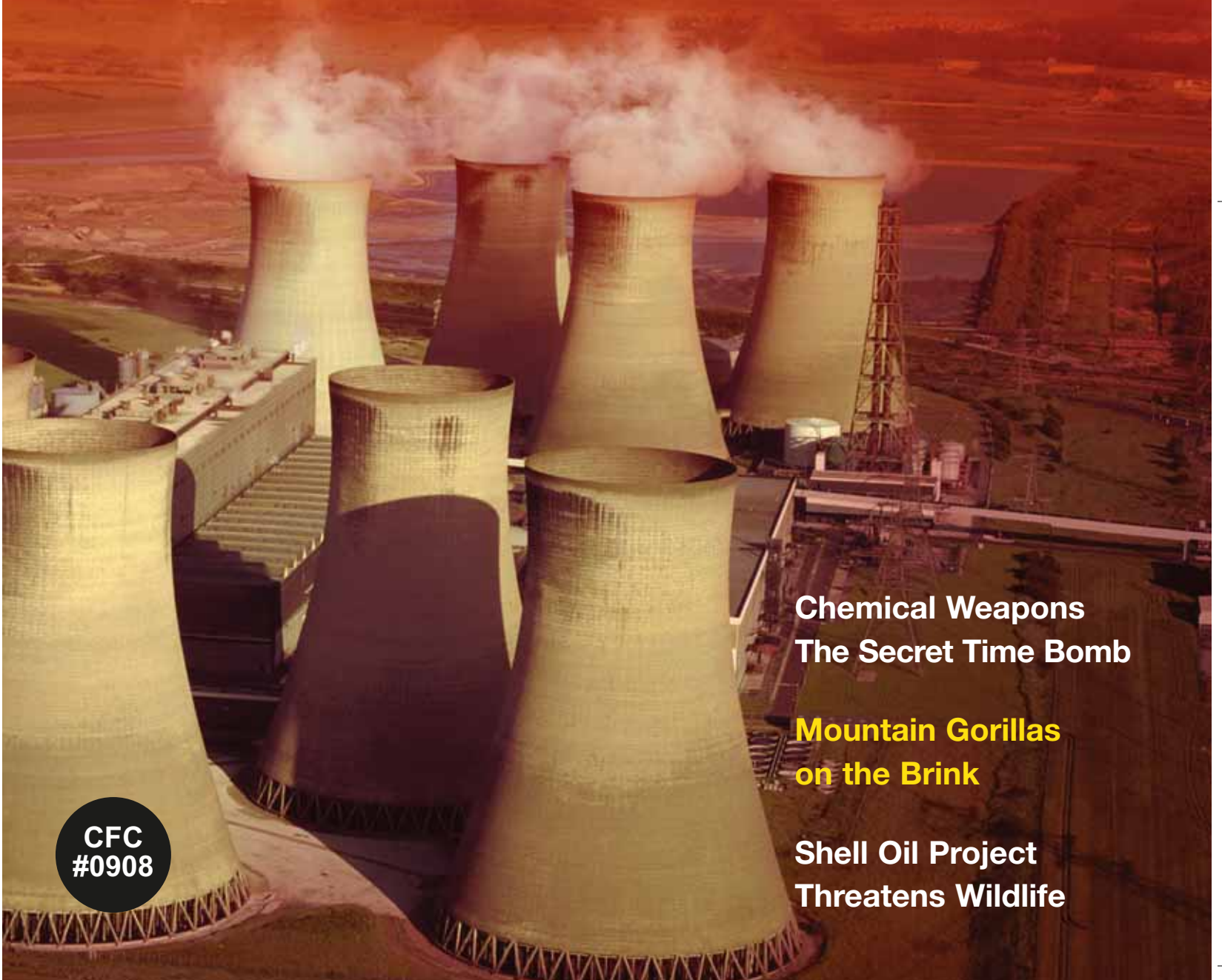


# FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

NEWS MAGAZINE

WWW.FOE.ORG | VOLUME 35, NUMBER 3 | FALL 2005

## Is Nuclear Power Making a Comeback?



**Chemical Weapons  
The Secret Time Bomb**

**Mountain Gorillas  
on the Brink**

**Shell Oil Project  
Threatens Wildlife**

**CFC  
#0908**

# Hurricane Damage Highlights Environmental Injustice in the Gulf

**FRIENDS OF THE EARTH** extends our deepest sympathies to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Hundreds of thousands of people continue to experience numerous hardships in the aftermath of the hurricane. As we move forward, it is critical that we learn from past mistakes.

The channeling of the Mississippi River from its natural course coupled with rampant oil and gas exploration in Louisiana have radically undermined wetlands. This has created environmental conditions for hurricane destruction that were most dangerous for the least powerful.

Indeed, this disaster is the most devastating example of environmental injustice ever experienced in the United States. The inundation of New Orleans and the resulting human misery have laid bare the unsettling links between human inequity and the environment around us.

For 36 years, Friends of the Earth has been working to prevent these types of disasters. We have campaigned against faulty flood control projects built by the Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies, which have undermined the safety of Louisiana and other Gulf Coast residents. But standing in the way of real reform has been the ever-present power of the pork barrel. Most water resource projects are not approved and built based on any merit or need; rather, they are built because influential constituents and campaign contributors, including the construction lobby, want them, and because members lack the courage to critique projects in other members' districts.



photo credit: Lisa Matthes

Brent Blackwelder, President

Unfortunately, the problem does not end with water projects. Congress is handling national policy on energy and transportation the same way. The energy bill and the transportation bill passed by Congress this summer don't represent coherent policy, but rather a string of subsidies and handouts to influential lobbies.

So where has this haphazard, pork barrel-driven development taken us? In the case of the Gulf Coast, federal and state governments have repeatedly encouraged and allowed construction and development in sensitive areas. Taxpayer money has been spent on projects in hazard zones, destroying or compromising marshlands, mangroves, sand dunes, and barrier islands—all natural defenses against storm surges. As a result, we have more and more damage, loss of life, tragedy and suffering.

The suffering is particularly tragic in the case of New Orleans, where we have witnessed the plight of poor and minorities trapped in flood waters. The obvious environmental

injustice of not providing faster and more comprehensive relief is a terrible commentary on the values of the Bush administration.

As the science of climate change has become more precise in recent years, the latest research indicates that the intensity of hurricanes is growing. An MIT study this year suggests a dramatic increase in hurricane intensity in the last 30 years. Global warming may well be bringing us stronger hurricanes as well as many other kinds of violent weather events.

We must address our nation's global warming emissions, as well as return critical coastal areas to their natural state. Unfortunately, President Bush has failed at a national level to push energy legislation that would put the country on track for a clean energy future. Instead, Bush has spearheaded legislation that subsidizes nuclear power. As the cover story of this issue details, wind power stands in stark contrast to the environmental and public health threats posed by an increase in the use of nuclear power.

I concluded my summer vacation with a tour of wind development in western New York State and Kansas. While Congress has doled out billions to the nuclear industry with the signing of the energy bill, wind energy is quietly emerging as power source that is both affordable and clean.

It is critical that we reduce our global warming emissions to stem the tide of severe weather events and the other adverse impacts of rapid climate change. Now is the time to demand that our leaders act.

*Brent Blackwelder*

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# Is Nuclear Power



*By Elizabeth Bast, International Policy Analyst, Friends of the Earth & Erich Pica, Director, Economic Programs, Friends of the Earth*

**FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS**, safety concerns and the failure of the nuclear industry to prove itself economically viable have kept nuclear power from expanding. No new nuclear power plants have been ordered in the United States since 1978. But with the help of a multi-million dollar ad campaign and increased political support from the White House and Congress, the nuclear power industry could make a comeback – offering nuclear energy as the answer to both global warming and the nation’s growing need for electricity.

## Is Nuclear Power “Clean”?

In the late 1990s, the nuclear power industry began efforts to buy a new reputation through misleading advertising and public relations campaigns. The industry presented nuclear power as a clean source of energy that would

**Since 1948, the federal government has spent \$73.4 billion on research and development for the nuclear power industry.**

reduce greenhouse gas emissions that lead to global warming and other air pollution. The ads, sponsored by the trade group Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), hyped nuclear power as a clean, emission-free energy source. Environmental groups filed a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission, which ultimately ruled that the ads were inaccurate. Undeterred, the most recent ad campaign released by NEI contains the tag-line, “Nuclear. The Clean Air Energy.”

Despite the marketing efforts of the nuclear power industry, the simple reality is that nuclear power is not clean energy. Generating nuclear power produces radioactive waste that must be stored and managed for millennia, and there is still no long-term storage system in place for the radioactive waste we have

# Making a Comeback?

already produced. Radioactive materials used at nuclear power plants still pose safety concerns, and accidents at nuclear power plants are still a serious possibility.

Construction of new plants seems particularly inappropriate considering the heightened concern over terrorist attacks in a post-9/11 world.

Nor is nuclear power a solution to global warming. According to a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) report, it would take the construction of more than 1000 new nuclear power plants worldwide to significantly affect global warming. Building nuclear reactors on this scale would exacerbate safety issues and create massive amounts of radioactive waste.

Adding to this, many new plants would likely produce a shortage of uranium supplies by the end of the century, requiring the development of another power option in the next 100 years. In addition, uranium mining, milling and enrichment rely on fossil fuels, meaning that nuclear power production would still emit greenhouse gases.

A recent report conducted for the U.S. Public Interest Research Group by Synapse Energy Economics shows that the U.S. can substantially reduce global warming pollution while reducing its reliance on nuclear power. The report concluded that modest investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy would allow the U.S. to reduce global

warming pollution from the electricity sector by 47 percent by 2025, while saving \$36 billion annually in electricity costs and cutting U.S. reliance on nuclear power by nearly half.

## The Numbers Still Don't Add Up

Nuclear power plants cost more than \$4 billion to construct, creating substantial start up costs for new plants. Since 1948, the federal government has spent \$73.4 billion on research and development for the nuclear power industry. Congress also passed the Price-Anderson Act,

## The energy bill contains more than \$12 billion in subsidies for the construction and operation of new nuclear power plants.

which caps the liability of the nuclear power industry at \$10 billion in the event of an accident, even though studies conducted by the

government's Sandia National Laboratory identified worst case scenarios that could cost more than \$300 billion. Despite these government handouts, no nuclear power plants have been ordered since 1978, and more than 100 reactors have been canceled, including all ordered after 1973. When asked in May about the prospect of financing a new nuclear power plant, Thomas Capps, chairman of Dominion, one of the nation's largest producers of energy, replied, "Standard & Poor's and Moody's would have a heart attack, and my chief financial officer would, too."

In spite of this, the nuclear power industry went to Congress and the Bush administration to seek additional federal help to change the economic picture for nuclear power. The energy bill, passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bush this summer, attempts to pick up where Wall Street investors have left off, offering substantial subsidies for the construction of new nuclear power plants.

The energy bill contains more than \$12 billion in subsidies for the construction and operation of new nuclear power plants. The bill provides loan guarantees, which reduce the financial risk of private investment in new plants, shifting the burden to the taxpayer instead. The bill provides nearly \$6 billion in production subsidies for new plants that

*(continued on page 6)*

## COVER STORY

*(continued from page 5)*

will make the plants more profitable in a shorter period of time. In addition, it protects the nuclear power industry from being financially liable in the case of an accident. The bill also authorizes spending of more than \$1.5 billion for more research and development.

This funding may not be enough to convince Wall Street to invest in new nuclear power plants. In previous legislative attempts to fund the construction of new nuclear power plants, Standard & Poor's, the world's leading provider of independent credit ratings and risk evaluation,

concluded: "...an electric utility with a nuclear exposure has weaker credit than one without and can expect to pay more on the margin for credit. Federal support of construction costs will do little to change that reality. Therefore, were a utility to embark on a new or expanded nuclear endeavor, Standard & Poor's would likely revisit its rating on the utility." While it is too early to determine whether the provisions in the energy bill are enough to revitalize the nuclear power industry, these new subsidies certainly open the door for a nuclear comeback.

## There are Real Solutions to Climate Change

Overlooked and ignored by Congress and nuclear power proponents are the truly clean and cost effective solutions to the global warming crisis. Renewable energy and energy efficiency are viable alternatives to conventional energy technologies, and many state and local governments are supporting these technologies, in spite of the failure at the federal level.

Wind power is becoming a more cost effective means of producing electricity every year, and it now rivals



Wind energy is catching on in Gray County, Kansas. This installation is now generating 110 megawatts of power.

conventional sources of energy in terms of cost per kilowatt hour. Wind is an abundant source of energy that can be produced on an industrial scale and fed into the grid—the nation's system of electricity generation, transmission and distribution. The United States has more than 8,000 gigawatts of raw wind potential – nearly 10 times the total installed electric generating capacity in the United States in 2001. Solar power, although more expensive than wind, is also growing at rapid rates.

Energy efficiency measures are the most cost effective way of reduc-

ing global warming emissions – by some estimates, energy efficiency only costs 2 cents per kilowatt hour, well below the market price of electricity. Some states are passing energy efficiency legislation, promoting efficiency in light bulbs and other appliances that can save electricity and can also cost the consumer less over the life of the product.

States and cities throughout the country are also passing renewable energy standards. Nineteen states have passed legislation requiring that a certain percentage of electricity be produced from renewable ener-

gy sources. Several cities, including Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, CA have also passed renewable portfolio standards. Several states are also working to reduce global warming emissions from cars and trucks – where most of our global warming emissions come from.

It is this sort of leadership in promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency that the federal government must show in order for the United States to effectively reduce global warming emissions, not the promotion of outdated and costly nuclear power. ○

## CAMPAIGN NOTES

## Friends of the Earth Blocking the Nuclear Comeback around the World

### United States

Friends of the Earth successfully lobbied the House of Representatives to pass an amendment prohibiting the U.S. Export-Import Bank from financing nuclear power projects in China. The Export-Import Bank made a preliminary commitment of \$5 billion to Westinghouse Corporation for construction of four nuclear reactors in Zhejiang and Guangdong Provinces. The amendment blocking funding for these plants won on a broad, bipartisan basis 313 – 114. The same amendment failed in the Senate but will be considered this September by a House-Senate conference committee.

Friends of the Earth and the Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS) launched a web campaign ([www.nukeretro.com](http://www.nukeretro.com)) focused on opposing nuclear power subsidies in the energy bill before the Congress. The campaign featured a comic animation set to a retro music score from the 1970s, when nuclear power was in its heyday. The energy bill ultimately passed and the nuclear industry stands to gain billions in subsidies.

### Europe

Global 2000, the Friends of the Earth member group in Austria is leading a campaign by Friends of the Earth Europe to phase out nuclear power in Europe. They intend to collect one million signatures on a petition to European Union decision makers. The campaign will mobilize national environmental organizations across Europe and include a major action day on April 26, 2006, the 20th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident.



# The Secret Time Bomb – Chemical Weapons

## Environmental, Public Health, and Security Threats

By Paul F. Walker  
Legacy Program Director  
Global Green USA  
[www.globalgreen.org](http://www.globalgreen.org)

**UNBEKNOWNST TO MOST AMERICANS**, chemical weapons remain one of the largest, most dangerous, and costly legacies of the Cold War and continue to threaten public health, the environment, and security. Fortunately, most nations, including the United States and Russia, have agreed to abolish their chemical weapons stockpiles, but the challenge of safe demilitarization remains a slow, politically contentious, and technically complex process. In the meantime, over 60,000 tons of deadly chemical agents, stored in millions of weapons potentially subject to leakage and proliferation, remain in several countries.

The first time I visited an existing chemical weapons (CW) stockpile was in 1994 when I was a member of an official on-site inspection of one of Russia's largest stockpiles. This was a U.S. delegation including both congressional and executive branch members to visit the easternmost of seven declared Russian CW arsenals. We flew three hours east from Moscow and spent a full day inside a remote chemical weapons depot in Siberia, just north of Kazakhstan, inspecting some two million artillery and missile warheads filled with VX nerve agent. What struck us most at the time were two things: the enormous size of this arsenal, representing about 14 percent of the Russian CW arsenal; and the very poor security of the stockpile, housed in old above-ground, corrugated metal buildings with bicycle padlocks on the



Russian artillery shells filled with VX nerve agent stored at Shchuch'ye, Kurgan Oblast, in Siberia.

doors, broken windows, and holes in the roof.

Shortly thereafter, at our discrete urging, the U.S. began negotiations with Russia to help secure and safely destroy this stockpile. Today, over a decade later, a mammoth destruction facility is 50 percent constructed at the Siberian site, not far from the village of Shchuch'ye (pronounced "Shoo-Shee"), midway between the cities of Chelyabinsk and Kurgan in the Kurgan Region.

This Siberian site, housing 5,400 tons of Russian VX nerve agent, is one of sixteen CW stockpiles in the U.S. and Russia now in the process of demilitarization and remediation. Russia and the U.S. have declared 40,000 and 31,500 tons of chemical weapons respectively to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the inspection and verification regime established by the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), in The Hague. Another 171 countries have

joined the CWC, of which four additional ones – Albania, India, Libya, and South Korea – have declared much smaller CW stockpiles ranging in size from a few tons to some 500 or more.

These six declared CW possessor states are obliged to abolish their stockpiles by April 2012 at the latest (which includes a five-year extension to initial 2007 CWC deadlines). However, the process of demilitarization has been much longer, more costly and more complex than the countries involved had first imagined.

### Despite Destruction Schedule, Stockpiles Remain

The U.S. has declared nine stockpiles with 31,500 tons of chemical weapons. Over the past fifteen years the U.S. has destroyed about 35 percent of this arsenal. Russia has declared seven stockpiles with 40,000 tons of chemical weapons. To date, Russia has destroyed slightly



over 2 percent of its arsenal – about 850 tons – with only one facility operating at Gorny. Two more facilities are scheduled to begin operating next year.

The U.S. had originally planned over twenty years ago to finish destruction by 1995. This deadline has been pushed back several times and now is projected to be 2012, the final CWC deadline. Russia has been very slow to begin destruction, opening its first facility at Gorny in December 2002. It still hopes to meet the 2012 CWC deadline for 100 percent destruction, but this will be difficult.

The U.S. initially projected a total program cost of \$2 billion. This has now skyrocketed to about \$40 billion. Likewise, Russia had planned on \$2-3 billion, but now projects \$7-10 billion in total costs to destroy its CW arsenal. Because of these enormous and unplanned costs, it is important that the West, through the G8 Global Partnership, help Russia to cover these costs. The U.S., through its Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR or “Nunn-Lugar”) Program, has committed over \$1 billion to Russian CW destruction.

One of the major causes in schedule delays and cost escalation has been disagreement and uncertainty on the most appropriate technologies. Given that a minute amount of chemical agent can cause immediate death, and that many of them are packaged with explosives, most technologies of destruction have had to be both robotic and able to contain explosions. Incineration has been the technology of choice of the U.S. Army, while chemical neutralization with hot water (in the case of mustard agent) or with caustic reagents such as sodium hydroxide (in the case of VX, sarin, and soman nerve agents) has been chosen by Russia and four U.S. states.



Russian missile warhead filled with VX nerve agent, stored at Shchuch'ye, Kurgan Oblast, in Siberia.

## Environmental, Public Health and Security Threats

Most chemical weapons, in storage for over three decades, have been subject to leakage and release of live agent into their protected bunkers; some of this agent has leaked outside, but in relatively small amounts. Accidents have also happened during disassembly, but no one has yet been killed by leakage or accident; there have been minor worker injuries at stockpile sites.

There is also concern over gaseous, solid, and liquid toxic waste generated by the incineration and neutralization demilitarization processes. The high thermal processes generate thousands of tons of atmospheric waste daily; although permitted by federal and state regulatory agencies, these smokestack emissions contain an undetermined amount of pollutants which drift uncontrolled downwind. Neutralized liquid wastes also contain slightly toxic substances, but can be held, tested, and only then released (or retreated) and are much more manageable.

In addition to declared stockpiles, both the U.S. and Russia, along with many other nations, have dumped chemical agents and weapons on land and sea over the last century. The U.S. alone suspects some 250 “nonstockpile” dump sites in three dozen states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. While these sites pose little security risk, they have been shown to be dangerous to health and the environment, especially if accidentally unearthed.

One of the greatest concerns with chemical weapons is the risk of theft, diversion, and proliferation. Terrorist groups such as Aum Shinrikyo in Tokyo in 1995 have used chemical weapons, and others such as Al Qaeda have vowed to obtain weapons of mass destruction. While U.S. CW arsenals are quite secure from theft, Russia’s stockpile security leaves much to be desired. Many of the CW stockpiles are also vulnerable to attack such as we experienced on September 11, 2001.

## The Future

While 173 countries have joined the Chemical Weapons Convention since it opened for signature in January 1993, nine states remain non-signatory and another twelve have not yet ratified it (as of August 29, 2005). The most worrisome are Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, North Korea, Somalia, and Syria, because they are suspected of chemical weapons activities. These states must eventually be brought into the CWC regime.

The bottom line is that we all need to support the timely and safe destruction of this secret and ticking time bomb – chemical weapons stockpiles and dump sites – but we must make sure that we do no harm to either the environment or public health in the process. ○

# Campaign News

## Rice Farmers in Missouri Stand Up to Ventria

Friends of the Earth and Anheuser-Busch aided Missouri rice farmers in May by helping chase Ventria Bioscience out of Missouri. Ventria planned to grow pharmaceutical-producing genetically engineered rice in Missouri. Anheuser-Busch threatened to boycott Show-Me state rice if Ventria was allowed to plant. Now, Ventria's in North Carolina, growing 75 acres near a rice germplasm facility, against the advice of rice breeders there.

Most of the few ongoing bio-pharm field trials, however, now utilize non-food crops (like tobacco) or marginal food (safflower) crops. Corn, once the favorite crop for this reckless experimentation is little used now, thanks in part to Friends of the Earth's efforts.



Yellowstone National Park

## Protecting Yellowstone & Grand Teton

The Department of the Interior recently announced that it will begin a third study of the impact of winter recreation on Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. These two parks, which are located primarily within Northwestern Wyoming, are the crown jewels of the system. Two previ-

ous winter use studies showed that the best way to protect resources and wildlife is to eliminate snowmobiles. The Bush administration rejected these studies. Thanks in part to a legal challenge by Bluewater Network – a division of Friends of the Earth, the Interior Department must seek additional public input before it can move forward with any plans to turn our first national park into a motorized amusement park.

## In Landmark Decision, Federal Court Recognizes Harm Caused by Global Warming

In a groundbreaking case, a federal judge in California ruled recently against the Bush administration and allowed a Friends of the Earth global warming lawsuit to proceed. The landmark decision is the first time that a federal court has specifically granted legal standing for a suit that challenges the federal government to account for impacts on the Earth's climate. The case, brought by Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, and four California and Colorado cities, charges that the Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) have financed oil and other fossil fuel projects around the world without first evaluating the projects' global warming impacts to the United States. The judge noted that the "projects supported by OPIC and Ex-Im are directly or indirectly responsible for approximately 1,911 million tonnes of carbon dioxide and methane emissions annually, which equals nearly eight percent of the world's emissions and is equivalent to one third of the total carbon emissions from the United States in 2003."

## Green Mountain National Forest Protected

Calling the Forest Service's decision to log 300 acres of the Green Mountain National Forest "arbitrary and capricious," the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals handed a solid victory to environmentalists in June. The ruling vacates a decision to log pristine, unique and rugged portions of the national forest in the towns of Chittenden and Rochester, Vermont. Friends of the Earth, Forest Watch, and the Forest Conservation Council joined forces in 2003 to stop the Old Joe Timber Sale because of shared concerns about the impacts of logging on recreation, water quality and wildlife. Vermont's Federal District Court denied the lawsuit on March 16, 2004. The groups appealed the District Court's decision to the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the District Court's decision was reversed.



photo credit: Mike Wells/Friends of the Earth

Environmental groups accuse shipping companies of behaving like pirates in the control they exert over the IMO.

## Shipping Pollution Protest

Bluewater Network called for an end to ship pollution piracy at the doors of the London-based United Nations body charged with regulating global shipping. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has failed to protect people and the planet from dirty diesel emissions spewed by ship smokestacks. Unfortunately, the IMO is dominated by so-called “flag-of-convenience” nations such as Panama and Liberia that are known for registering ships without regard for public health and the environment. A single cargo ship coming into port releases as much pollution as 350,000 current-model-year cars in one hour. The action helped convince the IMO to begin negotiating stronger international air pollution standards for ships.

## Friends of the Earth Leading on Amtrak

Amtrak is one of the most fuel efficient and environmentally friendly



Bluewater Network recently ran this full-page ad in *The New York Times*, and *Mother Jones* online.

ways to travel. So when the Bush administration zeroed out Amtrak’s yearly budget in February, Friends of the Earth began an intensive campaign to stop the elimination of America’s rail system. Leading the environmental community, Friends of the Earth was able to convince a

bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives to approve the highest level of funding in years. In the face of budget cuts across the board, this shows a significant commitment by Congress to the benefits of an environmentally friendly transportation choice.

## Challenging Gas Guzzling Volvos

Volvo has long enjoyed a reputation as a leader in making cars safer for passengers and the environment. But since being purchased by the Ford Motor Company – which ranks dead last in fuel economy among major automakers – Volvo has added a new lineup of gas-guzzling SUVs to its fleet and not a single new model averages more than 26.1 miles per gallon. Bluewater Network recently published an ad in *The New York Times* asking Volvo to stand up to Ford by again building cars that will protect the planet’s fragile environment. Visit the Bluewater web site at [www.bluewater-network.org](http://www.bluewater-network.org) to send a letter to Volvo. ○

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*Lisa Grob* Lisa Grob, Editor 9/16/05

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# Mountain Gorillas of Central Africa On the Brink

photo credit: ©Greenpeace/Daniel Beltrá

By Michelle Medeiros,  
Campaigner, Friends of the Earth

**THE GREAT APES** – chimpanzees, orangutans, and gorillas – are man's closest relatives in the animal kingdom, with a genetic make up that is 96-99 percent identical to that of humans. The gorilla's genetic make-up is 97.7 percent the same as ours: we have physical similarities, our social habits are similar, and we express our emotions similarly. The only significant difference between gorillas and humans is the ability to communicate through spoken language. The world's forests are home to these majestic animals, but the pressures of deforestation, illegal hunting, and regional conflict threaten their very existence. The mountain gorilla of Central Africa is perhaps one of the most endangered of the great apes, with only about 600 remaining in the wild. These gorillas live in the eastern mountains of Africa between the Virunga Mountains of the Democratic Republic of Congo and in

the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park in Uganda.

Mountain gorillas are sometimes portrayed as chest-pounding, hulking wild animals, eliciting unwarranted fear. These gorillas are quite large: the adult male can reach 400 pounds, while females can reach

**Gorillas are actually the smartest of the primates and exhibit human emotions like happiness and sadness.**

about 200, and the lead male in a group of gorillas, known as the silverback, is very protective of his brood and will pound his chest when the family is threatened. However, these gorillas are generally quite peaceful and gentle. Typically, gorilla families will spend most of their time searching for food such as stems, leaves and fruits, covering

hundreds of yards or more in a day. The families will stop to relax, watching the group's young as they frolic playfully in their jungle home. After a long day of traveling and eating the family makes a nest out of vegetation, either in treetops or on the ground, and will spend the night in this spot only to start their journey once again in the morning.

Gorillas are actually the smartest of the primates and exhibit human emotions like happiness and sadness. Scientists have discovered that gorillas are able to learn sign language to communicate words, and some gorillas have even put words together to form simple sentences. Koko - the world's most renowned gorilla - was rescued as a baby and has been taught sign language during her years living with humans. Koko now has a vocabulary of over 1,000 words and has become an ambassador for the great apes, demonstrating to the world the intelligence of the mountain gorilla.

Sadly, even though we have learned so much about the intelli-



gence and majesty of these animals, man remains the biggest threat to the existence of this species. The habitat for mountain gorillas is shrinking at an alarming rate, as the forests of eastern Africa are claimed by human refugees forced to flee their communities after years of violent conflict. War in Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), has resulted in the deaths of millions of people – over 3.5 million alone in DRC – and has also destroyed and infringed on the gorillas' habitat.

Gorillas are also being killed for their meat, often referred to as bushmeat. Though forest communities have hunted great apes for food for thousands of years, increased demand of the exotic bushmeat has commercialized this once traditional hunting ritual. The commercial bushmeat trade threatens gorillas, chimpanzees and bonobos with extinction.

The expansion of industrial logging in the lush jungles full of hardwood trees is another key threat to


the gorillas. These hardwood trees are often used in the U.S. for flooring, paneling, and high-end furniture. The logging roads open up access to forested areas for poaching, bushmeat hunting, agriculture expansion, and illegal logging. It is estimated that if the current trends continue,

### **Even with immediate action it will not be easy to save gorillas from the looming threat of extinction.**

the remaining wild apes of Africa will be gone within the next few decades. Even with immediate action it will not be easy to save gorillas from the looming threat of extinction. Gorilla populations recover slowly, as the female generally has only two to six offspring in her lifetime. Newborn gorillas are weak and tiny, weighing

about 4 pounds, and require substantial care and protection. As their habitat is destroyed, gorillas have less area to roam, isolating them into smaller groups and making them more susceptible to extinction due to the loss of genetic diversity.

Friends of the Earth's work recognizes that it is critical that we continue to work with governments and communities to create land use plans and regulations that allow both forest dependant communities and the mountain gorilla access to the forests and offer protection from the threats of logging, agricultural expansion, and the commercial bushmeat trade. Friends of the Earth has begun a new campaign that calls for the ecologically sustainable and socially just use of the Democratic Republic of Congo's vast natural resources located in the Congo Basin region of Central Africa, the world's second largest rainforest.

For updates on this campaign, sign up for Friends of the Earth news and email alerts at <http://www.foe.org>. 

# Recipes for a Clean House

**THE PRODUCTS WE BUY** to scrub, sterilize and beautify our houses are often anything but healthy. In fact, household cleaners are responsible for nearly 10 percent of all toxic exposures reported to U.S. Poison Control Centers. In addition to indoor pollution these products take a toll on the environment. Cleaning products pass through municipal treatment plants after being poured down household drains and subsequently enter our waterways. Although most of the ingredients break down into harmless substances during treatment, some do not, threatening water quality and wildlife.

You can make your own cleaners easily and inexpensively using ingredients found in your kitchen. Keep the following tips in mind when concocting your own cleaners:

- ▶ Be sure to label your mixtures to avoid confusion

- ▶ Liquid soap refers to castile soap, although coconut oil soap is a fine alternative.
- ▶ Vinegar means distilled white vinegar, which has a slight odor when wet, yet leaves no smell once dry.
- ▶ Washing soda and borax, though natural can irritate skin, so use gloves. Borax can be toxic when swallowed, so keep out of reach of children.

**All-purpose disinfectant:** To be used in the bathroom, the kitchen or wherever. Combine two teaspoons borax, four tablespoons vinegar and three to four cups hot water in a spray bottle. (For extra cleaning power, add 1/4 teaspoon liquid soap to the mixture).

**General dusting:** In a bowl, mix one teaspoon olive oil per 1/2 cup vinegar. Apply with a soft cloth.

**Detergent booster:** Adding baking soda or washing soda reduces the amount of laundry detergent you need to use by softening the water and thus increasing the detergent's power. For liquid detergent, add 1/2 cup of soda at the beginning of the wash. For powdered detergent, add 1/2 cup of soda during the rinse cycle.

**Air freshener:** Combine one teaspoon baking soda, one teaspoon vinegar or lemon juice, and two cups hot water in a spray bottle. Baking soda absorbs odors, while vinegar deodorizes. ○

Sources:

The Green Guide

<http://www.thegreenguide.com/green-cleaning-products/>

Children's Health Environmental Coalition

<http://www.checcnet.org/HealththeHouse>



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# Shell Oil Project Threatens Wildlife

By Elizabeth Bast

**SAKHALIN IS A LONG NARROW** island in the Pacific Ocean, several miles off of the coast of Russia. Comprised of three parallel mountain chains, the island has 60,000 streams and rivers and is covered with forests. The seas off the coast of the island are among the most productive areas of ocean in the world with abundant fish and shellfish, and local communities rely on these waters for their livelihoods. The area off the island is also a feeding ground for the Western Pacific grey whale, an endangered species with an estimated 100 surviving individuals.

A consortium of oil companies led by Shell is now building two 500-mile pipelines, two offshore drilling platforms, four undersea pipelines, and a massive liquefied natural gas plant off the shores of Sakhalin Island. The pipelines will cross 21 seismic faults and over 1000 rivers and streams on the island, including salmon spawning grounds. The project is also located near the Western Pacific grey whales' feeding grounds. Any oil or gas accidents or leaks could wreak havoc on the island, its wildlife and the surrounding waters. But in spite of the risks, financing for the project is expected and construction is proceeding.

Local indigenous communities maintain that their livelihoods based on fishing and reindeer herding have already been adversely impacted by oil development, and are staunchly opposed to the project. In January of this year, indigenous residents endured minus 30-degree temperatures to peacefully blockade the Sakhalin II mega-project and protest the negative impact it will have.

Expected profits from oil and gas are driving Shell and its partners.



Friends of the Earth and a coalition of groups ran this ad in the *Financial Times*, criticizing the Shell project.

However, Credit Suisse First Boston (CSFB), by providing financial advising for this harmful project, is violating its own commitment to the Equator Principles – a set of environmental guidelines for banks that require substantial safeguards for projects with this degree of environmental risk.

The Sakhalin II project is currently in its second phase of financing and construction. In 1994, Shell, Mitsubishi and Mitsui established the Sakhalin Energy Investment Company, which signed a production sharing agreement with the Russian government to develop the Sakhalin II oil and gas deposits. In 1998, Shell began the first phase of the Sakhalin II project, with \$116 million in financing each from the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

(EBRD), and Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

This first phase included the construction of a drilling platform off the coast of Sakhalin. Residents of Sakhalin say that since the construction of this first platform, there have been fewer and lower quality fish in the waters. Plans for phase two are much more extensive, and worries of environmental and social impacts have increased.

Shell is currently negotiating again with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and the U.S. Export-Import Bank – a U.S. government agency that lends money to U.S. companies for overseas projects – to finance the project.

Two recent developments should slow financing and construction of the project. In July, Shell announced that the project would be delayed and that estimates for project costs are now on “the order of \$20 billion.” Originally estimated to cost \$12 billion, Sakhalin II was described as the largest single integrated oil and gas project currently being undertaken, and this new estimate puts Sakhalin II off the charts.

Later in the month, citing environmental concerns, a Russian court upheld a decision rejecting an environmental impact review conducted by Royal Dutch/Shell's Sakhalin Energy Investment Corporation, meaning that the company will have to halt construction of the plant until its review is approved by the Russian courts.

Friends of the Earth will continue its campaign in solidarity with local communities to fight this environmentally and socially harmful project. ○

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

# Now is the Season for Workplace Giving!

**MANY EMPLOYERS SPONSOR** workplace giving programs to encourage employees to support organizations important to their communities. Employees can donate a small portion of their salary to a specific charity through payroll deduction. Friends of the Earth participates in hundreds of these campaigns directly and in many places through Earth Share. Our designation number is **0908**.

If your employer participates in the Combined Federal Campaign, United Way or other giving campaigns at the

state or local level, you can support Friends of the Earth directly.

## Earth Share



Earth Share, a nationwide network of America's leading non-profit environmental and conservation organizations, works to promote environmental education and charitable giving through workplace giving campaigns.

You can make your gift directly to us or as a national member of Earth

Share, Friends of the Earth will receive a percentage of all undesignated gifts given to Earth Share.

Earth Share now participates in campaigns at hundreds of government and corporate workplaces, including the federal government's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Find out if Earth Share participates at your workplace and to get more information visit [www.earthshare.org](http://www.earthshare.org) ☉

For more information contact Rosemary Greenaway, director of membership, 202-222-0722 or [rgreenaway@foe.org](mailto:rgreenaway@foe.org)

## MEMBER NOTICE

# Changing of the Guard

**AT THE JUNE 24 MEETING** of the Friends of the Earth Board of Directors Dan Gabel was elected Chairman of the board. He succeeds Avis Ogilvy Moore. Moore, a charter member of

Friends of the Earth has been a life long environmentalist, activist, and researcher. Gabel, President and CEO, Hagedorn & Company, has been involved with Friends of the Earth

since its inception also. He has served on the Friends of the Earth Board since 1995. Gabel served as treasurer of the board for ten years during Friends of the Earth's early years. ☉

A copy of the latest Financial Report and Registration filed by this organization may be obtained by contacting us at Friends of the Earth, 1717 Massachusetts Ave. NW Suite 600, Washington DC 20036-2008. Toll-free number: 877-843-8687. Or, for residents of the following states, by contacting any of the state agencies: **CALIFORNIA** - A copy of the Official Financial Statement may be obtained from the Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts, Department of Justice, P.O. Box 903447, Sacramento, CA 94203-4470 or by calling 916-445-2021. **FLORIDA** - A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE, WITHIN THE STATE, 1-800-435-7352. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. Florida registration # CH960. **KANSAS** Annual financial report is filed with Secretary of State #258-204-7. **MARYLAND** For the cost of copies and postage: Office of the Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401. **MICHIGAN** MICS 10926. **MISSISSIPPI** - The official registration and financial information of Friends of the Earth, Inc. may be obtained from the Mississippi Secretary of State's office by calling 1-888-236-6167. Registration by the Secretary of State does not imply endorsement by the Secretary of State. **NEW JERSEY** INFORMATION FILED WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CONCERNING THIS CHARITABLE SOLICITATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY BY CALLING 973-504-6215. REGISTRATION WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT. **NEW YORK** Office of the Attorney General, Department of Law, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271. **NORTH CAROLINA** FINANCIAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS ORGANIZATION AND A COPY OF ITS LICENSE ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE STATE SOLICITATION LICENSING BRANCH AT 1-888-830-4989. THE LICENSE IS NOT AN ENDORSEMENT BY THE STATE. **PENNSYLVANIA** - The official registration and financial information of Friends of the Earth may be obtained from Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within the state 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. **UTAH** - Permit #C495. **VIRGINIA** State Division of Consumer Affairs, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218; 1-800-552-9963. **WASHINGTON** - Charities Division, Office of the Secretary of the State, State of Washington, Olympia, WA 98504-0422; 1-800-332-4483. **WEST VIRGINIA** West Virginia residents may obtain a summary of the registration and financial documents from the Secretary of State, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305. Registration does not imply endorsement.



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