



Marla Smith-Nilson is co-founder and international director of Water Partners International. www.water.org
msmith@water.org

Bringing Water to a Thirsty World

Marla Smith-Nilson

When I first visited the village of El Limon, its 400 inhabitants shared their

water holes with pigs and other animals. They walked miles up steep ravines to collect contaminated water and struggled back down with their heavy loads. A tiny place lost in the middle of mountainous western Honduras, El Limon would have gone on with its children suffering—even dying—from diarrhea and water-borne diseases. Women and girls would have continued to spend hours each day fetching water for the survival of their families.

But in 1990, El Limon realized its wish for water. Water Partners International helped pay for a new water system. The villagers found a spring in the mountains, purchased the land around it, and protected the watershed. For over a year they worked to construct a gravity-flow system, building a water storage tank, digging trenches and laying 10 miles of pipe, all with simple hand tools. Each family also constructed a latrine.

Trained in water system operations and maintenance, they established a water board that governs the project and collects



monthly household water bills. Water has been flowing to each villager's home for over a decade now.

There are thousands of communities like El Limon across the globe. More than a billion people do not have access to clean water

and 2.4 billion do not have adequate sanitation. A counter on our website keeps a running tally of how many people die every day from water-related diseases. It reaches at least 13,500 every day.

Access to safe drinking water is a whopping problem with relatively simple solutions. We don't need to look for a miracle cure. Founded in 1990, Water Partners International links donors to projects that provide communities with clean drinking water. All 63 of the water systems we have helped build, from Central America to Asia to Africa, are still in operation today.

Access to water transforms poor communities. Young girls no longer have to walk miles to fetch

water; instead, they can use that time to go to school. Vegetable and flower gardens spring up. People take control of their lives. Most importantly, parents no longer watch their dehydrated children struggle for life. Today they have clean drinking water and dreams of extraordinary futures for their children.





Karen Allston is executive director of the Center for Environmental Law and Policy (CELP) in Seattle, WA. Rachael Paschal Osborn, teaches at Gonzaga Law School; She co-founded of the Washington Water Trust and CELP. www.celp.org

Troubled Waters

Karen Allston &
Rachael Paschal Osborn

mark Twain once said, “Whiskey is for drinking, water is for fighting.” The Pacific Northwest provides no exception. Even though Washington in particular is known for its wet climate, intense competition for limited supplies of water has created an environment rife with conflict.

The most notable water war in recent times occurred in the Klamath watershed, one of the driest regions in Southern Oregon. Beginning in 1905, the Bureau of Reclamation replaced the natural rivers, lakes and marshes of the Klamath Basin with a complex system of delivering water to farms. During the drought of 2001 the struggle over Klamath water came to national attention. For the first time in the history of this

methods of the Columbia River hydro system. Court orders now require dam operators to spill extra water over the dams instead of through the turbines during periods of low river flow. Utilities warn their customers that the summer spill requirement will result in higher electric bills. Battle lines are drawn between economic interests and the survival of fish.

Not only do dams interfere with natural stream flows, the artificial reservoirs behind them create the illusion that abundant water is available year-round. But Idaho, Washington and Oregon have given away so much water from the Columbia that the federal fish agency has recommended no more consumptive water rights be given during critical times of the year. When Washington did so anyway, Columbia River Tribes went to court in

January 2003 to block the water right permits. They succeeded in stopping the permits for the time being; but irrigators have ap-

pealed the ruling. Now Washington State has embarked on a contentious rule-making effort called the Columbia River Initiative to justify further water diversions.

As population grows and people use more water to power industry, irrigate crops, and quench their thirst, water is becoming increasingly scarce. Climate change scientists predict significantly less summer streamflow in Pacific Northwest rivers in the coming decades. Meanwhile, fish populations are declining as a direct result of habitat loss and

over-allocation of water from their home streams and rivers. The Northwest is now home to dozens of fish populations that are threatened with extinction. This adds pressure to keep water in rivers and streams to recover these imperiled species as well as avoid federal enforcement action. Conflicts are arising all over the West between those competing for the same limited resource.

Water laws in Western states encourage conflict between *instream* and *out-of-stream* uses. Our water allocation system is based on the “prior appropriation doctrine,” which means, simplistically, first come, first served. The first person to divert water from a river is entitled to continue using it in perpetuity; that right is superior to all subsequent water users.

Unfortunately, this system does not take into account the increasing demands on rivers we see today. In the rush to develop the West, the framers of the prior appropriation doctrine overlooked an important water user—the fish and other aquatic creatures that live in our waterways. Now many rivers throughout the Northwest have too little water to support fish.

World Water Wars

The environmental effects of water exploitation are not limited to the Western United States. Water projects around the globe have altered, and in many cases, severely damaged freshwater ecosystems.

The Aral Sea in Central Asia is a case in point. Once the fourth largest inland freshwater sea, diversion of water from the Amu Darya and Syr Darya Rivers to

Conflicts will not be resolved until there is widespread recognition that water is a scarce resource.

massive project, the federal government curtailed water to irrigators to ensure the survival of fish. However, in 2002 this policy was reversed and irrigation resumed. Tens of thousands of adult salmon migrating up the Klamath River died. The fight continues today in the courts and Congress.

A bumper sticker saying *Extinction is Forever, Dams Are Not* illustrates a complex point. Concerned about the connection between dams and endangered fish runs, environmental groups have challenged the operating

support industrial cotton farming has caused the Sea's water volumes to shrink by 75%. Not only have fishing and shipping industries collapsed, but tens of thousands of square miles of dry lakebed now create salt-polluted dust storms and desertification of the region.

The Nile River presents another example of both the ecological and geo-political conflicts inherent in water resource development. Construction of the Aswan High Dam enabled significant irrigation development in Egypt, but reduced the flow of sediments, nutrients, and fresh water to the Nile delta. The result is a dramatically receding Egyptian coastline, extinction of dozens of fish species, spread of water-borne disease, and decline in the productivity of Mediterranean fisheries.

The Nile is an international river that flows through ten nations, Egypt being the furthest downstream. With virtually no

water originating within its boundaries, Egypt has for a century fought wars and forced agreements upon its neighbors to ensure the continued flow of the Nile into Egypt. The 2001 Nile



Aswan High Dam, Egypt

Basin Initiative (NBI) is the first multi-lateral framework to include all of the Nile riparian nations in an effort to resolve allocation disputes. Notwithstanding the NBI, Tanzania has announced a new project to divert water from Lake Victoria, one of the Nile headwater sources.

The competing claims to waters of the Jordan and Yarmuk Rivers are a significant, but little-known basis of the conflicts in the

Middle East. The 1967 Six-Day War was triggered in part by threats to Israel's construction of water diversion works. Israel subsequently attacked Jordan's main irrigation canal to prevent its extension.

At present, freshwater usage in the Middle East exceeds annual supply, resulting in over-pumping of rivers and groundwater resources. The terrible conflicts in this part of the world will not be resolved without addressing the just allocation of water resources.

Nor will the conflicts here and across the globe be resolved until there is widespread recognition that water is a scarce resource. Humans, who have the power to divert, pollute, and manipulate water, also have the power to protect it. By accepting our collective responsibility as stewards of the earth's precious resources, we can begin to make water allocation decisions that value equity among all users of water.

CENTER FOR WATER AND ETHICS Loretta Jancoski, Ph.D. Director

Water symbolizes our diverse connections to the Earth and each other. Yet water is a source of deep conflict. There is growing anxiety about our ability to resolve these conflicts honestly and equitably. Litigation and legislative stagnation will not provide solutions. Opening communication and building trust will require new tools. The Center for Water and Ethics (CWE) at Seattle University addresses water conflicts using the ethical concepts of fairness, inclusiveness, and solidarity. CWE helps people engaged in water conflicts see the relevance of these concepts to viable solutions. Our methods are powerful but often unappreciated. They are storytelling, respectful listening, relationship building, and information sharing. In community gatherings, citizens examine the ethical and spiritual dimensions of their water issues.

Four ethical principles guide our discussions and provide a standard for solutions:

- ◆ **Sufficiency** requires that each sector of the community, including the environment, receives resources not just to survive but to thrive.
- ◆ **Sustainability** ensures that an adequate and acceptable quality of life sustains the needs of the community but does not jeopardize the prospects of future generations.
- ◆ **Participation** recognizes that all sectors of the community have a right to representation and to be heard and respected.
- ◆ **Solidarity** acknowledges the kinship and interdependence of the entire community, supporting and accepting those who suffer.

CWE is currently working with the Lower Hood Canal Watershed Implementing Committee to explore the ethics and spirituality embedded in their disputes. In light of how intractable their water problems seem, they are eager to try an approach that builds viable solutions on an ethical foundation.

jancoski@seattleu.edu



Peter Dykstra is a natural resources lawyer and project director of the Washington Water Trust. The views expressed here are his own. peter@thewatertrust.org

Who Owns Water?

Peter Dykstra

Charles Wilkinson, an influential scholar on natural resources, has named the system of water allocation used throughout the American West as “Lord of Yesterday.”¹ Although there have been some important changes, Washington’s water law is still based on a framework established in the middle of the 19th century called the *prior appropriation doctrine*.

Prior appropriation allocates the right to use water on *priority* or *seniority*. The first person to put water from a river to a



North Fork of the Teanaway River

beneficial use has the right to use that water before anyone else. The principle is known as *first in time, first in right*.

Even though the water in our rivers and streams is owned by the public, an individual can acquire the right to use those waters. In the early days of Washington State, to create a water right a person needed only pronounce the need for a certain amount of water at a certain rate for an authorized purpose, or *beneficial use*, and then actually put the water to that use, i.e., *perfect the water right*. Once perfected, the right to use water for the specified purpose was

guaranteed against all later uses of the water from that river. In times of limited water supply, the older, or *senior*, water rights can stop *junior* water rights from be-

Prior appropriation puts power over our water resource in the hands of the few.

ing used. Once granted, a water right must be used or it is lost.

For most of the first century of the prior appropriation, beneficial uses included agriculture, ranching, mining, drinking water, hydropower, and industry, all of which required the removal of the water from the river. There was no recognition of the value of water being left instream. In many places, so many rights were established for out-of-stream uses that rivers and streams could not meet the demand.

Today the prior appropriation system remains intact, though people now have to apply for a water right and meet a series of tests before the right is granted, if at all. One change for the better is that the value of water being left instream is now acknowledged, and instream flow is recognized as a beneficial use. While important, these recent fixes have not been enough to create a just system of water management.

Senior water rights for out-of-

stream uses still dry up many of our rivers and streams. Our system fails to provide equitably for the water needs of the “more than human world” that we have long ignored. Endangered salmon runs, properly functioning riparian ecosystems, and a wide variety of other natural needs continue to suffer. Human needs for aesthetic beauty and the spiritual experience of encountering free-flowing rivers are helped only feebly by the small changes we have made to this “Lord of Yesterday.”

The prior appropriation system puts power over our water resource in the hands of the few—those who were here first or those who have enough money to buy senior water rights—not in the hands of the many, who are ultimately the true owners of the water resource. This makes it difficult for newcomers to obtain water even for basic human needs. The increasing monetary value of water makes it less and less

likely that the poor will ever have guaranteed access.

If we continue to govern our water resources through this outdated framework, we are likely to end up with

a more unjust and violent world. New ways of allocating water must be created to equitably meet all of our present and future water needs. We need a more just means of quenching the world’s deep thirst.

25% of Washington’s watersheds have insufficient water to support the needs of people, plants and animals.

¹ Charles F. Wilkinson, *Crossing the Next Meridian: Land, Water and the Future of the West*, 21. (Island Press, 1992).

Water Wisdom in Story

Peter Donaldson

This is a story about the power of stories. Most of us generally expect that we are living the ideological American story: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Most of us generally deny that we are living the ecological shadow of that story: resource extraction, consumption, waste, and the sophisticated superficiality of selfishness. Some among us are working diligently to author a new story, one of sustainability, in which we rekindle our economy with choices that are ecologically restorative. We are creeping towards a tipping point of collective awakening. Or collapse.

I do not live in fear, but faith. And yet I struggle with a story too big for its binding. The story of nine billion people by the year 2050, half of whom will suffer resource dislocation, social fragmentation, mass migration, starvation, all of it driven by water

rights, water availability, water quality.

Here in the Pacific Northwest, we recognize, in the salmon story, our own possible heroism, our understanding of the cyclical nature of things, our increasingly humbled place in the web of life. Through re-imagining our story we construct for ourselves a new mental model of sustainable prosperity. For me, this is Salmon Nation, where people and salmon thrive.

I see myself as the Johnny Appleseed of Salmon Nation. As a storyteller, my primary work in the world is to gather and share stories of what's possible. No more divisive complaining. No more blame. It's time to write a new story and broadcast it, like seed.

The watershed of my ministry flows from three tributary streams. I tour the bioregion with a one-man show called *Salmonpeople*.

I work with public and private schools to awaken watershed wisdom. I facilitate community-based campaigns to promote sustainable behavior. You can learn more by swimming my website, but let me introduce you now to the first of these streams.

Salmonpeople; the Show

Salmonpeople is a one-man show featuring stories that reveal the ecological and economic interdependence of salmon and people in the Pacific Northwest. The story is told through a modern day everyman named Cyrus who finds

himself employed up at the local dam driving his tanker truck "salmon taxi" to transport spawners up past where a fish ladder never got built. Cyrus has been scratching his head lately about this whole endangered species thing. By nature a curious man, he has determined to recapture his watershed address by learning the major rivers in the bioregion and the stories they hold. Cyrus' self-taught lessons in ecology and economics are a triumph of the vernacular, a synthesis of complex patterns and changing values in the name of common sense for the common good.

This story is my calling card. It's how I learn and how I contribute at the same time. The strategic life cycle of this work goes like this.

The *Salmonpeople* story stimulates community dialogue about what we value. As we learn, we adapt our behavior to align with what we value. Naturally, we want to pass these behaviors onto our children. We begin to integrate lessons in ecology, economics and civic participation. We form new beliefs, namely, that it is no longer appropriate to educate our youth to *compete* in a world economy, but seek, rather, to educate our youth to *co-operate* in a world community. Well-educated children know the responsibilities of citizen stewardship. Citizen stewards evolve an economy that is inherently restorative. Restored natural systems sustain vibrant human community. This story has no end.

Salmonpeople is both a living story and a way to live. I invite you to step into the current.



Peter Donaldson is an educator, performance artist, and storyteller. His one-man show *Salmonpeople* tours schools in the Pacific Northwest. www.peterdonaldson.net
peter@peterdonaldson.net





Stephanie Raymond is the Education Coordinator for People for Puget Sound. www.pugetsound.org

Salmon Connect It All

Stephanie Raymond

Wherever you are in the Pacific Northwest, from coastal rainforests to the high desert plateaus, salmon are there with you. Whether water is close to you, dripping from your flooded gutters and seeping into your basement in winter, or delivered via irrigation ditch from a distant river channel to nurture crops through scorching August, you live in a watershed that is shared with salmon.

In the Puget Sound watershed and Columbia River system, many smaller watersheds join together to drain vast areas, channeling water, life and some less desirable substances toward the Pacific Ocean. Salmon weave watersheds together, using every part of them from the headwater streams where they are born, to the estuaries where tidal wetlands

provide shelter from predators, to the open ocean where they feed and grow until it is time for them to begin their journey back up



McAllister Estuary

stream to spawn.

Along the way, salmon are food for more than 137 different species, including orca whales and bald eagles. Salmon carcasses nourish streamside forests hundreds of miles from salt water. In turn, the forests provide habitat for native insects that feed juvenile salmon. Adult salmon

require smaller saltwater fish for food. Called forage fishes, these species have their own particular habitat needs: eelgrass meadows in calm, shallow near-shore waters, and fine gravel and sand on upper beaches unmarred by seawall construction. Without these, forage fish cannot successfully spawn, and adult salmon have inadequate food to fuel their upstream journey.

We have all heard that salmon populations have declined in recent years. In Puget Sound, this decline

corresponds to decreasing eelgrass habitat, increasing shoreline development, and the loss of 20% of the orcas, which are salmon-dependent. Puget Sound orcas carry high levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a toxin that causes neurological, immunological and reproductive problems. Recent reports of high PCB

WHAT YOU CAN DO

As watersheds in the Pacific Northwest risk dying the death of a thousand cuts, the question of what one concerned individual can do to protect our water resources becomes critical. The good news is that many individual actions have a quick and easily observed impact, and there is much that can be done to help. Here are a few suggestions:

- ◆ Reduce or eliminate use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers in your lawn and/or garden.
- ◆ Conserve water in the lawn or garden by using cisterns and rain barrels.
- ◆ Keep your car in good working order: fix oil leaks; dispose of oil properly if changing at home; wash your car on grass or at a car wash instead of in the street.
- ◆ Drive less: air pollution from car exhaust eventually becomes water pollution.
- ◆ Clean up pet waste.
- ◆ Use least-toxic alternatives for household cleaning and maintenance. Whenever possible, avoid products that say *caution*, *warning*, *danger* or *poison* on the label.
- ◆ If you have a septic system, be sure it is in good working order and have it serviced regularly.
- ◆ If you live along shoreline, plant native plants along banks to stabilize soil and improve wildlife habitat, or leave existing native vegetation undisturbed. Explore conservation easements or public benefit systems for property tax breaks.
- ◆ Volunteer to help with local habitat restoration projects and other water quality advocacy work.

levels in farmed salmon have glossed over alarming levels of PCBs in wild salmon—the preferred food of Puget Sound orcas. Seafloor sediments contaminated with industrial waste introduce PCBs, heavy metals and other toxins into the food chain where they increase as they are passed from species to species and impact the health of higher predators like the orcas—and us.

Estuarine wetlands, highly productive environments in their natural state, have been dredged and filled to create seaports at the expense of critical habitat for many species. Storm water carrying chemical runoff from suburban lawns and gardens and agricultural areas, together with sewage effluent and failed septic systems, are thought to feed plankton blooms that cause paralytic shellfish poisoning outbreaks. Such runoff is known to contaminate shellfish with fecal coliform bacteria, resulting in shellfish bed closures up and down the West Coast.

Water quality is reduced as much by habitat alteration as by toxic pollution. Vegetation on stream banks and shorelines and wetland areas help to filter and slow runoff, preventing floods and erosion. Water carrying large amounts of soil is darker and absorbs more heat than clear water, and the warmer water is, the less oxygen it contains. Decreased oxygen levels have dire conse-

quences for many aquatic organisms.

Throughout the Northwest, water pollution and alteration of aquatic habitats have caused so much ecological stress that species at every level of the food chain are at risk. Five years after Puget Sound Chinook salmon were added to the list of endangered species, few real regulatory changes have been made to affect significant ecosystem-wide improvements to their critical habitat.

Hope for the Future

The Duwamish River estuary in Seattle is a prime example of degraded aquatic habitat.

More than 95% of the original wetlands have been destroyed, and the floor of the river is highly

contaminated with industrial pollution. However, the Duwamish estuary is also a great example of

hope for the future. As clean-up

begins on the toxic sediment hot spots, a series of habitat restoration projects has turned drainage ditches, old lumber yards and storm water pipes into tidal sloughs where juvenile salmon feed, harbor seals and sea birds of many species can be seen, and native plants grow. As much damage as has been done to our waters, it is possible through careful stewardship to improve water quality and habitat for every living thing that relies upon water. And every living thing does.

Only 10% of the water consumed globally is directly utilized for human needs; 20% is used in industry and up to 70% for agriculture.

BOTTLED SECRET

Bottled water is *pure*. Bottled water is *fresher*. It tastes *better*. It's *healthier*. We've all heard the message. Bottled water is good. Tap water is bad.

Bottled water is the fastest growing segment of the beverage industry. By 2005 it is expected to become the second most consumed beverage, just behind soft drinks. However, a 1997 United Nations report found bottled water to have no nutritional advantage over tap water.

A four-year study of bottled water by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) came to the same conclusion, "No one should assume that just because he or she purchases water in a bottle that it is necessarily any better regulated, purer, or safer than most tap water." In fact, "our snapshot testing of more than 1,000 bottles of 103 brands of water by three independent labs found . . . about one third of the bottled waters we tested contained significant contamination¹

What's more, plastic water bottles can take up to 1000 years to biodegrade. Nine out of ten water bottles—30-million a day—end up as garbage or litter.²

1,000 gallons of tap water in the home costs the same as one bottle of Evian. Yet about 25% of the bottled water sold in the United States comes from a municipal water supply.

Many environmental groups and resource managers are coming to the conclusion that the cheapest, often safest and most ecologically responsible option is water that flows from our home faucet.

The NRDC report concludes, "While we reasonably may choose to use bottled water for convenience, taste, or as a temporary alternative to contaminated tap water, it is no long-term national solution . . . A major shift to bottled water could undermine funding for tap water protection, raising serious equity issues for the poor. Manufacture and shipping of billions of bottles causes unnecessary energy and petroleum consumption, leads to landfilling or incineration of bottles, and can release environmental toxins. The long-term solution to our water woes is to fix our tap water so it is safe for everyone."



¹ Natural Resources Defense Council. "Bottled Water: Pure Drink or Pure Hype?" 1999. www.nrdc.org/water/drinking

² Brian Howard. "Message in a Bottle," *E Magazine*, September-October, 2003.



James Martin Schram is Associate Professor of Religion at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. This is an excerpt from his book *Christian Environmental Ethics: A Case Method Approach*, Orbis Books, 2003.

Water: A Sacred Resource

James Martin-Schram

Various Christian traditions support the view that water is a sacred communal resource.

Living in arid lands, the ancient Hebrews were keenly aware of the relationship of water to the divine. The biblical writers emphasize that God provides water for the flourishing of all creation, not just human life. It is clear from the first creation account that the waters of Earth are to be a place where species thrive:

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. (Gen. 1:20-22)

The psalmist reiterates the theme that God waters creation so all forms of life may flourish: "You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water..." (Ps. 65:9). God provides water to be a blessing to all forms of life.

God also uses water as a means for personal, social, and planetary transformation. For example, God uses water in the sacrament of baptism as a means of *personal* transformation to

bring new members into the body of Christ. God uses water as a means of *social* transformation by parting the waters during the Exodus so the Hebrews might escape slavery in Egypt. And God uses water as a means of *planetary* transformation to water the

trees of life in this life and the next. In the book of Revelation, the river of life waters the trees of life in the New Jerusalem whose twelve kinds of fruit will bring healing to the nations (Rev. 22:1-2).

From the perspective of the biblical writers, God uses water to transform every aspect of life.

Moreover, provision for the thirst of the poor and defenseless is a fundamental measure of one's faithfulness to God. In Isaiah 3, God takes bread and water away from those who exploit the poor (Is. 3:1, 13-15).

long-term support for all who are thirsty and hungry (Is. 41:17-19). Jesus reflects this tradition of the

prophets when in the parable of the Last Judgment, the condemned ask him, "When was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty," Jesus replies: "Truly I tell

you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me" (Mt. 25:41-46). The distribution of water is always a matter of justice.

Even a cursory review of Scripture reveals that human ownership of property is limited and should be directed toward preserving the common good. God is regarded as the ultimate owner of all that exists. The psalmist writes, "The Earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it" (Ps. 24:1). It is clear that nature has value because God thinks it is "good, very good" (Gen. 1:31), not only because it has some utility or monetary value to human beings.

The use of creation should benefit all species, not only one. Through springs, streams, and plants, God seeks to provide for all by "giving them their food in due season" (Ps. 104:27). Land and water use decisions that profit human beings but jeopardize the existence of other species violate God's desire that all species live and flourish.

The distribution of water is always a matter of justice.

A human being can live for a month without solid food, but only a few days without water.



Reflection on Water

Take time for personal and communal reflection and discussion on how you experience water in your life.

- ◆ I take water for granted.
- ◆ I rarely think about water.
- ◆ I usually think of water as something that just comes out of the faucet.
- ◆ I have no idea where my community's water comes from.
- ◆ I think of water as a commodity that can be bought and sold.
- ◆ When I use water, I usually don't consider if there will be enough left for future generations.
- ◆ I rarely read, study, or discuss issues on water and the common good.
- ◆ I find it hard to see how my use of water makes any difference to fish and other species.
- ◆ My spiritual formation and understanding of Catholic social teaching on water and ecology is just beginning.
- ◆ I stop to enjoy the beauty of water flowing in our rivers, lakes and streams.
- ◆ I take time to deepen my awareness of my intimate connection to water and all of nature.
- ◆ I am awed and grateful for the water flowing from my household faucet.
- ◆ I know my watershed address.
- ◆ I see water as a basic human need that belongs to the whole community.
- ◆ I am changing my water use patterns to conserve and protect our water resources.
- ◆ I reflect, discuss, and act on water issues.
- ◆ My choices and patterns are shifting to take endangered species into consideration.
- ◆ My spirituality is evolving to include a deeper sense of communion with water and all God's creation.

Access to safe water is a fundamental human need and, therefore, a basic human right. Contaminated water jeopardizes both the physical and social health of all people. It is an affront to human dignity.

-Kofi Annan, U.N. Secretary-General

The Blessings of Water

are threefold
One to arrive
Two to fill.
And the third
to flow on.

Every prayer
in the world
has an answer.

Every tear
in the heart
finds a home
in some kind of faith,

and every thirst
in the body
has something
perfect to meet it.

Like the flow of water
from source
to depth,

drop by drop
rain
makes an ocean.

Word by word
prayer
makes a world.

Water and words
converse
in this blessing
as a way
to remember
what is clear
and flowing.

Simple
and relentless,
this clarity
at the heart
of our prayer,

that
word
and water
and a blessing
together
make creation
anew.

David Whyte

*Written for the Seattle University
Conference: "Liturgy for Sustainable
Communities," 1997*



Justice Circles

Currently we have 5 Spanish and 4 English speaking Justice Circles in progress

- ◆ Yakima
- ◆ Tacoma
- ◆ Wapato
- ◆ Spokane
- ◆ Sunnyside
- ◆ Bellevue
- ◆ Sumner
- ◆ Seattle

The Circles bring women who are low-income together with others who are economically stable to explore the issues that affect low-income women. Together they build community and act for change. Consider participating in a Justice Circle. Call 206.223.1138 for more information.

Ways to Support and Sustain IPJC

Direct Donation: Use the enclosed envelope to contribute.

United Way: Thank you to those of you who chose to give to IPJC through United Way. If your business is part of a Spring campaign please consider writing Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center in as your designation on your United Way Pledge form.

Company Matching: Let us know if your company has a matching program. When you send in your contribution enclose the company form or information for requesting matching funds.

Raffle: Purchase tickets.

Feedback: Take a few minutes to complete the feedback form on page 11. Use the enclosed envelope to return it to us.

Life Before Profit

Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment members are alarmed by the growing water crisis and the role of corporations in this issue. We believe that water is not a commodity, but it is an essential element for life. All people and civic, economic and political structures share a responsibility to respect and protect the world's water supply. In collaboration with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility we are studying the issues in order to use our position as shareholders, citizens and consumers to work for adequate access to clean, affordable water for all life. In our efforts, we

- ◆ raise awareness among corporations and other shareholders on the problematic issues surrounding water;
- ◆ urge corporations to affirm access to clean water as a human right, protect or restore the water supply, and minimize the use of water in manufacturing processes;
- ◆ hold corporations accountable for the use, protection and restoration of water.

We are addressing the role of corporations in the move to privatize the world's water services. The World Bank has been promoting this as a solution to countries' debts and as a way to build and maintain costly water systems. But privatization increases the cost of water and does not satisfy the thirst of the world's poorest people.

Another focus of our work is the soft drink industry. Goldman Sachs estimates that by 2005 Coca-Cola (Dasani), Pepsico (Aquafina) and Nestle (Perrier) will control 75% of the bottled water market and make 85% of the profits. (Source: *Food Technology*, "Profits Pouring from Bottled Water.")

An environmental impact of the soft drink industry is water usage—drawing water from spring sites for bottled water and using water at every phase of the production process and in the manufacture of beverage containers.

Aluminum Cans—the energy wasted in the year 2001 by not recycling aluminum cans could have met the electricity needs of the homes in Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, San Francisco and Seattle for one year.

Students Commit to Service & Justice

IPJC held the College Immersion at St. Martin College and welcomed students from Lewis and Clark College in Oregon. Service, justice, prayer, ritual and community building are the key components of the week-end together. Thank you to team leaders Renee DeSousa and Elissa Knight who are former Urban Plunge and College Immersion participants.

peace & justice center

IPJC at the Legislature

Thank you to the 115 people who drove, flew, and bussed their way to Olympia with IPJC for Church Advocacy day. We had individual appointments with legislators in 32 of the 48 districts in the state! We encourage you to continue to contact your legislators. Links to issues and action on our website www.ipjc.org/legislation



Advocacy day participants at briefing with Fr. Brian Hehir



Advocacy day participants meet with Rep. Maralyn Chase (D-32)

Last chance to support IPJC & IMVP and WIN \$2000.00

Thank you for your support! We still need your help to meet our goal. The Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center and the Intercommunity Ministry Volunteer Program are concluding our raffle. At noon on March 31, 2004 at the Intercommunity offices, winners for the \$2,000.00, \$1,000.00 and \$500.00 prizes will be drawn. Call 206-223-1138 and enter to win TODAY!

A Matter of Spirit (AMOS) Speak Up, Speak Out!

Please return in IPJC envelope

Check all boxes that apply:

- Informative
- Useful tools/resources
- Readable
- I read it occasionally
- I rarely read it
- Discontinue sending AMOS to me

What I like about AMOS:

1. _____

2. _____

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1. _____

2. _____

Topics I would like to see covered in AMOS:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Comments: _____

Water Resources

Books and Articles

Barlow, Maude and Tony Clarke. *Blue Gold*. The New Press, 2002.

Catholic Bishops of the Northwest. *Columbia River Pastoral*.

www.columbiariver.org

Ferrier, Catherine. "Bottled Water: Understanding a Social Phenomenon." World Wildlife Fund, 2001.

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Educating Young People about Water. A database of 151 water-related curricula.

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Salmonpeople Theatrical Presentations and Watershed Legacy Workshops.

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Saving Water Partnership

www.savingwater.org

A Matter of Spirit is a publication of the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center

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World Water Day

World Water Day 2004 on March 22nd focuses on the theme: *Water and Disasters*. Weather and climate-related extreme events, such as tornadoes, cyclones, storms, floods and drought, account for nearly 75% of all disasters. They lead to an enormous human suffering, loss of life and economic damage. Monitoring these events, predicting their movements and issuing timely warnings are essential to mitigate the disastrous impact of these events. For information about how you can participate in World Water Day, go to www.worldwaterday.org.

Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center

1216 NE 65th St
Seattle, WA 98115

address service requested

phone: 206.223.1138

fax: 206.621.7046

email: ipjc@ipjc.org

web: www.ipjc.org