

FLOW

(FOR LOVE OF WATER)

Advancing Public Trust Solutions to Save the Great Lakes

Goals

- 1. Build deep public awareness and to educate decision makers in government, academia, business, and communities about current and future issues, threats and abuses to the waters of the Great Lakes, Public Trust Principles, and how these principles can be implemented to provide a framework for governance over these waters to protect them now and for future generations.*
- 2. Advocate for the respect of the waters of the Great Lakes Basin, the implementation of public trust principles in our governance of the Great Lakes, the protection of the Lakes themselves, the rich biodiversity they support, and the rights that belong to the people living in the Great Lakes Basin.*

YOU HAVE RIGHTS

Public Trust Doctrine

Used as early as the Justinian period, The Public Trust Doctrine outlines how common resources are to be held in trust by the state for the use and enjoyment of the general public, rather than private interests. The Great Lakes are protected under this doctrine from being exploited by private groups for profit.

Drawbacks

The Public Trust's biggest weakness is the lack of awareness to the doctrine itself. Much of the public is unaware that they are the owners to common resources and are protected by this doctrine. Many advocates would benefit from knowing the inner workings of the doctrine and its ability to achieve protection for beneficiaries.

Success

The Trust puts the power in the hands of the people, which is where it holds strength. When governments fail to protect the citizens, resulting in actual harm, they are able to invoke The Public Trust Doctrine and find refuge within this principle.

- In 2009 environmental attorney, Jim Olson, settled a 10 year long court case in Mecosta County, MI against Nestlé Waters North America/Ice Mountain extraction.
- In 1993 native groups in Hawaii fought against suburban developers to shut down the Waiahole Ditch, which was diverting 27 million gallons of water per day from local farms in the area. They succeeded by citing The Public Trust Doctrine.

Mecosta County, Michigan

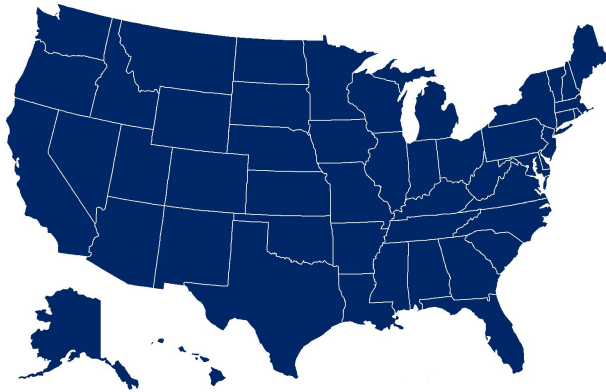
Nestle representatives claimed the company's studies demonstrated that pumping 400 gallons per minute (gpm) — 210 million gallons a year — would not harm the wetlands, stream and lakes.

A group of Big Rapids-area citizens formed Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation (MCWC) and began asking questions. MCWC's experts advised that pumping would reduce the flow of the stream 28 percent and the level of two lakes by as much as 6 inches. Then MCWC's experts discovered that Nestle's computer model was flawed: It included a "boundary" — a fixed assumption that the headwater lake and stream had an infinite amount of water. Incredibly, the model would never show impact.

In late 2003, Mecosta County Judge found that the proposed extraction would cause substantial harm at any rate of pumping. Judge Root issued a permanent injunction ordering Nestle to stop all pumping.

- Jim Olson, Environmental Attorney

WATER BOTTLES: ARE THEY WORTH THE CONVENIENCE?



USA: 8.6 BILLION GALLONS



WORLDWIDE: 53 BILLION GALLONS

WHERE IN THE WORLD DOES THIS WATER COME FROM?

- Generally, water bottles sold are sourced “locally”, meaning from their home country. Since the Great Lakes are the largest source of freshwater in the U.S., American water bottles are mainly sourced there.

WHO IS THE WORST OFFENDER?

- There are many corporations who extract water from common water sources, but by far the worst offender is **NESTLÉ**.

NESTLÉ? LIKE THE COLORFUL CANDY COMPANY?

- YEP. Nestlé has a huge bottling plant in Mecosta County, Michigan and another in Guelph, Ontario. They extract **400 gallons a minute** in Michigan.
 - **HOW ARE CORPORATIONS ALLOWED TO EXTRACT WATER? I THOUGHT THAT GREAT LAKES WATER IS CONSIDERED A PUBLIC GOOD?**

- THE '**WATER BOTTLE LOOPHOLE**' IN THE GREAT LAKES COMPACT ALLOWS PEOPLE TO DIVERT WATER FROM THE LAKES, BUT ONLY IF THEY ARE IN **CONTAINERS HOLDING 5.7 GALLONS OR LESS**-THUS ALLOWING COMPANIES TO TAKE AS MUCH BOTTLED WATER AS THEY CAN.

NESTLÉ MUST BE PAYING A TON FOR THIS WATER, RIGHT?

- NESTLÉ PAYS ALMOST **NOTHING** FOR THIS WATER. BECAUSE THEIR PUMPING STATIONS ARE LOCATED ON PRIVATE LAND, THEY PAY ONLY A SMALL PERMITTING FEE AND COSTS OF LEASING THE LAND. IN FACT, THEY RECEIVED \$13 MILLION IN TAX BREAKS WHEN THEY LOCATED IN MECOSTA COUNTY.

WAIT, WHAT!?! SO THEY GET THE WATER PRACTICALLY FOR FREE AND THEN SELL IT BACK TO US?

- EXACTLY. NESTLÉ PROFITS ABOUT **\$1.8 BILLION A DAY** FROM THEIR WATER BOTTLING PLANTS.



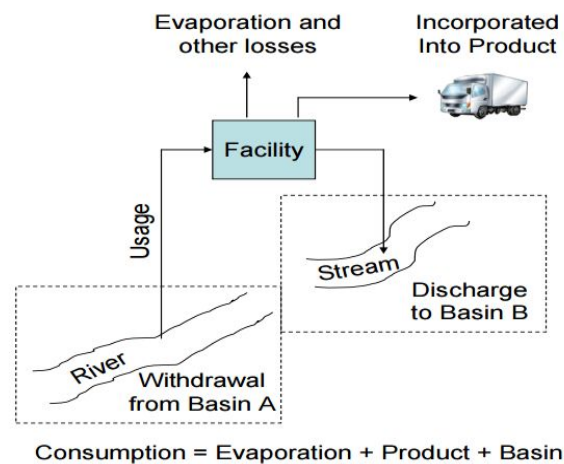
HOW MUCH DO DISPOSABLE WATER BOTTLES REALLY COST?

- THE AVERAGE COST OF A 12 OZ WATER BOTTLE IS \$1.20. 90% OF THE COST IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PHYSICAL BOTTLE, LABEL, AND LID.
- 340 MILLION GALLONS OF OIL ARE USED TO PRODUCE THE WORLD'S PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES.

- IN NORTH AMERICA, IT TAKES 1.39 LITERS TO CREATE 1 LITER OF WATER-THE WATER USAGE IS MORE IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD.
- PRODUCING BOTTLED WATER CONSUMED 2.5 MILLION TONS OF CARBON DIOXIDE

WHAT'S THE ACTUAL WATER FOOTPRINT?

ACCORDING TO THE WATER FOOTPRINT NETWORK, THE ACTUAL FOOTPRINT CREATED BY BOTTLED WATER AND OTHER DISPOSABLE BEVERAGES IS MUCH HIGHER THAN COMPANIES CLAIM. THE USAGE VARIES, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THAT PACKAGING CONSUMES MOST OF THE WATER.



DOES ANYONE DEFEND DISPOSABLE WATER BOTTLES?

- WELL, **yes**, THE CORPORATIONS CERTAINLY DO. NESTLE SPOKESMAN, BRIAN FLAHERTY CLAIMS THE WATER BOTTLE INDUSTRY IS BEING SINGLED OUT. "HOW DO YOU DEFINE A PRODUCT?" HE ASKED. "WATER GOES INTO BEER IN WISCONSIN AND RADIATORS IN DETROIT. WHY WOULD YOU HAVE A SEPARATE STANDARD FOR BOTTLED WATER VERSUS SODA?"

- 'BOTTLED water matters', funded by 'THE INTERNATIONAL BOTTLED WATER ASSOCIATION' CLAIMS MULTIPLE REASONS FOR CHOOSING WATER BOTTLES, "CONSUMERS ARE NOT UNIFORMLY REPLACING THEIR PUBLIC DRINKING WATER WITH BOTTLED WATER; RATHER THEY ARE CHOOSING BOTTLED WATER OVER THE OTHER BEVERAGES AVAILABLE AT THE STORE AND HOME"

IS BOTTLED WATER REALLY SAFER THAN TAP?

- In most cases, **no**. There are HARDLY any regulations for BOTTLED WATER. MUNICIPAL WATER IS TESTED UP TO 300 TIMES A DAY VS BOTTLED WATER WHICH MAY ONLY BE TESTED ONCE.

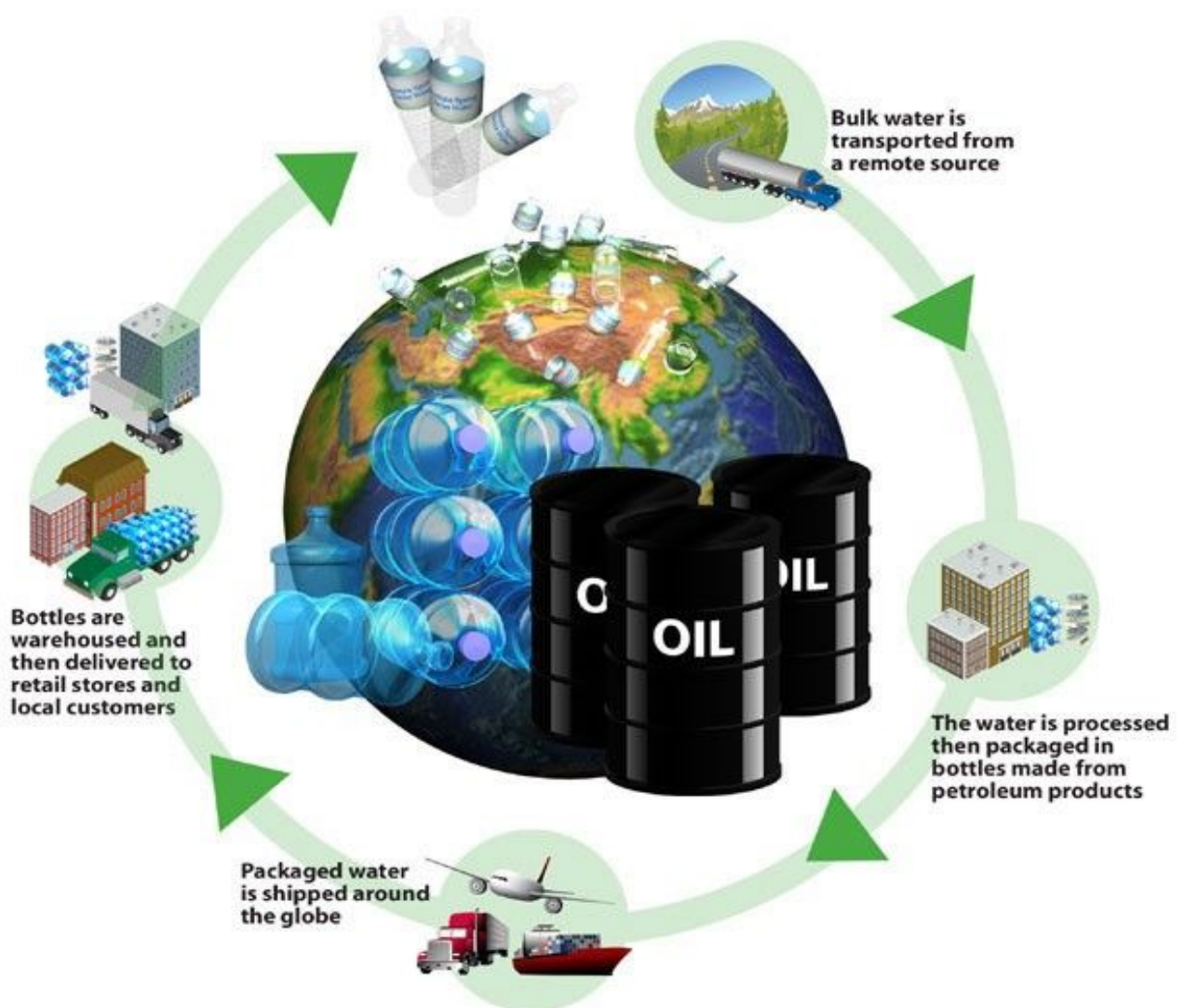
SO, I SHOULD JUST DRINK OUT OF THE TAP?

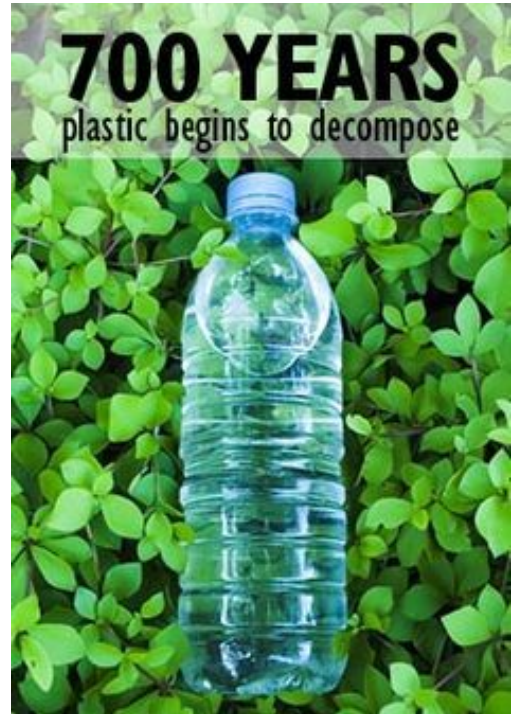
- In simple, **yes**. There are certainly exceptions, BUT IN CHICAGO, THE WATER IS CONSIDERED INCREDIBLY SAFE AND POTABLE. **COUPLING YOUR TAP TO A FILTER WILL ENSURE CLEAN WATER THAT IS PERFECTLY SAFE TO DRINK.**

IN THE UNITED STATES, WHICH MIGHT HAVE THE CLEANEST TAP WATER IN THE WORLD, FOOD & WATER WATCH REPORTS THAT ALMOST **HALF** (47.8% IN 2009) **OF THE BOTTLED WATER SOLD IS PURIFIED MUNICIPAL WATER.** THAT MEANS THAT YOU ARE PAYING A HUGE MARKUP FOR THE WATER THAT RUNS FREELY FROM YOUR TAP.

RECYCLE RECYCLE RECYCLE!

- ONLY 1 IN 5 BOTTLES ARE RECYCLED. CONSIDERING THAT APPROXIMATELY 60 MILLION PLASTIC WATER BOTTLES ARE USED EVERY DAY IN THE US, WE CAN ASSUME THAT NEARLY **18,834,000,000 END UP IN THE LANDFILL EACH YEAR.** EACH BOTTLE CAN TAKE UP TO **700 YEARS TO DECOMPOSE.**





“Access to WATER should not be a public right.”

- Nestlé CEO Peter Brabeck





WHAT WE LEARNED

- WE COLLECTED PLASTIC BOTTLES FROM UIC CAMPUS. IT TOOK US 3 DAYS TO ACQUIRE ABOUT 400 BOTTLES.
- UIC MAINTENANCE DOES A GREAT JOB OF COLLECTING GARBAGE FROM CAMPUS, MOST BINS WERE HARDLY FULL.
- STUDENTS AND FACULTY DO RECYCLE, BUT WE DID FIND MANY BOTTLES IN THE WRONG CANS.
- SURPRISINGLY, MANY BOTTLES WERE STILL FULL OF WATER.
- WE NOTICED MOST STUDENTS USING REFILLABLE BOTTLES INSTEAD OF DISPOSABLE.
- PLASTIC BOTTLES MAKE A SURPRISINGLY STRONG STRUCTURE.

SCULPTURE

- We have the opportunity to present our sculpture at UIC's Final Fling Event. Students will have the opportunity to sit in our chair as we ask them trivial questions about water extraction for bottling. After participating, they will receive a reusable water bottle courtesy of the UIC Sustainability Grant Fund.

**April 22nd
3pm-7pm
East Campus Quad**