

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

What are legislators thinking?

TO THE EDITOR | What are they thinking? Erwin Town, Painted Post Village, and Corning City officials are proposing to sell each day hundreds of millions of gallons of water – our very most precious natural resource – to Pennsylvania natural gas fracking companies. What will we think in times to come when we turn on a faucet, and there is no water to be had?

How will this distribution of hundreds of millions of gallons of water affect our shared aquifer? Has there been a study of the capability of this geological feature? In past years, in times of drought we were instructed not to water our lawns or gardens, or wash our vehicles, or launder bedding, or fill our backyard swimming pools so as not to overtax the aquifer. Now we are considering millions of gallons of water being delivered elsewhere.

I live downstream from the Water Barons, and I fear for my private well's viability. But worse, how can the proposed downstream Corning Hospital take care of its patients with its primary source of water compromised?

What will the Water Barons do when the rivers dry up, as they sometimes do? I know that in 1975 it was possible to wade in sneakers from Denison Park to Gibson, for I did it. Will the Water Barons then set up a range of coffer dams – the very kind of dams that have been used in Pennsylvania to great ecological damage? And how might the fracking firms respond to unfilled contracts because of the lack of our merchandise?

How will the three municipalities draw up this water? I don't imagine they will just stick oversized straws into the passing river, but that will be generously distributed through three compact municipal water systems. What will then happen to the water quality of existing municipal wells? Corning already must scrub the water from one of its city wells.

Then will this water with all its added pollutants come back to the Steuben County Landfill – another decision that seems like a sell-off of our irreplaceable assets? Our legislators are making short term decisions which could affect the quality of life of our entire watershed for decades. What are they really thinking? It's high time to sound off!

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