Dear friends,

I'm very happy to share with you an essay written by a student in Michele Wilkins Bailey's fourth grade class. If you need a bit of inspiration this week, please read and share their words. Sending gratitude to Michele and Clara for the example they set.

In the struggle,
Lee Stewart
BeyondExtremeEnergy.org

Just as climate change is the overwhelming challenge of our future, so too are our children the hope and promise of our future. After attending the Climate Reality Training last October, I showed my fourth grade students a slide show on climate change. I told them that they were not powerless to make a difference so when we heard about the Rover Pipeline leaking, they wanted to do something. I directed them to do some research and then write opinion papers to send to newspapers and decision makers. Here is one of those papers written by one of my students.

–Michele Wilkins Bailey, Ann Arbor, MI

There is a big argument going on in Michigan. The Rover and Nexus Pipelines are natural gas pipelines that use natural gas from sources in Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. It is still being debated whether they should continue to be built in Michigan, or stopped. My opinion is that the pipelines should NOT be built. The process used to harvest natural gas, fracking, uses priceless freshwater and contaminates groundwater with bad toxins, as well as hurting the wildlife. During fracking, companies do not need to show the chemicals they use, which is another big danger. The pipelines will increase pollution and climate change.

One reason the pipelines should not be built is that fresh water is being used and contaminated. During fracking, companies use about 70 gallons of water a minute to get natural gas (Slagter, Ann Arbor News, 10/13/17), infecting the water with toxins. Toxins and chemicals also can spill out into drinkable freshwater sources such as the Huron River, where many of us get our water from. The reason the Rover Pipeline was stopped is because it leaked into wetlands near Dexter, Michigan, potentially causing horrible diseases from the poisonous chemicals. Wildlife such as plants and animals in the areas where water is polluted may die. The pipelines are a threat to our water.

When companies frack for gas, it is not required that they show the chemicals they use. If people get sick from leaks, doctors may not know what patients are sick from, because they do not know what chemicals are causing the effects. Toxic and forbidden substances should not be used without our knowing. This is a big danger for the community. Different chemicals are used in different companies and released in different water sources. Some common substances have been found: Acids, proppants (they open cracks in stone), clay stabilizers (preventing clay and soil from blocking cracks), and many others are some examples.

Another reason the pipelines should be stopped is they will cause more pollution and climate change. Fracking puts dangerous chemicals into the water and natural gas puts carbon dioxide into the air. Installing the pipelines will require cutting down more trees, which will result in less intake of carbon dioxide, also increasing climate change. Renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, and water power are much greener options and are never-ending, so they do the exact opposite of polluting.

The Rover Pipeline Safety Commitment is: “Safety is our main goal. We want to provide safe and reliable natural gas service to communities.” I do not think they would be doing this project if they were completely committed to safety. In just the past two years, twelve people have died and ten have been injured from exploding pipelines (“Green America Magazine”, 2017). Along with contaminated water and pollution, the outcome of this project is neither safe nor healthy.

By now, I’m sure you have come over to the green side. Obviously, everyone wants clean water, truthful information about their drinking water, and a non-polluted Earth. Now, it’s time to take action. Do your part. Put up posters. You can even do what I did-write an argument and send it to the authorities. The Rover and Nexus Pipelines must be stopped!

Clara Paulson
4th Grade Student
Ann Arbor, MI

Please share this essay here.

PS: If you have trouble viewing this email, click here to see a copy of the BXEEkly in Google Docs.

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Upcoming Events

1. WE SPEAK FOR THE TREES NOMVP OPEN MIC NIGHT. Thursday, Feb. 8. Blacksburg, VA. Share some art, music, and poetry to stop the Mountain Valley Pipeline! Click here to read more.

2. 33rd SAFETY STUDY RALLY FOR COVE POINT. Thursday, Feb. 8. Annapolis, MD. Join us for the 33rd week in a row that we've rallied outside Governor Hogan's mansion in Annapolis for a safety study (called a Quantitative Risk Assessment, or QRA) on Dominion Energy's fracking refinery, power plant and export terminal being built in Cove Point. Click here to learn more.

3. OFFSHORE WIND NOT WILLIAMS PIPELINE: PRESENTATION AND NEXT STEPS. Friday, Feb. 9. Far Rockaway, New York. Click here to learn more.

4. MEDICAL AND HERB SUPPLY DRIVE FOR THE L’EAU EST LA VIE CAMP. Sunday, Feb. 11. Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Check out this all day Medical and Herb Supply Drive for the L'eau Est La Vie Camp in so-called Louisiana resisting Energy Transfer Partners - Bayou Bridge Pipeline. Click here to learn more.

Action Items

1. Grumble has fed us on innumerable action occasions across the country. Please contribute to his journey to wellness post-heart attack. Click here to donate. Please do consider it. Grumble has done so much for us and people across the country.

2. “This year's Earth First! Winter Rendezvous and Organizers Conference will be the last week of February, in the swamps of Mississippi, on occupied Choctow territory. Belly of the Beast Earth First! is hosting us, and they are ready to build, plot and scheme from within the heart of the fossil fuel industry. Despite diligent fundraising efforts, we are still $3000 dollars short of the budget we hoped for.” Click here if you can donate.

3. From No ACP: Fighting the Mountain Valley and Atlantic Coast pipelines through the bureaucratic and judicial routes only is no longer a viable options. As the companies forge ahead with no care for our land, our future or our water it has become crystal clear that many of us will be committing our bodies to direct action with the goal of stopping these pipelines. We believe in autonomy, collective power and a diversity of tactics. We believe we can win.” Please consider donating funds here. If you prefer paypal please see donate button here.

Reading Material

1. “Atlantic Coast Pipeline protesters: ‘We’re ready to go out in front of bulldozers.’” Click here to read more about a sit in that happened at Gov. Cooper’s office in North Carolina. More news and video can be found here.

2. “Landowners tear up PennEast leases as New Jersey shelves permit application.” Click here to read more.

3. “ETP Reroutes Controversial Bayou Bridge Pipeline Around L’eau Est La Vie Resistance Camp.” Click here to read more.

4. “A Native American Activist Followed Her Mother’s Footsteps to Standing Rock. Now She Faces Years in Prison.” Click here to read more.

5. “‘Do We Really Need to Fly?’: Meet the Climate Scientists Walking Their Talk” Click here to read more.

6. “Secret Sellout or Pay to Play? Terry McAuliffe’s Parting Gift to Dominion Energy and the Atlantic Coast Pipeline.” Click here to read more about what Virginia’s recent governor did.

7. “New Data Reveals 197 Land and Environmental Defenders Murdered in 2017.” Click here to read more.

8. “Land Stripped From Utah National Monuments Opens To Mining Claims Friday” Click here to read more.

9. “As Trump Unfurls Infrastructure Plan, Iowa Bill Seeks to Criminalize Pipeline Protests.” Click here to read more.

10. “The Hunter and His Gun: An American Myth That Just Won’t Die. How Daniel Boone and Last of the Mohicans Built a Colonist Origin Story” by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. Click here to read more.

11. “Writer bell hooks says people must resist "culture of fear." Click here to watch excerpts from bell hooks' acceptance speech at Kentucky Writers Hall of Fame ceremony in Lexington on Jan. 31, 2018.

Quote of the Week

Recent comments from FERC Commissioner Neil Chatterjee, a former adviser to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., who was appointed to FERC by President Trump.

“I want to find ways to improve the process to make FERC more friendly so landowners feel they can engage with us.”

“I want to make sure steps are taken, whether it’s rerouting, to make sure landowner rights are protected.”

“It is unfair to say we approve every project. We do have a very rigorous and robust process. People don’t see when projects are submitted and withdrawn.”

Click here to read more.

BXE Call Schedule

Video Project: Wednesday (2/7), 3pm ET
Call-In: 302-202-1108, code: 950727

BXE Evaluation: Thursday (2/8), 6pm-8pm ET
Call-In: 302-202-1108, code: 950727

Budget & Fundraising: Friday (2/9), 11am ET
Call-In: 302-202-1108, code: 950727