

Petition update

# Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition - Reorganization Update

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## **Nittany Valley Water Coalition**

State College, PA

Feb 7, 2018 — For the last six weeks, Nittany Valley Water Coalition leaders have been busy re-tooling the organization for Centre County environmental fights current and yet to come, and also continuing to analyze options for further fighting to protect the Harter and Thomas watershed from the Toll Brothers luxury student housing development.

Here are some updates:

Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition is incorporated as a 501(c)4, which means donations are not tax deductible, but the organization can fully engage in political lobbying, to address issues/proposed legislation and to endorse specific candidates. NVEC can also engage in litigation.

The initial group of officers includes President Kelli Hoover, Vice-President Katherine Watt, Treasurer David Stone and Secretary Terry Melton. (Earlier version incorrectly identified Dorothy Blair as Secretary).

NVEC also has a small board of directors, bylaws, policies, insurance, and a bank account.

NVEC has a new website: <http://nittanyvalley-eco.org> and a new contact email address - [nvec2018@gmail.com](mailto:nvec2018@gmail.com)

Treasurer David Stone can accept donations by check, made out to "Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition" and mailed to his attention at 539 E. Foster Ave., State College PA, 16801

NVEC will be tabling at the upcoming PASA (Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture) conference, along with Sierra Club. An information flier will be available at the table and is also available at the new website.

ABOUT NITTANY VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION

Our Mission is to protect our constitutionally-guaranteed environmental rights as Pennsylvania citizens.

## Our Rights and Duties

Article I Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution states:

“The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people.”

In support of these rights, the citizens of State College Borough and Ferguson Township have amended their home rule charters to include more extensive rights: a Community Bill of Rights adopted in 2011 by State College voters, and an Environmental Bill of Rights adopted in 2012 by Ferguson Township voters.

Our Goals are to:

- Maintain public water purity and abundance
- Prevent urban sprawl to preserve our region's small town and rural agricultural character, farmland, open space and the beauty of our natural environment
- Build public understanding of our constitutionally-guaranteed environmental rights, and threats to those rights.
- Prevent or mitigate air pollution in the face of global warming
- Prevent or mitigate agricultural soil destruction.

## Our Tools

Our tools include public information campaigns, dialog with decision-makers, direct action campaigns against polluters and sprawl developers, and if necessary, litigation against local violations of our environmental rights as Pennsylvania citizens.

## Our Subcommittees

The Nittany Valley Water Coalition (NVWC) is a committee of the NVEC. For three years, the NVWC fought Penn State, Ferguson Township and Toll Brothers over the sale of 45 acres of priceless agricultural land perched above the wellfields that provide two-thirds of the drinking water for State College Borough Water Authority's customers. This sinkhole and karst-filled farmland was sold by Penn State to Toll Brothers in December 2017. Toll Brothers plan is to develop “luxury student housing” on our watershed. After three years of activism and lawsuits, Toll Brothers is moving forward with this development, but our actions have raised broad public understanding of water rights, the costs of sprawl to the community, and corporate Penn State's lack of stewardship of public natural resources. We assert that Penn State should not convert its farmlands to high-density housing, but should use them instead to promote agro-ecological farming.

## STOP NESTLE CAMPAIGN

Since early January - when the Centre Daily Times reported on CBICC (Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County) plans to facilitate Nestle Waters plan to open a groundwater extraction plant somewhere in Centre County - NVEC has also been working with Sierra Club Moshannon Group, ClearWater Conservancy and other concerned individuals and groups to learn more about the proposal and Nestle's record of water extraction in other communities.

While NVEC is not leading the Stop Nestle campaign, NVEC is supporting the campaign by participating in organizational meetings, and some of our members are submitting Right to Know requests to Centre County and Pennsylvania public entities involved in the recruitment and project review processes. NVEC has also set up a repository for documents collected.

Here's the link to that repository:

<https://stopnestlewaterextraction.wordpress.com>

and a link to some talking points prepared for distribution at the Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition/Sierra Club table at PASA:

<https://stopnestlewaterextraction.wordpress.com/2018/02/07/stop-nestle-talking-points/>

## PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Those two websites

<http://nittanyvalley-eco.org>

<https://stopnestlewaterextraction.wordpress.com>

are some ways to keep up with happenings.

Other channels are still being adjusted. We're not sure about how the two Facebook pages used in the past

Nittany Valley Water Coalition

<https://www.facebook.com/Nittany-Valley-Water-Coalition-411453045714666/>

and

Save State College Water Supply

<https://www.facebook.com/savestatecollegewater>

will be used going forward.

## LASTLY

Bailiwick News is also retooling to better support two primary citizen priorities for 2018: conservation of crucial local ecosystems (water, air, soil/food systems) for current and future residents and rebalancing of skewed local political and economic power relationships among elected public governments, unelected public/private Penn State administrators and private corporate executives.

Bailiwick News has a website and Facebook page,

<https://bailiwicknews.wordpress.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/Bailiwick-News-561442980728785/>

and a MailChimp mailing list for distribution of new Bailiwick News editions is currently in development.

Contact [kw.investigations.llc@gmail.com](mailto:kw.investigations.llc@gmail.com) to be added to the MailChimp list, because that will also be a good

way to keep up with what's happening on those two umbrella issues listed above - Centre County ecological support system conservation and Centre County political economics.

At some point, this Change.org newsletter will be discontinued.

We'll try to let you know good ways to stay informed about what's happening and how you can get involved, as those public communication channels firm up in the next few months.

THANKS FOR READING!

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## Discussion



### Nittany Valley Water Coalition

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## Petition Closed

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2,481 supporters  
19 needed to reach 2,500

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