**Reports for UU Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting – October 20, 2024**

Injection Wells.

In response to Kevin Ritter’s semantic confusion about brine waste, the following letter, submitted by Debra Miller, was published in the October 8 edition of the Marietta Times. In addition, I spoke about this matter (before the letter was published) to County Commissioner, Charlie Schilling, who was also promulgating this fiction.

***Brine is not Brine Waste***

*.In its September 25 edition the Marietta Times carried a front-page story about the candidates’ forum sponsored by the Marietta Area Chamber of Commerce on the previous day.*

*Candidate for 94th District of the House of Representatives, Kevin Ritter, was reported to have said that brine water in injection wells could be a boon to the area since technology is being developed in Europe to extract much-needed lithium from brine water.*

*This statement represents a misleading, false, and even dangerous confusion on Mr. Ritter’s part. Brine is salt water; brine waste is a hazardous, toxic, and radioactive biproduct of fracking, that is, high-pressure hydraulic fracturing. The technology of brine (salt water) being used to extract lithium in Germany has nothing to do with brine waste; by the way, similar technology is being developed in Nevada, as related in another 2024 report by National Public Radio.*

*This confusion is intentional on the part of the fossil-fuel industry in order to mask the danger of brine waste to public health and the environment. The trucks carrying brine waste travel along the roads of Washington County and the 94th Ohio House District marked with the word “brine;” there is nothing indicated about the hazardous, radioactive contents on the outside of these trucks. Furthermore, drivers of these trucks and others responsible for handling brine waste are not provided with personal protective clothing to prevent exposure to radioactivity (radium 226 and radium 228).*

*These trucks operate all hours of the day, all days of the week, and any day of the year in Washington County. If you stand on the corner of Putnam and Third Streets for a few minutes, you are guaranteed to spot one of these “brine” trucks moving along Third Street. On one Saturday evening I spotted a brine truck at 7:30 p.m. (also going through a red light); I have also seen brine trucks on July 4.*

*Brine waste contains harmful chemicals including PFAS (forever chemicals), carcinogens, volatile organic compounds, and more. Of course, oil and gas producers attempt to mollify us by stating that only about 1% of brine waste contains these chemicals, but when we are talking about millions of gallons of brine waste, the amounts of these harmful substances are non-trivial (it is important to note here that oil and gas companies are not required to reveal the contents of brine waste, a privilege granted by the federal government–independent observers have tested samples of brine waste).*

*Washington County, Ohio, has the dubious distinction of leading the state in the total volume of brine waste injected under its grounds. According to data from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, a total of 5,985,024 barrels (a barrel is about 43 gallons) of brine waste were pushed into the ground through what are called Class II injection wells in 2023! Most injection wells are in eastern Ohio; one might ask how many barrels were injected in Franklin County (Columbus area) and whether such egregious exploitation would be tolerated in the environs where our public officials and department personnel reside (the answer is 0).*

*We need public officials in Columbus who recognize the exploitation imposed on this region of Ohio and who are willing to take action to put some limits on the hauling and injection of brine waste in Washington County.*

*Wenda Sheard is such a person who would represent the 94th District in a responsible and responsive way and, at the very least, would not confuse brine water with brine waste.*

*Debra Miller*

Save Ohio Parks

There was a meeting of this group on Friday, October 18. The major focus is the meeting of the Oil and Gas Land Management Commission on October 21 at noon in Columbus when four “nominations are to be discussed; two of these nominations involve Salt Fork State Park. The meeting will be at the Ohio Department of Public Safety, 1970 W. Broad St., Columbus 43223.

Citizens Climate Lobby

Next meeting is Monday, October 21 (7 p.m.) via Zoom.

CCL is interested in supporting the permitting reform legislation (Manchin & Barasso, S 4753). This legislation is controversial—several environmental groups, e.g. Sierra Club, oppose it because it provides for some drilling on federal lands and for infrastructure to export LNG.

George Banziger