



**SIERRA
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NESTLÉ BOTTLES SPRING WATER FOR PROFIT, COMMUNITIES LOSE OUT

People Are Telling Nestlé: We have a right to protect our water!

Greenwich, CT: As Nestlé shareholders convened in Vevey, Switzerland for their annual meeting, Sierra Club, which is a Nestlé shareholder, and Corporate Accountability International gathered with concerned citizens at the company's North American headquarters to demand that Nestlé respect the right of local communities to exercise democratic control over the use of their water and to deliver thousands of post cards from around the country.

"Water is essential to life on this earth and to the viability of local communities," said Ruth Caplan, chair of the Sierra Club's Water Privatization Task Force. "Nestlé is bottling communities' spring water without their informed consent. Nestlé profits while consumers pay more than a thousand times the cost of their local water. What's next? Paying for the air we breathe?"

The Sierra Club owns shares in Nestlé and so can press this issue, and other concerns relating to corporate behavior and practices, with the added clout of a shareholder. The Sierra Club letter to Nestlé calls on the corporation to agree to "prior, full and informed consent" from local communities.

"In California, this means a thorough review of the project impacts through the California Environmental Quality Act process so that the community can be fully informed before deciding whether or not to give its consent," said Diane Lowe with Concerned McCloud Citizens in California. "Water is life and must be protected by communities so all living things can thrive."

Citizen organizations from Rangely, Maine to Mecosta County, Michigan to McCloud, California, have all gone to court to contest Nestlé's bottled water operations.

"The courts have ruled that Nestlé's pumping of spring water in Michigan has and will continue to harm the environment," said Terri Swier, President of Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation. "We in Michigan ask: 'Whose water is it?' and our answer is: 'Water belongs to the people, not to Nestlé.' Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation will continue to do all in our power to protect Michigan waters from being pumped for profit so our water will be available for future generations."

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Nestlé Waters North America produces seven brands of bottled spring water in the United States including Poland Spring in Maine, the nation's number one brand spring water; Ice Mountain in Michigan; Deer Park in Pennsylvania and Florida; Zephyrhills in Florida; and Arrowhead and Calistoga in California.

"Today we delivered thousands of public comments from students, members of the faith communities, activists, and people all across the country," said Gigi Kellett, Associate Campaigns Director with Corporate Accountability International. "It is clear that people are very concerned about Nestlé's aggressive interference in local, democratic control of water. And today, the day of Nestlé's annual shareholders' meeting, the corporation is hearing that its profits must not come at the expense of people's right to water."

Nestlé currently has 75 spring sites around the country and is actively looking for more. Removing large quantities of spring water has already degraded lakes, harmed wetlands, lowered water tables and continues to threaten family and farm wells. With sales of bottled water rapidly increasing, and with global warming bringing about more drought conditions, these negative impacts will increasingly threaten communities' water supplies across America and around the world.

With sales of bottled water rapidly increasing and with global warming threatening to increase drought, community water supplies across America face a growing risk. Since selling water in bottles means that the marketplace determines the price, one day many families may not be able to afford clean water. The United Nations has declared: "The human right to drinking water is fundamental to life and health."

The Sierra Club has made its demand in a letter sent to Peter Brabeck, the CEO of Nestlé S.A., and delivered to Kim E. Jeffery, President and CEO of Nestlé Waters North America. For a copy of Sierra Club's letter, please contact Odette Mucha at Odette.mucha@sierraclub.org or Ruth Caplan at rcaplan@igc.org

The Sierra Club's members and supporters are more than 1.3 million of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. For more information on bottled water see www.sierraclub.org/committees/cac/water/bottled_water/

Corporate Accountability International, formerly Infact, is a membership organization that protects people by waging and winning campaigns challenging irresponsible and dangerous corporate actions around the world. For over 30 years, we've forced corporations—like Nestlé, General Electric and Philip Morris/Altria—to stop abusive actions. For more information visit www.stopcorporateabuse.org

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