

## **Press Release: The Finger Lakes CleanWaters Initiative**

### ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

Coalition to make a splash to protect New York's waters from unsafe gas drilling; bands and health experts join forces at weekend events in Binghamton, June 3,4,5

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***Binghamton, New York, June 2***—As summer gets underway, residents and tourists flock to New York's lakes, rivers, and streams to enjoy the state's unique natural and recreational resources. The recently launched Finger Lakes CleanWaters Initiative has teamed up with citizens and environmental organizations and the Finger Lakes GrassRoots Festival of Music and Dance for a two-day event to raise awareness of the impacts of unsafe natural gas development using hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") on water and public health.

The weekend kicks off in Binghamton on Friday, June 3, 4-11pm, with a "Small Splash!" at Atomic Tom's Art Gallery (200 State Street), including art, a performance by Chris Merkley and Jamie Willard, citizen outreach, guest speakers, and beer & wine. Proceeds to benefit the Finger Lakes CleanWaters Initiative.

On Saturday, June 4, the Southern Tier Clean Waters Symposium will be held at the RiverWalk Hotel in Binghamton. The event will begin at 10:30 am with a presentation by Attorney Joe Health on how to end a gas lease (an issue of growing concern to landowners in the Finger Lakes). A keynote address by renowned author, ecologist, and Ithaca College Distinguished Scholar Sandra Steingraber will focus on the threats to children's health and futures from environmental damage, including industrial gas drilling. The afternoon will be devoted to a workshop on the health effects of hydrofracking moderated by Dr. Walid S. Hammoud, President of the Broome County Medical Society. Expert panelists include . Ron Bishop of SUNY Oneonta; safety and hazardous materials specialist Shelley; Dr. Adam Law of Cornell Medical College; and Dr. Michelle Bamberger of Vet Behavior Consults.

"As New York considers whether to permit or prohibit this form of energy extraction, it is essential that we understand the possible consequences to public health as a prerequisite for making that decision," says Sandra Steingraber. "Once shale is shattered, it cannot be unshattered, nor water unpoisoned."

On Sunday, June 5 from 11am-9pm, The Binghamton Big Splash! will take place in Recreation Park. Live bands will perform in celebration of water resources and the work being done to defend them against unsafe gas drilling. Bands include YOLK, Sim Redmond Band, Drift Wood, Richie Stearns and the Evil City String Band, The Burns Sisters, Thousands Of One,

Dutch Bucket System, The Green Deeps, Driftwood and Cabinet. The Syracuse Big Splash! will take place on Sunday, June 12 from 11am-9pm at the Inner Harbor in Syracuse with Donna The Buffalo, Sophistafunk, Ayurveda, Tim Herron Corporation, Thousands of One with more to come.

Both Big Splash! events will include information booths, food vendors, and live solar energy demonstrations.

“We’ve teamed up with some great organizations to talk about gas drilling impacts and some really great bands to engage and entertain,” says Chris Tate, co-founder of the Finger Lakes CleanWaters Initiative. “These events will give the public a chance to learn about the urgent need to defend New York’s precious water resources, while also having some great summer fun. Dancers welcome!”

**All CleanWaters Initiative events are open to the public and free with a suggested \$10.00 donation.** For more information, visit <http://fingerlakescleanwaters.org>, contact [info@fingerlakescleanwater.org](mailto:info@fingerlakescleanwater.org), or check out the events on Facebook.

Event sponsors include The Finger Lakes GrassRoots Festival, City of Binghamton, City of Syracuse, Binghamton River Walk Hotel, Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition, Catskill MountainKeeper, Coalition to Protect New York, Earthworks Oil & Gas Accountability Project, Frack Action, New York Residents Against Drilling, ShaleShock, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, Gas Free Seneca, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, and others.