

PFAS/Military Poisons Coalition Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2023 at Noon

Present: Marguerite Adelman, Pam Ladds, Sylvia Knight, Sam Brynes, Henry Coe, and Morgen Decker

2023 Legislative Updates: Everyone

-
- **S.25**—Our major PFAS bill did not get heard in the House this session even tho it passed the Senate unanimously. We have been promised it will be heard in January of 2024 by Rep. Wood. We need to work this summer/fall on improving the bill.
-
-
- **H.31**—This weak bill to form a study Commission to look at pesticide use in Vermont did pass this session. Now that we have proof that a number of pesticides actually contain PFAS and it's not just leaching from the container, we need to pressure these folks to do more. Sylvia points out that we don't know enough yet about PFAS in herbicides.
-
-
- **S. 269** (Federal)--Protect America's Children from Toxic Pesticides Act was introduced by Senators Sanders and Booker. It needs our support as it has only been introduced. We need it to move forward.
-
-
- **EPA PFAS Water Quality Standards**—written testimony on the EPA new PFAS water quality standards is being taken until May 30th (see below). Already the dark forces are looking to establish exemptions for public and private entities and to extend the deadline out beyond 2026. Please send your comments asking them to ban all forms of PFAS, allow for no exemptions, and to speed the process up, not slow it down.
-

Work group projects

-
- **Educational PFAS Presentations for Vermont communities**—Marguerite noted that she is doing national presentations on PFAS to help further our mission to educate the public on this complex topic. She has already presented to groups in Massachusetts and Iowa. Her next presentation is May 17th for the Jane Addams Branch of WILPF—a national group. Coalition members are invited to attend and see if they might be interested in being presenters as well. Pam Ladds expressed interest in having it on her public access program. CCTV in Burlington will be filming a zoom event for Vermont in August that will be able to share around the state. Let's bring this program to communities and groups across Vermont. Marguerite will share the flyer for the May 17th program.
-
-
- **Art/Activism Signs Project**—Marguerite met with James Murray of Canada (recommended by Teresa Gerade) and he helped to design our idea for involving artists in designing posters/signage on PFAS for demonstrations, store windows, exhibits, and more. We are looking for 10 artists whom we'll pay \$75 each to help us design Ban

PFAS signage/artwork that has a grassroots look. We also have money for a canvas banner design for one artist. Marguerite will share the project descriptions with the group. We have money for a college student to help us update the website (www.militarypoisons.org), but we've had only one applicant for this remote work. Help promoting this temporary position that pays \$3,000 (\$25 per hour) by the end of December would be appreciated.

-
-
- **Planning for the 2023 Legislative Session**—We need some folks willing to work on legislation for the 2024 Session, especially improving S.25 and getting H.31 study committee informed and working on PFAS in Pesticides.
-
-
-

Other news from members

-
- **Sylvia on Pesticides**—Sylvia has been working on the railroad spraying issue for the past few weeks. Recent studies are showing PFAS in some pesticides and not just in the container and leaching out. She is trying to work with the Burlington Health Department on the issue. She was disappointed in the signage that was only put up for a day and she didn't find any signs. The Burlington Pesticide Ordinance can't be enforced because the state supersedes it. There is a need to find someone in the vicinity of the railroad who can make a case. Perhaps Mason Overstreet can help VT PAPAN with this.
-
-
- **DUMP and Casella** (Henry and Pam)--Working against Casella is like pushing a boulder up a mountain. Casella is a formidable foe and has a new PR team which Pam notes is very clever. The pretreatment plant is keeping DUMP members busy as they continue to fight it and know that the eventual plan is to "dump" the pretreated leachate into the BlackRiver instead of shipping it out. Also the issue of Massachusetts sludge that has PFAS in it.
-
-
- **Morgen on Hinesburg**—we have conducted 3 high end tests in Hinesburg area, and two Cyclopure tests. The results have not be exceptionally high for PFAS, except near Global Foundries on the Winooski River. However, we were not able to get close. Morgen is still considering where to run the final two cyclopure tests: perhaps one at a home near the landfill and one at Lake Iroquis. Morgen has shared the information from the EPA on funding streams, but they won't likely help with the wastewater treatment plant.
-
-
- **Sam's grant on fish testing**—Sam is going to be submitting the grant he discussed on testing fish tissue in the Lake Champlain Basin (and perhaps a few in Lake Memphremagog) for PFAS. The coalition agreed to submit a letter of support for Sam's grant, which may be the first such grant to test PFAS fish tissue in Lake Champlain area (besides the little bit done by the state)

-
-
-

Marguerite

–Marguerite has submitted a Commentary on the EPAS new Water Quality Standards for PFAS. Additional Editorial ideas are below. The summer is the time to keep these PFAS editorials in the news. Remember that many folks must submit and not just one or two people. Ideas for editorials are below.

- **Pam**–Pam noted that Planet of the Humans was a great event for promoting our work and educating folks. Lots of contacts were made. She also talked about the heating of water that contains PFAS and whether the food (fish, pasta, etc.) that is heated and contains PFAS also concentrates into a stronger form? Sam will look into this with fish. Pam also noted that we may want to go after ANR in editorials and in other ways. Lots to think about in terms of how to do this.

Our next meeting will be on August 17th at Noon on Zoom. During June and July, Marguerite will work with individuals interested in select projects that we discussed for the work groups.

New You Can Use

-
- *PFAS in Pesticides* – Yep, Sylvia Knight has been right all along. PFAS is IN pesticides, not just the containers. Our food is being poisoned –
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/may/07/food-pesticides-toxic-forever-chemicals-pfas>
-
-
- *Submit your comments to the EPA on the newly Proposed PFAS drinking water standards by May 30th.* Tell them to regulate PFAS as a class. And to regulate PFAS in all products. Here's the link to make your comments – Go to
<https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/EPA-HQ-OW-2022-0114-0027>
-

Need for Vermont Editorials:

-
- *PFAS in Pesticides*
-
-
- *Why Can the Vermont Legislature Pass Certain Bills and not others? Is it because things like cannabis and off track betting make money for Vermont and banning PFAS in products doesn't and may cost us money?*
-
-
- *US Military Hold Harmless Agreements with local cities between the VTANG fire division and local fire departments. Do they have the right to contaminate our communities with PFAS and we can't do anything about it?*