Tracking Nature

On The Reader’s Almanac Blog on Earth Day of this year, nature writer, author and founder of the website 350.org, Bill McKibben writes “In the last two years, there have been 15,000 demonstrations in 189 nations. CNN called it the most widespread political activity in the planet’s history.”

All are dedicated to bringing worldwide attention to our situation and generate change. Change is elusive in a world that depends so heavily on fossil fuels. The technology we had always hoped would help save us has turned against us. Instead of creating ways to access wind and solar power on a large scale, new ways of extracting fossil fuels are being utilized. “

Fracking” for natural gas is pumping chemicals into the earth and polluting drinking water – wasting obscene amounts of clean water in the process. The coal industry has concluded the best way to access large pockets is to blow the tops off of mountains and then strip mine the exposed layers. Appalachia will never be the same if this is allowed to continue. Finally, the tar sands process is making enormous waves. Keystone XL is a pipeline project being planned to run from the Tar Sands of Alberta, Canada to the Gulf Coast of the United States. The Keystone XL will be 1,702 miles of toxic material running underground, to the costly tune of $7 Billion dollars in construction. This is not what we had in mind when the president talked about healing the planet in his campaign. This is not the answer to ending our dependence on big oil. It is certainly not the answer to keeping our air and water clean. This summer there is an important protest in the making. It will be bigger than the March on Blair Mountain this month. Bill McKibben’s Twitter invitation reads “Most impt tweet of my short tweeting career--join us in DC this summer, and bring your courage”. Although I am not able to attend myself, I am committed to spreading the word.