

Episode 2: Give A Damn. Think globally, Act Locally!

The “think globally, act locally” slogan has been an integral part of climate action. It embodies the idea that instead of waiting for grand breakthroughs to “fix the world,” we should implement environmentally conscious solutions into everyday decisions and actions. Through each having a local impact, in aggregate the weight of small decisions can have a globally transformative effect. (1)

To make Voluntary Stewardship real, the whole world concept above has to be brought down to the local level. This is the case for river miles 130 to 135 and for any other section of the Hudson River where those in intimate contact with the river find it under assault.

Assault is invasive. For example, pollution at the shoreline seeps into the river unseen and little noticed. But imperceptible amounts, especially manmade “forever” chemicals invulnerable to natural degradation, eventually create a permanent toxic background. The public perception of accumulated chemical toxicity produces the current social fact of a river that is widely and deeply viewed by the public as un-drinkable, un-fishable and un-swimmable.

The identity of the Hudson River has been established as an adjunct to commerce, industry and capitalist economics. What has been obscured, sacrificed and forgotten is its first and truest identity as a gift and vital force of nature. Nature that also includes human beings, ever dependent on it, regardless of the disconnect that plagues the modern mind trapped in commerce, industry and capitalist economics. The identity of the River as a mere element and means of production subordinates ownership of what is held in common to what is good for industry. Subordinating the natural world in effect takes ownership of what is held in common away from all those who do not have a seat at the table. The table of industrial ownership, wealth, political power and political influence. And that would be everyone else and the watchword for everyone else is: “If you don’t have seat at the table you’re probably on the menu.”

Bibliography:

(1) Anna Mikulska, Risk Management and Decision Processes Center, The Wharton School, The University of Pennsylvania. Online document.

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