



“Tracy’s Walk”

Press Packet

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PRESS RELEASE/CONTACTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 13, 2019

**AMERICAN WOMAN, AMPUTEE, AND VICTIM OF CORPORATE POISONING
WILL WALK ACROSS DENMARK TO TELL HER STORY AND ASK THE
DANISH PEOPLE TO HELP STOP POISONING BY ROCKWOOL**

Tracy Danzey will walk across the Zealand island of Denmark on her one leg and forearm crutches to ask, in her words, "the most environmentally conscious people in the world" for help in her community's struggle to stop Danish-owned Rockwool from poisoning America's iconic Shenandoah Valley and its children, air, water and land.

She will begin her walk with a public kick off in Aarhus October 25.

Danzey will then ferry to the Zealand island and travel to Kahlunborg to learn how industry is managed in Denmark where public welfare is a priority.

From Kahlunborg she will walk, passing Rockwool's headquarters in Hedehusene, and stop along the way to meet with mayors and public officials, local media, environmentalists, union leaders and others, eventually completing her walk in Copenhagen. Danzey anticipates the walk will take up to two weeks.

Rockwool plans to build a factory to melt rock to manufacture insulation in Jefferson County, WV, only 400 meters from an elementary school.

The factory plans to burn 80 metric tons of coal and 45,000 cubic meters of "fracked" natural gas every day. Rockwool, therefore, single-handedly taking the county's industrial air pollutant count from 8 kg annually to over 140,000 metric tons each year, with plans to grow.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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ITINERARY

Announcement/ Kick-off Event:

Friday - October 25th, 2019

Aarhus

(*Location and time of event to come. Date may change.)

Start of Walk:

Saturday - October 26th, 2019

Kalundborg

(**Location and time of start to walk to come. Date may change.)

Route:

Highway 23 & 21

Kalundborg to Copenhagen

(Approximately 5 miles per day)

Towns/Municipalities Along Route :

- 1) Viskinge
- 2) Jyerup
- 3) Tornvei
- 4) Morkov
- 5) Norre Jernlose
- 6) Kvanlose
- 7) Kirke Sonnerup
- 8) Torkilstrup / Kirk Saby Forsamlingshus
- 9) Gevninge
- 10) Svogerslev
- 11) Roskild
- 12) Hedehusene
- 13) Baldersbronde
- 14) Taastrup
- 15) Albertslund
- 16) Geostrup
- 17) Rodovre
- 18) Fredericksberg
- 19) *Copenhagen

***Completion Event:** To be announced (dependent on Tracy's progress)

TRACY'S STORY

Tracy Danzey is a 40 year old nurse, wife, and mother from Shepherdstown, West Virginia, US, a pristine highland valley of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Danzey was born and raised in Parkersburg, WV, in the Mid-Ohio Valley, commonly referred to in the United States as “Chemical Valley”. Her hometown has been featured in the documentary “The Devil We Know” (on Netflix), and will soon be the focus of a Mark Ruffalo drama entitled “Dark Waters”, set to release in November of this year.

Parkersburg, WV was the scene of a historic industrial poisoning by an worldwide plastics manufacturer. This industrial giant knowingly released C8 (a Teflon byproduct) into the area’s waterways. These same waterways were the source of the community’s drinking water. Evidence now exists that the industry was aware of the contamination and its danger to human health for some 30 years, yet willfully concealed that evidence and continued to release C8 directly into the waterways. There are now various class-action and independent lawsuits that have been filed against the plastics manufacturer regarding this poisoning. Ms. Danzey is not a participant.

Danzey was a competitive swimmer for the majority of her developmental years, 1983-1996, many of those years being at the height of her community’s poisoning. She regularly spent 5-8 hours a day unknowingly swimming within and consuming C8-filled waters. In 1998, Danzey moved from the Mid-Ohio Valley, to the eastern panhandle of West Virginia to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Shepherd University. While attending, in 2000, she discovered that her thyroid had ceased functioning properly (a established side-effect of C8 exposure). Upon graduation, Danzey began working as a Registered Nurse in her local hospital’s Critical Care Unit, she married, then continued to reside in Shepherdstown, WV a part of the greater Washington DC area.

In 2005, while Danzey was running with her husband, she collapsed with an injury to her hip. Diagnostics soon proved that Danzey was suffering from a pathologically atypical form of Osteosarcoma (bone cancer) in the socket of her hip. Her childhood dog had succumbed to this same disease in its hip only 5 years prior. Her options for treatment included amputation of the affected area and high dose chemotherapy treatments, or palliative care.

Danzey opted for an amputation of the right side of her pelvis and leg, then underwent 13 rounds of high dose chemotherapy over a year and a half time. She now walks with forearm crutches and has adapted to her new life as an amputee.

In 2011, she and her husband gave birth to a healthy baby boy, who she now cares for in the home. Though Danzey has been unable to rebound professionally, she has remained a force within her community. Recently, she has focused her energies on opposing a Danish insulation company, Rockwool, which is attempting to build a manufacturing facility and permitted to burn 80 metric tons of coal and 45,000 cubic meters of fracked gas a day, less than 400 meters from an elementary school and in the center of Jefferson County, West Virginia’s poorest and most vulnerable community.

Months ago, she became president of a local non-profit, Resist Rockwool, which has been focusing its efforts on peaceful protests, boycotts, and divestment, but recently Danzey established goals for a personal campaign in her opposition entitled “Tracy’s Walk”.

Tracy’s Walk will be a 100 km hike across the Zealand island of Denmark in opposition to Rockwool. The walk is slated for late-October. Danzey plans to use her own experience and affected body as a teaching tool to inform Danes of the lax environmental regulation and enforcement in West Virginia and Rockwool’s intent to take advantage of them, making it impossible to properly protect her family and community.

Further, Danzey wishes to communicate to the Danish people that the siting of this plant in Jefferson County is against the will of its people. “Rockwool has not only chosen to not partake in the democratic process, they have intentionally circumvented it,” says Danzey. She remains steadfast and hopes that the Danish people will apply public pressure on Rockwool to respect the will of the people of Jefferson County and act in the same way that they would if producing a new facility within their own country and protect the children of Danzey’s community in the same way that they would seek to protect Danish children when developing a new facility.

Danzey’s walk will run from Kalundborg to Copenhagen, approximately 100 km, and she hopes to speak and connect with local government and citizens along the route, while serving as an advocate for her community and an informant to the Danish people regarding Rockwool’s practices outside of Denmark. She will walk the entirety on forearm crutches and one leg and is hopeful that the Danish people will join her walk in support.

Her local community will simultaneously walk the C&O canal from her home in Shepherdstown, WV to the Danish embassy in Washington DC in solidarity, also a 100 km hike. Both walks will end with a ceremonial presentation and a request to the Danish people and it’s government.

Local News Coverage of “Tracy’s Walk”:

<https://www.localdvm.com/news/west-virginia/resist-rockwool-president-to-walk-across-denmark-in-protest/>

<http://www.shepherdstownchronicle.com/page/content.detail/id/518347/Ready-for-the-journey--Shepherdstown-environmental-activist-to-walk-across-Denmark.html?nav=5089>

https://www.journal-news.net/journal-news/shepherdstown-woman-to-walk-across-denmark-in-protest-of-rockwool/article_151371fc-4dfb-5cb9-b7ac-0e6c9dba8558.html

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BaE_xXzMuwc

Also, please read Tracy’s Op-Ed in the Charleston Gazette:

https://www.wvgazette.com/opinion/gazette_opinion/op_ed_commentaries/tracy-danzey-surviving-west-virginia-is-that-really-enough/article_3b822edd-bec7-546d-99c2-e22c57eded90.html

HISTORY OF ROCKWOOL IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

Rockwool is a Danish insulation company that is seeking to site and build a manufacturing facility in Jefferson County, WV in the eastern panhandle just 65 miles from Washington DC. It is the wealthiest and most economically stable county in West Virginia. Its economy is based in tourism, agriculture, government, education, outdoor adventure, and the arts. Jefferson County currently has no heavy industry, and its current comprehensive plan focuses on additional rail service to Washington DC and increased tourism.

In 2017, Rockwool announced its plans to site a facility in Jefferson County and touted it's "Danish way". Rockwool called themselves a green company and reassured the community that they would not be polluting the air or water.

The community, which is located at the convergence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, was informed that the only wastewater that would be leaving the facility would be "what is used in toilets and sinks". Rockwool further claimed that what would be escaping their smokestacks would only be "steam", and "cleaner than ambient air". It wasn't until Rockwool began seeking an air permit that the public in Jefferson County learned the truth.

Rockwool, according to their own numbers, plans to burn 45,000 cubic meters of fracked gas and over 80 metric tons of coal a day. Jefferson County's air pollutants will go from 8 kg to 142,000 metric tons annually as a result of Rockwool alone.

The population of Jefferson county rose up in opposition in every way possible. They packed houses at every local government meeting, wrote state government officials, performed sit-ins at their senators' office, protested and blocked the entrances to the Danish Embassy and the construction site, created land-owner petitions, overturned nearly their entire local government and reseated them with anti-Rockwool candidates.

Community groups and the Board of Education have put forth legal battle after legal battle, some of which the decisions are still outstanding. Jefferson County residents have purchased stock, attended shareholders meetings in Copenhagen, Denmark, and proposed a resolution (which was denied).

The majority of the community members are now organized and members of one or more of the following groups: Concerned Citizens of Jefferson County, Jefferson County Vision, Eastern Panhandle Green Coalition, and Resist Rockwool. Also, taking on leadership in the opposition to Rockwool are already existing groups, Rural Agricultural Defenders and Eastern Panhandle Protectors. The groundswell has been immense and the fight continues.

The following entities have made public statements in their stance against Rockwool in Jefferson County, WV:

- Concerned Citizens Against Rockwool
- Jefferson County Vision
- Jefferson County Board of Education
- Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board
- Jefferson County Historic Landmark Commission
- Jefferson County NAACP
- Appalachian Trail Conservancy
- American Academy of Pediatrics - West Virginia Chapter
- Eastern Panhandle Protectors
- Corporation of Charles Town, WV
- Corporation of Shepherdstown, WV
- Corporation of Harpers Ferry, WV
- Loudoun County (VA) Board of Supervisors
- Loudoun County Equine Alliance
- City of Leesburg, VA
- City of Lovettsville, VA
- City of Hamilton, VA
- City of Hillsboro, VA
- City of Middleburg, VA
- City of Purcellville, VA
- Corporation of Brunswick, MD
- Corporation of Sharpsburg, MD
- Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health & the Environment
- Potomac Audubon Society
- Sierra Club - West Virginia Chapter
- Smart Growth Syndicate
- Women's March - West Virginia Chapter
- Resist Rockwool
- Eastern Panhandle Green Coalition

THE SCIENCE

Rockwool will Pollute the Air on a scale unseen in Jefferson County

As permitted, Rockwool will be a major source of at least [nine different categories](#) of air pollution that deteriorate air quality and harm human health. The facility's industrial furnaces and large-scale use of hazardous chemicals create a pollution footprint that is far different from traditional manufacturing.

Rockwool will burn Coal and utilize Fracked Gas to power the factory

They will burn an estimated 80 metric tons of coal along with 45,000 cubic meters of fracked gas per day despite having access to cleaner technologies. They have already built a gas pipeline and disturbed lands around an African-American Cemetery despite not having a connecting source.

Rockwool will Emit Cancer-causing Chemicals

Rockwool's plans would make it West Virginia's second largest emitter of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) -- that's #2 out of all significant polluting sites across the state, based on their permit PTE and [2014 EPA NEI data](#) (the latest year available).

The VOC payload includes 6 different known or suspected [cancer-causing chemicals](#): Acetaldehyde, Formaldehyde, Biphenyl, 1,3-Butadiene, Naphthalene, and Benzene.

Rockwool Pollution Damages intellectual development in Children

One of Rockwool's permitted VOCs, Formaldehyde, is a neurotoxin that damages memory, concentration, behavior, and physical dexterity in children.

Rockwool Pollution causes serious Heart and Lung Damage

Hazardous Fine Particulate Matter (PM 2.5) is pollution that is inhaled and penetrates deep into the lungs. PM 2.5 we now know crosses the blood-brain barrier and placental barrier. The World Health Organization now states that there is "no safe amount of PM 2.5 for human beings". As permitted, Rockwool will rank #10 out of several hundred polluting sites in West Virginia for PM 2.5 emissions (most sites developed over a half a century ago), based on [2014 EPA NEI data](#).

Rockwool will produce Haze and Smog precursors

It will be a major source of [ozone \(O3\) pollution](#), implicated as a primary cause of asthma in children.

Light and Noise Pollution

A 463,000 square foot mega-factory running 24/7 is going to generate a lot of light and noise (and possibly odors). These impacts can be very serious for people living near the plant. There's nothing else close to this size and intensity in Jefferson County, and it will impact local quality of life and even nighttime skies across the county.

Ground and Surface Water Pollution

Contamination of rivers can often come from airborne pollution. Given the rivers' importance to local drinking supplies, Rockwool's nitrogen and hazardous pollution impact needs to be evaluated. There are also major concerns about the topography on which Rockwool is planning to build. The [karst topography](#) of Jefferson County is prone to sinkholes and extremely susceptible to groundwater contamination. Rockwool has chosen to site its facility and retention ponds directly over the county's area largest area of sinkhole concentration directly over our county's ancient aquifers from which 80% of our county's population depends upon for their drinking water through well systems. Rockwool recently gained permits to emit 250,000 liters a day in stormwater, for which they are considering injection wells.

MORE RESOURCES

[WV DEP Rockwool Page](#)

[WV DEP Permit Application](#)

[WV DEP Fact Sheet](#)

[WV DEP Permit](#)

[Gavin Perry - White Paper](#)