

GOAT NOATS: The Green Organizing Action Team will screen Mike Wicklein's FRACKING WESTERN MARYLAND, on Sunday, November 20, at 1:00 p.m. in the Homewood Meeting House Dining Room. The film has a particular impact at this point in the Maryland State Legislature's 2016-2017 session. A recent article in the Frederick News-Post described this documentary film and the political issues around fracking for natural gas in our region:

**Fracking documentary reveals key players in big decision for Maryland**

By Samantha Hogan [shogan@newspost.com](mailto:shogan@newspost.com); Sep 15, 2016 [Edited for space]

Independent Documentarian Mike Wicklein, 62, produced "Fracking Western Maryland?" to document the public outcry and legislative response to whether Maryland would allow hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as fracking, in Allegany and Garrett counties. The film was released earlier this year.

"Fracking Western Maryland?" was the first film Wicklein approached as a journalist, and is a primer for residents on the situation in Maryland.

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"Very few people are key in how this goes forward," Wicklein said.

Many of those people speak in the film, including General Assembly Democrat Maryland State Senator Joan Carter Conway, who reads the stripped down fracking moratorium bill at the end of the film, and Wendell Beitzel, the Maryland House of Delegates member for the two counties that could be fracked.

However, most of the pro-fracking politicians would not go on record for the film. This included the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, which changed its stance from pro-fracking to neutral near the end of filming, he said. Wicklein offered to speak with the chamber members again, but they refused.

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In researching, Wicklein was surprised to learn that people living in portions of Western Maryland live in a unique media landscape where they do not receive Baltimore newspapers and TV, but rather Pittsburgh. "The people in Garrett County in particular are media orphans to the rest of the state," he said.

Until very recently, Wicklein said he remained unbiased on the fracking question. That changed when he saw the images coming out of North Dakota of the oil and gas industry bulldozing ancient burial grounds, Wicklein said by email. "The images of attack dogs were bad enough to remind me of Selma, Alabama, in the 1960s," Wicklein wrote. "But then the video of the bulldozers plowing through documented burial grounds just told me that the gas and oil industry has no regard for human beings."