

Monday, April 19, 2010

## **Sierra Club Activist Wins Prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize**

**Michigan farmer Lynn Henning recognized with \$150,000 prize for her work to protect water and communities from factory farms**

SAN FRANCISCO – Michigan farmer and Sierra Club activist Lynn Henning has been awarded this year's prestigious Goldman prize, considered the "Nobel prize for environmental activism." Henning took action after concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO's) began polluting the water near the 300-acre corn and soybean farm she works with her husband in Lenawee County. Over the last decade she has become a leading voice calling on state and federal authorities to hold these livestock factory farms accountable to water and air quality laws. "Lynn Henning represents the soul of grassroots activism," said Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club. "Faced with a threat to her community's environment, Lynn organized with her neighbors and pushed successfully to hold the polluters accountable. This is a thrilling day for the Sierra Club family."

When factory farms surrounded her property, Henning and other concerned neighbors formed Environmentally Concerned Citizens of South Central Michigan (ECCSCM) and began to organize. Reaching out to neighbors, fellow farmers and Environmental Protection Agency enforcement officials, Henning gathered her own data on factory farm pollution. Regularly driving a 125-mile circuit multiple times a week to track factory farm pollution and to take water samples, Henning learned about the sources of the pollution affecting her community and decided to take action.

"The Henning family, like so many neighbors of animal factories, has endured unspeakable pollution, horrible health impacts and direct threats to their safety and security for speaking out about this outrageous pollution" said Anne Woiwode, director of the Sierra Club's Michigan Chapter. "Lynn's response has been to fight harder, to learn everything she could about CAFO pollution, to teach others what she knows and to advocate for solutions with anyone who could possibly stop this horror. Lynn is one of the bravest, smartest and most determined people I've ever known, and an inspiration every day."

Henning joined forces with the Sierra Club's Michigan Chapter as a volunteer in the Water Sentinel program in 2001, and she joined the staff in 2005. As a result of Henning's work, the state of Michigan has levied hundreds of citations against factory farms for environmental violations, and federal officials have taken notice. Sierra Club has proudly supported Henning's efforts to develop water quality monitoring programs nationwide to measure pollution levels from factory farms.

"The Sierra Club is extremely proud of Lynn's accomplishments in stopping new animal factories, bringing polluting animal factories to justice and educating the public to the very serious health, food safety and environmental hazards they present," said Scott Dye, Director of the Sierra Club's Water Sentinels program. "We're honored and humbled that the Goldman Prize has recognized Lynn's outstanding work on the world stage."

The Goldman Environmental Prize, now in its 21st year, is awarded annually to grassroots environmental heroes from each of the world's inhabited continental regions and is the largest award of its kind. Winners receive \$150,000 each and will be recognized at an invitation-only ceremony Monday, April 19, 2010 at 5 p.m. at the San Francisco Opera House. Winners will also be honored at a smaller ceremony on Wednesday, April 21 at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

For more information visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/people/henning>