

To the citizens of Shapleigh and Newfield:

HISTORY IS FILLED WITH SO-CALLED ILLEGAL ACTS: THEY OCCUR WHEN PROGRESS REQUIRES INDIVIDUALS TO STAND UP TO UNJUST AUTHORITY.

In 1955, was Rosa Parks, who was black, wrong to take a seat among whites at the front of her bus? That act at that time was illegal -- and Parks was arrested for it -- but it led to the overthrow of an unjust law.

In 1963, was Martin Luther King, who led a bus boycott after Parks' arrest, wrong to have inspired 250,000 citizens to march in protest on Washington, when that march led to passage of the most expansive civil rights law in U.S. history?

In 1920, were American women wrong to accept the Constitutional Amendment finally granting them the right to vote, after scores of women had, for decades, demanded that right -- and after many had gone to jail for it in the face of denial and derision?

And, finally, in 1775, were our forefathers wrong to have "take[n] arms against a sea of troubles," to oppose rule by a despotic English king? That bold act was decidedly "illegal" but it led to the very creation of this United States of America, and to the right it gives us to express ourselves here about issues like this today.

HISTORY IS FULL OF CASES IN WHICH INDIVIDUALS HAVE STOOD UP FOR THEIR RIGHTS TO DEMAND A JUSTIFIABLE CHANGE.

In our towns, we now have the opportunity to face up to another such challenge.

The fight to protect Newfield and Shapleigh from large-scale water extraction did not end with Shapleigh's September vote to impose a 180-day moratorium on drilling plans. That moratorium merely gave Shapleigh officials time to prepare a large-scale water extraction ordinance (law) similar to one already on the books in Newfield.

But those ordinances DO NOT STOP large-scale water extraction; THEY MERELY REGULATE IT.

The only way to STOP large-scale water extraction is through adoption of a different sort of ordinance, one called RIGHTS-BASED.

RIGHTS-BASED ORDINANCES GIVE BACK TO COMMUNITIES THE RIGHT TO SAY NO -- but they are viewed as illegal because the law as currently interpreted favors the rights of corporations over those of individuals and towns. It's time to challenge that interpretation!

A RIGHTS-BASED ORDINANCE has now been proposed for presentation to the voters of both towns. In supporting it, the citizens of Newfield and Shapleigh are doing what our ancestors have done throughout history: we are standing up for our rights and demanding change

Join us in supporting our rights-based ordinance, to give us back the right to determine, ourselves -- free of corporate decisions made far from our borders -- what's best for our valuable aquifer and for the undisturbed ecosystem upon which we and it depend, and expect to depend, far into the future.

**POWWR, 185 Hooper Rd., Shapleigh
powwr@live.com**