



Nestlé Waters North America Response to *Bottlemania*

We at Nestlé Waters North America, share Elizabeth Royte's belief that everyone should have access to a safe and affordable supply of water as a human right. We also appreciate the important challenges highlighted in the book, and we agree that we all carry a responsibility to act in a sustainable way.

As Royte says in her book *Bottlemania*, "nearly everything humans do has an environmental impact." At Nestlé Waters North America we work to lighten our footprint each and every day, and appreciate that Royte highlighted a number of key actions we've taken to demonstrate this commitment--like making extensive monitoring data publicly available and creating the lightest weight half liter plastic bottle* currently on store shelves.

This responsibility is especially relevant in an age of on-the-go lifestyles and increased obesity amongst adults and children. An important fact downplayed in the book is that bottled water is a calorie-free, easily accessible alternative to sodas and other sugared beverages. Considering beverage calories have added a whopping 82,000 calories per year to our diets within the last decade, we should encourage all Americans to make a healthier lifestyle choice and drink more water – whether it comes from a bottle or a tap.

However, the reader of *Bottlemania* is left with the impression that they should drink neither bottled water nor tap water – even if the tap water is filtered with a pour-through filter. In her words, "the most responsible thing I can drink, I realize, is none of the above". According to Royte the "responsible" choice that remains, is reclaimed water or as she calls it "toilet to tap". We believe this is an irresponsible conclusion that will reduce water consumption in favor of less healthy beverage choices. Studies have shown that half of bottled water drinkers say they would choose sugared drinks as an alternative to bottled water if bottled water were not available. Royte ignores the health consequences of soda and sugared fruit drinks, which also require far more water to produce than bottled water. Nestlé Waters promotes water as a beverage, bottled or tap.

When it comes to our water sources, their long term sustainability is paramount to the success of our company. Our team of 11 natural resource managers monitors our spring sources for long-term sustainability and the health of the surrounding environment. Nestlé Waters' work in protecting aquifers, providing scientific data on aquifers and conserving surrounding land has significant benefits for communities and water districts. We are proud of our century-old legacy of sustaining our springs and the communities in which we operate.

In Maine, the Poland Spring Water Company has spring sources in eight communities and uniformly excellent relations in all of them but Fryeburg. Royte has chosen Fryeburg, where only a small percentage of our water originates, to make a case against bottled water and large corporations. When she fails to find people in the other seven communities who share her perspective, she simply ignores this part of Poland Spring's story. In Fryeburg, by her own admission, decades-old feuds and a preponderance of "heated opinions" have colored all aspects of water use in that town. Fryeburg is hardly a fair representation of Poland Spring in Maine, as the author surely knows. Royte characterizes Fryeburg in a way that is more soap opera than science, and largely ignores the hundreds of pages of independent scientific data on the aquifer



and surrounding water bodies The story of spring water in Fryeburg is interesting but irrelevant as a proxy on bottled water.

Unfortunately for the reader, *Bottlemania* pays less attention to data than drama. Here are a few examples of facts that are incorrect and stories that are inaccurate:

1. Page 12: “Meanwhile, Howard Dearborn’s well . . . was intermittently sucking air, for which he blames overzealous commercial pumping.”

Correction: Mr. Dearborn’s well had an air leak that caused it to draw air. This was a mechanical problem that was completely unrelated to local water withdrawal. No one has provided Poland Spring with any evidence to suggest that Mr. Dearborn’s well, or any other well, has run dry because of our activities. Even Mr. Dearborn has stopped complaining about his well after the air leak was fixed over three years ago – the well problem is old news.

2. Page 12: “Maine operates with a rule called absolute dominion, which it adopted in the late 1800s. . . Absolute dominion is the weakest of all four groundwater protection rules and it lets Hugh Hastings pump all the water he wants.”

Correction: Maine law is much closer to what is referred to as modified reasonable use, which Royte defines as a rule that “considers other usages and the wants of the community.” There are a number of state statutes and local ordinances that regulate water withdrawal in Maine, so neither the Fryeburg Water Company nor any other user, including Poland Spring, can pump all the water they want.

3. Page 13: “Poland Spring, after failing to buy significant tracts of land over the Wards Brook aquifer, bought land in the adjacent town of Denmark. . .”

Correction: Poland Spring has bought significant tracts of land in Fryeburg over the aquifer, to protect it. We also bought land in Denmark on which springs were located. The two activities are unrelated.

4. Page 13 : “Nestlé, which had been playing nice with Fryeburg so far. . . spun around and took the town to court.”

Correction: In fact, Nestlé Waters appealed a ruling of the Zoning Board of Appeals which had overturned a very thorough planning board permit. In Maine, an appeal is filed against the municipality.

5. Page 14: “No one can say for sure which of the town wells supplies Poland Spring, versus the town, at any time. . .”

Correction: Town wells do not supply Poland Spring. The water is supplied by the Fryeburg Water Company, which will readily answer questions as to which wells are supplying Poland Spring as well as the town.



6. Page 52: “An early modeling study of the aquifer, funded by Poland Spring, concluded that the current level of pumping. . .was sustainable.”

Correction: This study was not funded by Poland Spring. It was sponsored by the Fryeburg Aquifer Resource Committee, an independent, third-party group formed by the Fryeburg Planning Board and Poland Spring made their groundwater data available to the committee.

7. Page 58: “Protecting aquifers. . .doesn’t necessarily protect the surrounding environment.”

Correction: The state of Maine has very strict laws to make sure that withdrawal cannot have a negative impact on the environment, including rivers, streams or wetlands.

8. Page 73 “. . .Pure Mountain Springs. . .started purchasing tankerloads of water, at regular town rates (less than a penny a gallon) from the Fryeburg Water Company. Pure Mountain Springs then turned around and sold that water, at four cents more per gallon, to Poland Spring.”

Correction: Poland Spring purchases water from Pure Mountain Spring (not “Springs”) at a fraction of a cent per gallon, more in line with a typical commercial rate, not the four cents per gallon Royte states.

9. Page 86: Stefan Jackson states: “. . .forty percent of what comes out of the aquifer comes back in a year.”

Correction: In fact, 100 percent comes back. The water Poland Spring withdraws is rapidly renewed to the aquifer through rain and snow. The aquifer is continually recharging and remains healthy.

10. Page 186: It’s nothing for Nestlé to make six-figure donations- perfectly legal- so that towns with perennial budget shortfalls can repair their roads or buildings. Money talks, especially in communities with high unemployment and a low tax base. Large corporations, because they make campaign contributions, employ hundreds, and add to state revenue, have friends in high places. Their permits are rubber stamped and they receive exemptions from statutes and grandfather status for activities no longer permitted.”

Correction: Nestlé Waters is committed to providing benefits in all the communities where we operate. The suggestion that this results in permits that are rubber stamped is an insult to local review boards and state regulatory agencies, which conduct thorough and stringent reviews of our applications and on-going operations.

11. Page 192: “The Poland Spring trucks on Portland Street are already so loud, say townsfolk that you can’t talk in your living room with the windows open.”



Correction: Poland Spring trucks are a small contributor to local traffic. It is important to remember that Route 302 in Fryeburg is the gateway into Maine and truck traffic of all sorts is significant. Fryeburg is also a major truck route leading from Portland for goods, fuel, and materials of all sorts headed to New Hampshire and Vermont. It is misleading to suggest that Poland Spring trucks are the only source of noise on this highway. For instance, the proposed East Fryeburg load station with 50 trucks a day would increase the total traffic on Route 302, a state road, by approximately 2.5 percent.

12. Page 194 – “It’s hard to imagine Lovewell Pond or the Wards Brook aquifer drying up, like the Aral when large-scale irrigation of the desert got underway. . .”

Clarification: Picking a 50-year-old desert irrigation project as a point of comparison for Maine spring water is irresponsible.

13. Pages 194-6: Howard Dearborn claims that Lovewell Pond is damaged because of spring water withdrawals and cites the Waite Report, which he funded.

Clarification: The independent report by Normandeau Associates on groundwater withdrawal impacts to Wards Brook and Lovewell Pond found that Poland Spring water withdrawals were not causing problems in Wards Brook or Lovewell Pond. “. . . it is safe to conclude that the potential impact of groundwater withdrawals from the Wards Brook aquifer on water quality in Lovewell Pond is likely to be minor and indistinguishable from existing water quality conditions.” (Normandeau, pages v and 34)

14. Page 226: Royte: “...all that Poland Spring water- 180 million gallons a year...”

Correction: Poland Spring used 121 million gallons from Fryeburg in 2007. From 2005-2007, Poland Spring’s withdrawal in Fryeburg has declined by 33% because new water sources around the state were developed. This data is readily available in the annual reports to the town and the state.

** Based on a March 2007 nationally conducted audit of 1/2 liter bottles, 34 different leading brands across the water, soda and tea categories were weighed in 12 cities. The Eco-Shape™ Bottle was found to contain an average of 30% less plastic when compared to the mean of the other beverage bottles.*