

**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO RUN A LOCAL  
“NO NEW COAL” CAMPAIGN**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Campaign Background
  2. Campaign Timeline
  3. Getting more people involved locally
    - a. How to get petition signatures
    - b. Hold a movie night to educate folks about destructive mountaintop removal coal mining
    - c. A bunch of other ways to get people involved
  4. Easy tactics to do on your own or as a group
    - a. Sign the email petition
    - b. Call The Wall Street Seven
    - c. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper/school paper
    - d. Flyer at the local branch to raise awareness
    - e. Invisible theater – Pretend to open an account at your local bank
  5. Organizing a fun demonstration for the Day the Action
    - a. A list of creative and fun ideas for your event
    - b. How to plan an effective event – the nuts and bolts
  6. Sample campaign plan
  7. Reporting back on your progress
- APPENDIX – Calling all Billionaires (A guide to pulling off a great Billionaires action)

## **PART ONE: CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND**

Coal is an outdated technology that is destructive from cradle to grave. From destructive mining practices like strip mining and mountaintop removal to the mercury and greenhouse gases that wreck havoc on our local and global environment – coal is inherently destructive to our communities and climate. Our energy needs can be met through smart energy management, a commitment to efficiency, and with the prioritization of clean, renewable energy sources.

Momentum is building. Communities, students and environmental groups are resisting the build out of 150 new coal-fired power plants outlined in the Bush-Cheney energy plan. Already, many coal-fired power plants have been stopped in their tracks by communities standing up to Big Coal. A formidable anti-Mountaintop Removal movement of coalfield residents, students and environmentalists has placed Appalachian coal extraction in a national spotlight. Native communities in the American Southwest are creating alternatives to Peabody's coal operations at the same time they are resisting the poisoning of traditional water sources with coal slurry.

**RAN's strategy is to follow the money. We're demanding that two of Wall Street's biggest banks— Bank of America and Citi (formerly Citibank)— stop the financing of coal mining and power plants in the US and to adopt strong climate policies.**

This packet will tell you how you can plan a local campaign to target Bank of America and Citi and get them to stop funding new coal plants and various forms of strip mining. Depending on the time and the number of people you have available, you could do anything from collecting petition signatures to staging a demonstration outside your local Bank of America or Citi branch. Stop the big banks from funding dirty coal from the cradle to the grave. Save the climate.

For more information, to download materials, and to find out more about the campaign, go to [www.dirtymoney.org](http://www.dirtymoney.org).

## PART TWO: CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

Things are moving very quickly and often shifting.

Here are some key dates for the campaign over the next few months to help with your planning. Direct and continuous communication with the banks – starting with emails and phone calls and escalating to bigger events in front of the branches – shows the banks we're serious and getting stronger. There's a sample campaign plan in part six that will help you plot out your engagement with the banks.

- **Sept 17: Bank of America's 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Investor's Conference.** San Francisco, CA. Bank of America hosts an investor's conference to showcase their dirty coal investments.
- **Sept 24: Carbon Disclosure Project.** New York, NY. The Carbon Disclosure Project is a gathering of corporations and institutional investors to focus attention on carbon emissions, energy usage and reduction. They are having an event to launch their fifth report. Also to give green corporate actors awards for their emissions reductions. They'll be giving Citi and Bank of America awards this year for their stellar working in greenwashing their climate operations.
- **October 2: Rainforest Action Network and Coal River Mountain Watch launches a campaign against Bank of America and Citi's coal investments.** This is it, we're launching a very public robust campaign with our allies to stop Bank of America and Citi's financing of coal extraction, processing and combustions... get your friends, relatives, organizations and allies together to stop the two biggest players in the banking sector funding of coal extraction and global warming. Join us on a campaign kick-off conference call briefing and action how-to at 5 pm Pacific time on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Call in number is 800-377-8846, email [jwolk@ran.org](mailto:jwolk@ran.org) for the pass code.
- **All of October.** Rainforest Action Network's Global Finance Campaign, Coal River Mountain Watch and allies will be activating their networks of activists and supporters via media outreach, online and grassroots organizing and creative direct action.
- **November 2-5: Powershift.** Washington DC. Youth student climate mega-summit. This fall, youth from across the country will convene in Washington, DC to change the climate on global warming in the United States. Organizers from the Global Finance Campaign will be at Powershift facilitating workshops and promoting the campaign targeting coal investors.
- **November 3: Step It Up-2.** Washington DC. Step It Up-2 will be happening all over the country with a strong emphasis on coal. During Powershift, the Global Finance Campaign will be organizing actions at Bank of America and Citi branches in the area.
- **November 16-17: Days of Action against Bank of America and Citi's Coal Investments. All Over the USA!** One hundred actions in 48 hours, Rainforest Action Network, Coal River Mountain Watch, allies and friends will join hundreds and thousands of people at Bank of America and Citi

branches, offices, ATM's across the country sending a very simple message to the bankers "No More Coal!" You'll find plenty of ideas in part five of this guide.

## **PART THREE: GETTING MORE PEOPLE INVOLVED LOCALLY**

### **a. HOW TO GET PETITION SIGNATURES**

From crowded street corners and the front of the bank you're targeting to the farmers market or campus commons, all you need is a clipboard, a pen and some information!

When you get RAN petitions signed, not only will the CEOs hear about it, but new folks will be added to our email list and will receive updates about the campaign so they can get more involved and help us win!

In addition, if you are planning a local event, we can send an email to the people that you've signed up to let them know it's happening!

Petitioning is easy, requires little set-up, and you can do it almost anywhere (but try to stay on public property and avoid blocking the doors to businesses).

1. Start with a friendly greeting and eye contact – that's the only way someone walking by will stop.
2. Go straight to your pitch – "Hi! Would you sign a petition telling Bank of America and Citi to stop funding dirty coal-fired power plants?" (Tell them more if they ask, as well as a local angle). Feel free to get creative and make up your own lines to get peoples' attention.
3. Hand over the clipboard – giving the clipboard to someone empowers them to act.
4. Get their contact info, especially their email, on that petition. And give them a flyer!
5. Bring extra pens and clipboards (you can use the side of a cardboard box) so that when you're talking to groups of people, you can have many people sign at once.
6. Don't spend time trying to convince people who disagree. There are plenty of people out there that are happy to get involved!

### **NUTS AND BOLTS:**

- You can download petitions and flyers from <http://dirtymoney.org/downloads/>.
- Keep multiple copies of the petition on your clipboard(s).
- Keep a stack of flyers in your pocket to give away.
- Make sure people fill in everything, especially their email address!
- If people don't fill in their FULL address, we will be **unable** to send them locally targeted emails; only emails that go to the full list will reach them.

**AFTER YOU'RE DONE:**

- Download the Excel spreadsheet from [www.dirtymoney.org](http://www.dirtymoney.org) and enter the signers. Email it [jwolk@ran.org](mailto:jwolk@ran.org). If you can't, simply send the filled out petitions back to us in the mail: Rainforest Action Network, c/o Julie Wolk, 221 Pine Street 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, San Francisco, CA 94104.

## **b. HOLD A MOVIE NIGHT TO EDUCATE FOLKS ABOUT DESTRUCTIVE MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL COAL MINING**

Burning coal isn't the only destructive part of the system. Banks are also funding mountaintop removal coal mining, and it is devastating communities and ecosystems across Appalachia. Invite family and friends to your house, or host a bigger event at a local venue (from a café to an independent movie theater). This is a great way to educate folks about coal mining and burning, and also to plug them into the demonstrations you are organizing. Contact [dirtymoney@ran.org](mailto:dirtymoney@ran.org) to get a copy of Black Diamonds and a movie night kit.

## **c. A BUNCH OF OTHER WAYS TO GET PEOPLE INVOLVED**

There are a million ways to get the word out about your campaign and events. Check these out and decide what might work best in your community, then sit down and brainstorm specific ideas on your own or with your group.

- List your events or meetings on RAN's website at [community.ran.org](http://community.ran.org).
- Place an ad in the newspaper – the alternative free weekly is often read by progressives and tends to be much cheaper than the daily paper. And, event listings are usually free!
- Place ads on community websites (such as the online entertainment guide for your local paper).
- Record a Public Service Announcement (PSA) for public TV or radio.
- Have fun volunteer nights with food and music (along with some activism work).
- Brainstorm a list of religious, business and nonprofit groups in your community, and figure out how you can work together (what are your common interests?), or give presentations to them about the work you're doing. Remember to bring a petition as well as info about the campaign.
- Visit local universities, high schools and middle schools, and put flyers up on bulletin boards and make quick classroom speeches.
- Find student groups, and ask them to get involved.
- Ask these community groups to put a message in their newsletter or weekly email about your next meeting or event.
- Post your event on Facebook and MySpace
- Post your meetings and events on free event websites like [Upcoming.org](http://Upcoming.org), [Indymedia.org](http://Indymedia.org), [craigslist.org](http://craigslist.org), [volunteerforchange.org](http://volunteerforchange.org) and [activismnetwork.org](http://activismnetwork.org).
- Hand out flyers or stickers.
- Put up posters.
- Get your volunteers interviewed on a local TV or radio talk show.
- Call in to local radio talk shows.
- Get newspaper coverage of your group, events or volunteers.
- Encourage your volunteers to bring friends and family to events.
- Show a film or slideshow or hold a free concert (you could also ask for donations). Remember to bring a petition as well as info about RAN.
- Start a speakers bureau (volunteers trained to talk about RAN's campaigns).
- Table and crowd canvass at local festivals, fairs and shopping areas.

- Start a RAN group and recruit more people to get involved! Contact [activism@ran.org](mailto:activism@ran.org) if you're interested.

## PART FOUR: EASY TACTICS TO DO ON YOUR OWN OR AS A GROUP

### a. SIGN THE EMAIL PETITION

If you haven't done it already, make sure to go [www.dirtymoney.org](http://www.dirtymoney.org) and sign our online petition telling Bank of America not to fund new coal plants.

#### *Take it to the next level:*

- Forward the petition to your friends, and ask them to sign it as well.

### b. ORGANIZE A LOCAL CALL-IN TO YOUR LOCAL WALL STREET SEVEN BRANCH

First, make the call yourself. Look up the contact info for your local Bank of America here [http://ran.org/get\\_involved/take\\_action\\_locally/global\\_finance/street\\_activism/](http://ran.org/get_involved/take_action_locally/global_finance/street_activism/). Then let your fingers do the walking.

Then say something like this:

"My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am calling to let Citi (*for example*) know that your bank needs to stop helping finance dirty coal plants. Citi needs to adopt climate-friendly environmental and social policies. I will be letting my friends and fellow investors know about this, and I sincerely hope Citi does the right thing."

If no one picks up, leave a message!

You can let us know at [dirtymoney@ran.org](mailto:dirtymoney@ran.org) that you've made the call.

#### *Take it to the next level:*

- After you've made the call, ask 10 friends to do the same.
- Or, take your cell phone outside of your local Bank of America or Citi branch, and tell people about the campaign as they walk by. Hand them a flyer and ask them to make the call with your cell phone (or theirs). You can print out a copy of the script so that people feel comfortable. This could be a fun and interactive part of a demonstration. Let us know how many people make the call!

### c. WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF YOUR LOCAL PAPER/SCHOOL PAPER

#### **What is a Letter to the Editor?**

- Letters to the editor (LTE's) are usually found on the last couple pages of the front section of the newspaper, and most often discuss a recent event/issue covered by the paper.
- They are your chance to "sound-off" to your community about issues in the news. **They are widely read**—so make them an important part of your media strategy.
- It is much easier to publish a letter to the editor than it is to place an op-ed, get an editorial written, or get a story written by a reporter.

#### **Tips**

- **Keep a lookout for stories in your local paper about global warming, and especially about coal specifically.** Your letter has a much better chance of being printed if it is a reaction to a story in the paper. Respond as quickly as you can.
- Read the letters page—you will learn how to develop an effective letter-writing style, and you will be able to see if someone has already written on your issue.
- Keep it short and concise—150-200 words. The paper will take the liberty to shorten your letter to suit its format; the more it has to cut, the less control you have of what gets printed. Lead with your most important information.
- Focus on one main point and make a compelling case. Be "witty" without lapsing into sarcasm or clichés.
- Write in short paragraphs, with no more than three sentences per paragraph.
- Avoid personal attacks.
- Put your full name, address and phone number at the top of the page and sign the letter at the bottom (unless you are emailing it in). You must include a phone number for verification purposes.
- Follow the paper's directions regarding how to send the letter.
- Follow up to see if the letter was received.

#### **No New Coal Letter to the Editor Talking Points**

**You can use a few (just a few!) of these facts to write your letter to the editor. Remember, keep it concise – 150-200 words max!**

To transition from a general story about global warming to the Wall Street Seven funding dirty coal issue, start by saying something like...

“Your xx date article titled xx clearly shows the dramatic effects already happening from global warming/ shows the need to curb global warming. One way to do this is to stop funding the creation of new coal-fired power plants...”

More facts you can include in your letter:

- **As the world calls for immediate action to confront climate change, Wall Street doesn't seem to be paying attention. Banks such as Citibank and Bank of America needs to stop financing coal mining and dirty coal plants, and instead adopt climate-friendly environmental and social policies.**
- Top NASA scientist Dr. James Hansen, regarded by many as one of the world's climate gurus, called for a moratorium on building more coal-fired power plants in the United States. He said it's the No. 1 solution to global warming, and that so far, no coal-fired plants can capture carbon dioxide emissions so they are not released into the atmosphere. Shockingly, in the next decade alone 159 new coal plants are scheduled to be built, part of the Bush Administration's national energy plan.
- Coal is an outdated technology that is destructive along every step. From harmful mining practices like strip mining and mountaintop removal to the mercury and greenhouse gasses that wreck havoc on our environment – coal is inherently destructive to our communities and climate.
- Stop Funding Dirty Energy Deals. Investing in companies like Dynegy and AEP is bad for business, the environment, and for future generations. No New Coal Plants.
- In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, banks should be shifting their resources away from dangerous energy sources such as coal and nuclear and focusing on clean sources such as wind and solar.

***Take it to the next level:***

- Get a group together, or simply ask more people to write letters and give them copies of these tips. The more people that write about an issue, the more likely the paper is to print a letter.

#### **d. FLYER AT THE LOCAL OFFICE OR BRANCH TO RAISE AWARENESS**

Download our handy half page flyer at [www.dirtymoney.org/materials](http://www.dirtymoney.org/materials). Make sure to print it out horizontally, and when you make copies, print two out, double side them, and cut them in half (they are meant to be half page, double sided flyers). Print them on brightly-colored paper if you can.

Grab a stack and head to your local bank branch. Hand out flyers to folks passing by the bank, and especially those that are going in and out to do their banking.

#### ***Take it to the next level:***

- Bring your friends with you to the branch!
- Combine this with getting petition signatures or getting cell phone calls into the banks.
- Bring the flyers everywhere you go!

There are a million other places to flyer and leave flyers, such as:

#### **• You can leave a stack of flyers at:**

- The cashier's desk at stores and restaurants
- Coffee shops
- Music venues
- Community and activist gathering places

#### **• You can put up or pass out flyers at:**

- Community bulletin boards in coffee and book shops
- Street kiosks
- Storefronts (ask if you can put it up inside of the front window facing out)
- On college campuses
- Public transportation hubs and stops
- Parks
- In other community or religious groups' meeting spaces (with permission)
- Local events, like film screenings & protests

## e. INVISIBLE THEATER – PRETEND TO OPEN AN ACCOUNT AT YOUR LOCAL BANK

Here's a fun idea! Walk into your local bank and ask about opening an account. Be sure to ask them lots of questions about what they'll be investing your money in... make sure they know that you will not open a new account unless you KNOW they aren't invested in coal. Tell them why coal is so bad. Ask to speak to the manager if the banker doesn't know how to help you. Bring your friends... imagine if everyone in the bank were getting the same question from seemingly innocent customers... And bring some friends to flyer out front.

## PART FIVE: ORGANIZING A FUN DEMONSTRATION FOR THE DAY OF ACTION

### a. A LIST OF CREATIVE AND FUN IDEAS FOR YOUR EVENT

Following is a list of possible themes for your event. Feel free to get creative and think of your own! For more details on how to organize your event, check the next section.

- **Billionaires for Coal:** We've teamed up with the Billionaires for Coal (check out <http://billionairesforbush.com/index.php> for tips on creating hilarious street theater) to create a perfectly ironic theme for our events. Basically, dressed in swanky duds and cuddling pieces of coal, the Billionaires "counter-protest" our events by extolling the virtues of the dirty coal that makes them billions to anyone who will listen (the press, the passers-by, the managers of the bank). It's very easy to do – just find some fancy clothes to wear, make some cardboard top hats that say "Coal," "TXU," or "Dynegey" and put on your best affected accent. For a fantastic example, check out video from our January 30<sup>th</sup> action in New York: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=Z-jxZoSf6p8>. For more details on how to do a Billionaires for Coal action, check out the last page of this guide.

- **Beach party for Global Warming:** 67 degrees in Michigan in December? Hey, let's throw a beach party!! Bring your beach blankets, arm floaties, sun hats and shades, and throw a beach party in front of the bank (or inside, if you're feeling bold). And if you're really feeling bold, get out that swimsuit.

- **Tyvek Suits/Hazmat theme:** Coal is so dirty, we really need to protect ourselves. Go to your local banking center or office and declare it a hazardous material area as they are knee-deep in coal investments. You can buy white Tyvek suits really cheap at places like Home Depot. They make a great visual along with dust masks and goggles. Try covering yourself with soot (from powered charcoal or your fireplace).

- **Coal is a Dinosaur:** How about dressing up like our prehistoric friends to show just how ancient a technology coal is. I mean, weren't the dinosaurs around when coal was formed? Ok, so the costume is a little harder, but maybe you've got one laying around.

- **Coal delivery:** Schedule an appointment with a Merrill Lynch investment advisor or Citibank account manager and bring some coal (Maybe wrapped as a gift? Disguised as a box of candy?) and see how they respond. We bet they don't want any coal. If you can't find the real thing, BBQ charcoal will work out fine.

- **Wheeze-in:** Get your asthma inhalers out and fake your choking death. Yeah, it's kind of dramatic, but imagine all those people laying on the floor of the bank...

## **b. HOW TO PLAN AN EFFECTIVE EVENT – THE NUTS AND BOLTS**

Here are the steps to planning an event. For more help, especially with media or having RAN send an email out to our folks in your area to promote the event, please email [jwolk@ran.org](mailto:jwolk@ran.org).

**Identify and reach out to supporters/Create a coalition:** As with organizing any event—whether a house party, teach-in or protest—it is essential to bring together a group of people who are committed to the project. It is also useful to reach out to other groups to see if they want to participate. Campaigns work best when they are anchored by a coalition of groups and individuals. Who else might be interested in helping plan the demonstration? What natural allies do you have in the community? Try to find coalition partners sooner rather than later. Coalitions work best when everyone is involved in the process from the beginning.

Building coalitions among different constituencies is not only key to organizing a big demonstration—it is also essential to forming an energetic and broad-based social movement and winning real change.

**Assign tasks and determine roles:** Make sure everyone knows their assigned tasks. When organizing a demonstration, you probably want one person responsible for emceeding the protest itself; one person in charge of getting the required permits and being in contact with the police (if necessary); one person responsible for working with the media; and one responsible for signs, art, and chants. Everyone should be responsible for spreading the word to the general public.

**Location-location-location/Permits and officials:** You want to hold your demonstration where there is a lot of traffic—either auto traffic or pedestrians or both. Because you want to connect with as many people as possible, visibility is key. A lousy location can undermine even the best-organized demonstration.

It is important that you know your rights regarding the use of space, whether you are organizing a demonstration on a college campus or along a public street. Many towns require permits for demonstrations, especially if you will be using amplified sound such as bullhorns. Permits are almost always required for marches since they may disrupt traffic. Talk to the campus or community police about your demonstration and determine what permits you need.

If you are planning to risk arrest, you should make extra arrangements. It is wise to have trained legal observers on hand to document the event. The National Lawyers Guild can provide suggestions on finding legal observers: [www.nlg.org](http://www.nlg.org) or 212-679-5100.

We also recommend that before engaging in non-violent civil disobedience, some members of your group take part in non-violence training. Please call or email us and we will do a training or connect you with trainers in your area.

**Get the word out:** Turnout is crucial. Having a large number of people at your protest demonstrates broad public support for your cause. Both the media and the decision makers you are trying to influence will be looking closely at the number of people at your protest to see if you have real community backing. Develop a specific strategy for outreach and publicity (check out part three), and set a goal for the number of people you want at the demonstration. Then create a plan for reaching out to 10 to 100 times as many people as you hope will be there. Assume that only a fraction of the people you contact will actually show up.

The key to a successful outreach strategy is the production of materials like event flyers, direct mail invitations, email invitations, and public service announcements. Distribute the flyers as broadly as possible among friends and colleagues, and distribute them publicly at coffee shops, community centers, bulletin boards, cultural centers, other political/activism events, churches, schools, universities, etc.

You can also use the press as a tool to get the word out. Write a press release and send it to campus and local media to get the media to cover the event (we can help with this). Send a flyer or public service announcement to radio stations and community newspapers to get the event announced on the air or in the events section of the newspaper. The sooner you have materials ready, the better, especially in regards to media.

And don't forget the internet! Post events on Facebook, MySpace, Upcoming.org, Craigslist, Volunteer for Change, Indy Media and RAN's events site <http://community.ran.org>.

Check out Part 3 Section c for a list of more ways to get the word out!

**Speakers and Schedule:** Whether you're holding a solemn vigil or a loud march, you will want speakers at your event. Gather a group of people representing a wide range of constituency—young people, old people, people of color, working class people, professionals, religious leaders, people directly affected by the problem, experts in the field. Just as a large number of people illustrate support for your cause, so does a diverse range of speakers. Talk to friends, teachers and professors and family to find good speakers. Think about influential people in the community that you could approach. Brainstorm local organizations, and ask a representative from the group to speak. Decide on the order in which you want your speakers to address the crowd. Give each speaker about two or three minutes and ask them to keep it short. ***Remember: this is a demonstration, not a teach-in.***

Also, always make sure you have an emcee in charge of the speakers' order. It's this person's responsibility to bring a bullhorn or amplifier and keep the program moving smoothly and on time.

**Slogans and Chanting:** Don't assume that you will suddenly think up chants in the heat of the protest. This won't happen, so you need to prepare chants beforehand.

A few days before the demonstration, set aside some time to brainstorm catchy slogans that can be learned quickly by a crowd. Be as creative as you can. Even if you're working on a very serious issue, it's always a good idea to come up with a chant that might make people smile. Keep in mind that the passersby are people you want to educate, not alienate.

Make copies of the chants to give out to fellow demonstrators. Have someone in charge of leading people in the chants.

**Signs and other materials:** Colorful signs are essential for capturing people's attention. Make signs that have bold letters and clear messages—the fewer words, the better. You can paint your signs by hand or enlarge photos that illustrate your issue. Make sure your signs are readable from far away and make for good photo-ops. As with chants, the use of sarcasm or a play on words can be an effective way of communicating.

**Literature and handouts:** A bright, colorful sign may catch someone's attention, but then what? Most people won't have the time to stop and chat about your cause. That's why it's important that you bring educational materials to hand out—we have one you can use at [www.dirtymoney.org/](http://www.dirtymoney.org/) (click on "Materials"). The average person on their lunch break may not be able to hang out and learn about the issue, but if you give them something to stick in their back pocket, chances are that they will read it later.

**Puppets and other props:** Life-size puppets offer a fantastic way to dramatize your issue, and they make a great visual for television cameras. Other kinds of props like giant banners will also enliven your demonstration. Making art a central part of your protest will help you attract more attention. Art will also make your demonstration more fun for those involved.

**Creative actions, skits and songs:** It's always a good idea to think of new ways to express your point of view. Maybe you don't want to have another protest with people changing and shouting. Perhaps you want something more original.

Skits and other kinds performance (see our ideas in the previous section) provide an excellent way to grab people's interest. Write and perform a short play that explores your issue. For example, anti-sweatshop activists have organized "sweatshop fashion shows" to show people who the real fashion victims are. A song and dance performance is another fun way to attract attention and get your point across.

**Invite the media/prepare press packets:** A well-organized demonstration on a busy street corner can communicate with hundreds of people. But if the media covers your demonstration, you can reach 1,000 times as many people. Make sure you designate someone to be responsible for doing outreach to the media. Contact us if you need help with media.

On the day of the demonstration, make sure you have plenty of press packets prepared. A press packet should have all the background material a reporter would need to cover your story. Include your original press release about the event (which should explain why you are protesting) and also any fact sheets or

other campaign materials you may have. At least one person should be responsible for handing out press packets to reporters and also getting the reporters' names so you can contact them about future events.

Timeline for Planning an event: the earlier you start, the better!

### **3 WEEKS PRIOR TO THE EVENT**

- Finalize the date and time for your event.
- Select a venue for the event.
- Reach out to organizations in your community that may be interested in supporting, co-sponsoring or attending the movie night.
- Draw up a list of potential guests. Remember to over-invite as not everyone will be able to attend.
- Send a "save the date" to people and groups you hope will attend.
- Notify RAN if you'd like us to send an email to local activists on our list. Also let us know what other RAN materials you'd like to have on hand for the event.
- Determine whether you want to have media coverage of the event.

### **TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT**

- Confirm the venue and logistics for the event (audio-visual equipment, liquor license, food service, parking, start and end time, etc.).
- Send out an email invitation to family, friends, group list serves and/or other concerned activists. Try to get an RSVP so you know how many people to expect.
- Send the email text to RAN if you'd like us to pass it along to our list.
- Look into posting the announcement on community event websites, Indy Media websites, Craigslist, local papers or ask local groups to advertise on their website/list serve.
- Post flyers announcing the event around town on community bulletin boards, coffee shops, storefronts (make sure to ask permission), outdoor spaces, and schools.
- If appropriate, draft a news release and an advisory about the event (or sk us for a sample).

### **ONE WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT**

- Send out a reminder email to your guests, include a link to directions.
- Consider asking friends to bring food and drinks to share.
- If you have any questions about RAN, our campaigns or the issues that will be addressed at the event, give us a call!
- One or two days before the event, call or email guests with a reminder about the event and anything they committed to bring or prepare.
- Print out sign-up sheets, petitions, donation slips.
- Make sure you have all of the materials you'll need: clipboards, pens, petitions, flyers, posters, goodies, info.
- Two to three days before the event send out a media advisory (if you want media coverage). The day before your event, call the assignment editor to confirm that it was received and see if they are going to send someone (they may not know yet, but it will help your planning to ask).

### **DAY OF THE EVENT**

- Make sure to have brochures and petitions visible and readily available.
- Have someone from your group designated as the trouble-shooter, who will deal with any problems that come up (or will delegate to another group member if needed).
- Designate a few group members as greeters. Their role will be to make new arrivals feel welcome, tell them more about your group and the issue, etc.
- Have a designated media spokesperson and someone designated to welcome and sign-in members of the media.
- Take some pictures!
- Talk about next steps – try to get people to sign up for the next action or outreach opportunity while they're there.
- Enjoy the event!

### **DAY AFTER**

- Mail your signed petitions back to RAN.
- Email us your pictures of the event so we can post them on our website.
- Debrief as a group, and let us know how the event went. Did you achieve your goals?
- Send out a thank you email to all those who attended, and tell them about key successes from the event. Include a link to some event pictures.

## **PART SIX: SAMPLE CAMPAIGN PLAN**

Here's a sample campaign plan to give you an idea of how this might all work:

### **October 2-9:**

- Hold a meeting to make a campaign plan and plug people in.
- Petition at local farmers market or park and collect 100 signatures (part three).
- You and ten friends write letters to the editor of your local paper (part four).
- Plan your visibility action for April 13 (part four).

### **October 15:**

- Do a simple flyering, petitioning and/or cell phone action at your local Citi or Bank of America branch (part four).

### **October 17-November 15:**

- Hold regular meetings to plan events, educate new volunteers and plug them in.
- Continue to get folks involved by petitioning and flyering, either in front of the banks for more visibility or at places like the farmers market (part three).
- Choose some other simple tactics from part four to remind the banks you're around and gather more support.
- Plan your big action for the Day of Action (part five).

### **November 16-17: Nationwide Days of Action:**

- Turn everyone you know out for your big event to stop global warming and coal extraction!

Stay tuned for what happens next...

## **PART SEVEN: REPORTING BACK ON YOUR PROGRESS**

We want to hear and see what you've accomplished! This will help us keep track of our successes and see where we still need to do more work.

- Blog about your event on RAN's website at <http://understory.ran.org/>.
- Please send us digital video and photos of any actions you do; we'll try to get them online for others to see.
- Please let us know how many phone calls, emails, letters to the editor and petition signatures you get by emailing [jwolk@ran.org](mailto:jwolk@ran.org).
- Please tell us about the events you are planning and register them at [community.ran.org](http://community.ran.org).

And please feel free to call Julie at 415-659-0525 or Scott at 415-659-0524 if you have any questions or need additional support. We are here to help! Or email us at [jwolk@ran.org](mailto:jwolk@ran.org) and [sparkin@ran.org](mailto:sparkin@ran.org).

RAN's address (for sending back petitions if you can't upload them into the Excel file):

Rainforest Action Network  
c/o Julie Wolk  
221 Pine Street 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94104

## **APPENDIX : \$\$ CALLING ALL BILLIONAIRES! \$\$**

### **\$\$ HOW TO COUNTER-DEMONSTRATE AT ANTI-COAL EVENTS! \$\$**

Great hordes of environmentalists and social justice activists have taken to the streets against our beloved coal companies and the banks that make it all possible! Imagine, the coal industry... under attack!! These hooligans must be stopped. We must counter-protest, and show the world that the coal industry is backed by powerful moneyed interests!

Activists plan demonstrations outside the seven most powerful coal-funding banks, especially on April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. We must stand in solidarity with our banking brothers.

Please, hold a “Thank you banks for your continued support” rally at the banks WHILE the activists are protesting. Show the banks we are in full support of their actions.

### **\$\$ MAKING YOUR BILLIONAIRES EVENT A SUCCESSFUL ONE \$\$**

Our friends at the Billionaires for Bush (<http://billionairesforbush.com>) helped us dream up this FUN, creative, attention-grabbing and effective action theme. We’ve provided instructions for planning a “counter-protest,” but there are lots of ways to get in touch with your inner billionaire!

#### **What you need:**

\$ Costumes –Have a third to half the people at your action dress up like Billionaires and counter-protest the activists. Wear suits, fancy dresses, high heels, gaudy jewelry, and fur (fake, of course). Bring extra plastic tiaras, top hats, ties and costume jewelry for people who don’t come in costume. Prepping this event makes for a fun trip to the thrift shop or a search through your closet for your old prom dress.

\$ Smokestack top hats – These are easy to make. Just roll up a large piece of stiff black paper (like poster board), write something like “I love coal” on it in white paint or chalk, buy some cotton fill from a fabric store and stuff it in the top. You can sprinkle some charcoal powder on the smoke, too, to make it as dirty looking as possible. Use artists charcoal or charcoal briquettes. You can make a rim for the hat, as well. Check out pictures here.

[http://ran.org/new/dirty\\_money/home/image\\_gallery/feb\\_21\\_merrill\\_lynch\\_actions/](http://ran.org/new/dirty_money/home/image_gallery/feb_21_merrill_lynch_actions/)

\$ Signs – Both the Billionaires and the “regular” activists need good signage. It’s hard for passers-by to know what’s going on unless we tell them. Make signs for the Billionaires that say something like, “Billionaires for Coal - Keeping Rich People Rich.” Be sure to also have signs for the protesters that say “No New Coal,” “Stop Coal Investments,” etc.

\$ Other supplies – It’s great to have a couple bullhorns, or at least one. This way, the two sides can engage in a bit of a shouting match (more on that later).

#### **What to do at the event:**

\$ Get in character!! Ham it up, it’s fun to pretend to be uber-wealthy.

\$ In general, Billionaires can show up to the “opposition’s” event with banner, signs and leaflets. Mock the activists’ misguided ways and chant about your love for coal and money. The audience can be the participants in the event that we’re counter-demonstrating, and the goal might be to recruit some of them to participate in upcoming Billionaire actions. You might have one or two Billionaires “interrupt” the rally or demonstration to give speeches. Or you might have a full-on West Side Story-esque theatrical performance...

\$ Keep the energy up! Make sure to think of some clever chants before the action (for both sides), and continue to use them throughout the event (take turns so passers-by and the bank staff can actually hear what’s going on).

\$ Focus on just the Billionaires for a while – do some impromptu theater where people talk about how rich they are and how devoted they are to the coal industry. Make sure to use your best rich people accent, dahling.

\$ Have someone from the activist side make a short speech about why we’re out here, and make sure the Billionaires are counter-chanting (and vice versa).

#### **Press Statement:**

The Press Statement is valuable to have at events that are expected to get press coverage — whether a rally, demonstration, or press conference. They are also useful to pass out to people that walk by (or you can just use a flyer). The press statement can be a more formal (and funny) statement about the importance of building new coal plants if we are to keep our profits high. You’ll still want a “regular” press statement from the activists as well. Let us know if you need help writing press statements.

#### **Other ideas to incorporate:**

\$ The Billionaires can carry champagne flutes with charcoal briquettes in each one and toast to each other about coal while coughing incessantly.

\$ The Billionaires can attempt to go inside the building and thank bankers to show their support for coal. Be sure to do this when you first arrive before security figures out what is going on. And make sure people are following you with the video camera!!

\$ Have a sit-in until the banks say they promise to fund all 159 coal plants on the Bush/Cheney agenda.

\$ The coal and banking industries are making billions of dollars while people are suffering from asthma and other diseases... you can make this visual by having the Billionaires “strangling” people to death from the other side.

\$ Play football or lacrosse with some lumps of coal.

\$ Use pieces of coal or charcoal to spell out “I LOVE COAL” on the sidewalk: [http://ran.org/new/dirty\\_money/home/image\\_gallery/feb\\_21\\_merrill\\_lynch\\_](http://ran.org/new/dirty_money/home/image_gallery/feb_21_merrill_lynch_)