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# The Jersey..... SIERRAN

Vol. 48, No. 3      Approximately 21,000 Members in New Jersey      July-September 2019

## Reports from Trenton

### Delayed Energy Master Plan Hurts NJ's Clean Energy Future

From a press release issued on April 22 by our Trenton staff

The release of New Jersey's Energy Master Plan (EMP) will be delayed until at least June 1, with adoption not expected until December. That announcement has just come from the Board of Public Utilities (BPU). Shamefully, the delay allows New Jersey to move forward on projects that run counter to the state's avowed goal of 100% clean energy by 2050.

Greenhouse gas emissions continue while we wait. The BPU approves rate cases first and plans later. Solar and offshore wind, energy efficiency programs, and electric vehicles all hang suspended in the balance.

As the BPU announced the delay, it approved \$300 million annually in rate-payer subsidies for nuclear energy. That decision commits New Jersey to buy 40 percent of its energy from nuclear for the indefinite future. Those subsidies will

block the state from reaching the clean energy goals that are supposed to be laid out in the EMP.

New Jersey's solar energy sector is on the verge of collapse: Solar Renewable Energy Certificates are running out and we are approaching the cost cap. The decision for accepting bids for 1,100 MW in offshore wind is scheduled for June.

New Jersey is considering eight new pipelines and five new power plants, all for fossil fuels. If approved, the state's greenhouse gases will increase by 32 percent. It isn't hard to suspect that the delay in the EMP is exactly what the fossil fuel industry would desire. The Empower NJ coalition, which includes the New Jersey Sierra Club, has called on Gov. Murphy to place a moratorium on all fossil-fuel infrastructure projects in the state. (See article at right)

## Conservation Chair's Report

### Zero Energy Homes

By Greg Gorman (ggorman07419@embarqmail.com)

Buying a home is the biggest financial commitment you'll make in your lifetime. To make the decision you consider "Location, Location, and Location", your lifestyle preferences, and your future plans. Future plans often include family plans, job security, and resale potential if you must move. As we enter a decade when we begin to accelerate our transition toward a clean energy economy, the homebuyer should also consider if the residence is zero-energy (ZE) or zero-energy ready (ZER).

The US Department of Energy (DOE) defines a ZER home as "a high-performance home so energy efficient all or most annual energy consumption can be offset with renewable energy." DOE, based on inputs from home performance professionals, suggests seven design characteristics of a ZER home: moisture protection, a high-performance heating and cooling system, a complete package of high-efficiency components include water heating, appliances, lighting, and fans that save energy, a comprehensive indoor air quality system, solar ready construction, and enhanced quality assurance provided by independent inspections, testing, and national program certifications to ensure that your home is performance ready.<sup>1</sup>

The Zero Energy Project, a non-profit educational organization, provides non-technical information to prospective home buyers, builders, designers, real estate professionals and advocates about zero net energy homes.<sup>2</sup> It emphasizes that ZE homes are just like any homes — except better in providing comfort, resiliency, durability and affordability. Both ZE and ZER homes are constructed to maintain superior indoor air quality, an important feature in NJ with its air pollution problems.

There are other factors to consider: is the home surrounded by trees? Does the municipality offer community solar? Is a plug-in vehicle in your future? Will a 25-ft charger cable reach the curb from an outside electric outlet? How easy would it be to replace or supplement the gas furnace with a heat pump to warm in winter and cool in summer? When you move in, what energy saving appliances should you buy? The Rocky Mountain Institute's "Residential Energy+" provides resources to answer these questions.<sup>3</sup>

The home buyer should request access to electric and fuel bills and if available, the latest energy audit. An energy audit will provide recommended measures to improve the health, safety, and, energy efficiency.<sup>4</sup> These measures may influence your buying decision.

Why is this important in relationship to global warming? Residential units account for 14% of NJ's carbon emissions and consume 25% of its energy. Nearly half the energy consumed in New Jersey homes is for space heating. Appliances account for 30% of the energy use; water heating alone accounts for 18%. Your choice in selecting a home helps defeat global warming.

(References)  
1 <https://www.energy.gov/eere/buildings/zero-energy-ready-home>  
2 <https://zeroenergyproject.org/>  
3 <https://rmi.org/our-work/buildings/residential-energy-performance/>  
4 <http://www.njcleanenergy.com/residential/programs/home-performance-energy-star/what-expect-home-energy-assessment> and <http://www.resnet.us/professional/home-energy-audit-benefits>



### Moratorium on Fossil-fuel Projects an Urgent Need

By Jeff Tittel, Senior Chapter Director (Jeff.Tittel@Sierraclub.org)

We live amid a rapidly worsening climate crisis, about which only government has the authority, resources, and duty to take action. Last year was the fourth hottest on record, globally, and the other of the top five years have all been since 2014. Recent reports show oceans warming 40% faster than previously thought. Impacts will be catastrophic: sea level rise, frequency and intensity of weather events, devastation of marine life, and agricultural turmoil. Human health impacts are already evident in New Jersey, with rising rates of asthma and tick-borne diseases such as Lyme.

On Feb 20th the Empower NJ - No Fossil Fuel Campaign released a special report, Fighting Climate Change in New Jersey: the Urgent Case for a Moratorium on all Fossil Fuel Projects. It details the danger, from five proposed power plants and eight new pipelines, of increased greenhouse gases, and of thwarting Gov. Murphy's goal of 100% renewable energy by 2050. The report urges the creation of rules limiting CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas emissions before any of these 13 projects is permitted. The New Jersey Sierra Club is a member of Empower NJ, a coalition of 58 environmental, community, faith-based and other progressive organizations.

The report considers each of the 13 fossil fuel projects. If built, they collectively would increase CO<sub>2</sub> and GHG emissions by 32 metric tons per year, or about 32%. The five power plants would increase CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from electricity generation by 76%. To regulate CO<sub>2</sub> and GHG emissions, Empower NJ recommends removal of cost caps on renewable projects (mostly solar and wind), reversing Gov. Christie-era regulatory roll-backs making it easier to build pipelines, and a fracking ban both in New Jersey and the entire Delaware River Basin.

Gov. Murphy has pledged action on climate change, but he has made little progress toward the 100% percent renewable goal. He must turn words into action. A moratorium on the 13 fossil-fuel projects would allow New Jersey to implement rules reducing GHGs and CO<sub>2</sub> before any of them proceeds.

New Jersey governors have a history of using moratoriums to tackle pressing environmental issues. Gov. Byrne stopped

Pinelands development until the Pinelands Act was approved. Gov. Kean preserved freshwater wetlands while awaiting approval of wetlands protections. Gov. Florio blocked new incinerators.

A moratorium is needed because many projects are moving ahead despite strong public opposition. Construction has begun on the 28-mile Southern Reliability Link pipeline, which would destroy environmentally sensitive land in the Pinelands. The Club is seeking a stay halting that construction, while also legally challenging a South Jersey Gas pipeline to the now-closed B.L. England power plant in Cape May Co. PennEast has been granted eminent domain to gain access for land surveys for its 120-mile pipeline. DEP granted permits for a new compressor station in Roseland, threatening that community.

The proposed Meadowlands power plant, that would serve only New York customers, has prompted increasing resistance from surrounding communities. Murphy has not offered an opinion on the project, saying only that he will "not call balls and strikes" on the proposals. That, he said, is the DEP's job. But the DEP is powerless to stop those projects until regulations are established on CO<sub>2</sub>, which New Jersey declared an air pollutant in 2005. Murphy isn't just the umpire; he's the owner! A moratorium is the only way to halt these projects and enable the state to achieve its 100% renewable goal by 2050. Otherwise, pipelines and power plants that began under Christie will become Murphy's legacy.

Officials across the nation are not just talking; they are acting responsibly to reduce greenhouse gases. The Seattle county council adopted a six-month moratorium on major fossil-fuel infrastructure. Los Angeles officials just announced plans to shut down three gas-fired plants. Even staunchly Republican Arizona regulators extended a moratorium on new natural-gas power plants.

When Gov. Christie pulled us out of the Northeastern States' Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) in 2011, New Jersey produced 12% of the pollution among the ten member states.

(Continued on page 4)

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**More in our Electronic Edition (pp. 13-20):** Community Environmental Leadership; On the Trail in Burlington Co; From Trenton: Fluorochemicals, BL England, Coastal Resource Zone, C-1 Streams, Beach Access, Park Funding, Wildfires in the Pinelands, PennEast Pipeline, Nuclear Subsidy, Trumping Pipelines. Footnotes.  
**Here's the URL:** [https://www.sierraclub.org/newjersey/njs\\_sierran/nj-sierran](https://www.sierraclub.org/newjersey/njs_sierran/nj-sierran)



*High School Coordinator's Report*

## What Can be Done in High School

By Shivani Patel (Shivani.patel172001@gmail)

I've been hard at work fighting environmental battles!

Just across the state border from Trenton, NJ, a company called Elcon has an application into the PA-DEP to build a toxic waste facility along the Delaware River. The proposed site is only five minutes from my home, and the environmental, health, and safety impacts are likely to be extremely negative. I've been spending countless hours canvassing for petition signatures, speaking out during public comment, and encouraging my peers to write letters to the DEP. I am ecstatic to inform you that my community's hard work has paid off! The Falls Township (PA) Board of Supervisors has rejected Elcon's proposal and the PA-DEP has

issued a draft decision to deny the permit! That is another environmental victory.

I attended a demonstration of a BlueBird electric school bus at my school, and lobbied the school board to invest in electric and propane school buses.

In April I organized two community clean ups of local creeks. I've been making short videos for my school's daily announcements about how kids can tackle environmental issues in their communities. I include tips about sustainable habits. I'm currently writing a research paper about climate change.

I would welcome the opportunity to consult with other high school environmentalists in New Jersey.

*Transportation Report*

## Northern Valley Greenway

By Bill Beren, Chair of our Transportation Committee (Beren1@Verizon.net)

Can a recreational bicycling/walking path coexist alongside modern light rail? That's the question members of our Transportation Committee set out to answer this past February when I, along with Tim Sevenser, surveyed the abandoned Northern Valley rail line: in Bergen County north of Englewood Hospital. The route is currently owned by CSX, a railroad.

New Jersey Transit is seeking federal funds to extend the Hudson Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) from its current terminus in North Bergen to Englewood along this abandoned rail line. Beyond that point, community activists have been fighting to convert the next eight miles of rail right of way (ROW) to a multi-use path for walking and biking: starting in Tenafly, and including the communities of Cresskill, Demarest, Closter, Norwood and Northvale, where the route crosses the New York State line and joins existing bike trails there.

Our Transportation Committee strongly supports the concept of a recreational path along the ROW, but also urges that the planned path should allow for a future extension of the HBLR alongside. Although preservation of the rail corridor for future passenger service is required under current federal rail-banking regulations, our Committee was concerned that once the recreational path is built, it would difficult to get community support to redesign the route to accommodate light rail.

Therefore, in a statement distributed at a public meeting at North Valley Regional High School in Demarest on March 5<sup>th</sup>, we asked that the final plan include a 12-15' landscaped, unpaved strip along the west side of the recreational route – for a future single track passenger light rail system with passing sidings at locations deemed appropriate by NJ Transit. There's plenty of room for both uses: the width of the ROW is 60' along most of the route north of Tenafly, and in many places it abuts public parkland which could supply additional width.

Our Committee was encouraged to see that one of the three proposed designs for the recreational path presented that evening – by the Landscape Architecture firm N|V|5 of Parsippany – included an option for the future rail extension, and that there were many comments submitted by community residents that favored this option. N|V|5 was hired by NJ Dept. of Transportation to conduct a preliminary feasibility study and present design alternatives for the Greenway.

Based on its preliminary designs, it appears that the ROW can accommodate three parallel 15' pathways, one each for rail, biking, and walking/jogging, with 15' left over for buffers between the three pathways and along the eastern and western edges. The Club recommends that the 15' strip set aside for rail be landscaped and land-banked for a future extension of the HBLR.

Angela DeSapio, a member of both the Transportation Committee and our Executive Committee, thinks that the idea of converting abandoned rails to joint pedestrian/bicycling pathways with an accompanying rail line is gaining momentum. In fact, the Rails to Trails Conservancy, a national lobby for multi-use recreational trails, now promotes Rails *with* Trails. There are many good examples including, here in New Jersey, the Morris Traction Trail between Madison and Morristown (Morris Co).

N|V|5 is expected to issue final recommendations in early June. For more information on the Greenway project, see their web site at <https://www.northernvalleygreenway.org/>.

Further information on the proposed HBLR extension to Englewood is at <http://northernbranchcorridor.com/>. Our Transportation Committee also supports this project, and will be lobbying New Jersey's Congressional Delegation to appropriate the funding.

Club members who would like to volunteer to work on either of these two projects should contact the Club's office in Trenton.

*Political Chair's Report*

## Candidates Endorsed for NJ's Primary Election

By John Kashwick (jkashwick@gmail.com)

While some states may consider this an off-year, in New Jersey our entire General Assembly will be elected, as well many county and municipal officials. Here's our first list of endorsed candidates for State Assembly. Please consider them when you vote on June 4.

First our incumbents: the following Assemblypersons are recognized for championing environmental legislation in the last two years, at least. We strongly encourage our members to vote for and support their campaigns:

**Asm. Daniel Benson** (D, Dist. 14 – parts of Mercer & Middlesex Cos)

**Asm. Andrew Zwicker** (D, Dist. 16 – Princeton, S Brunswick, and parts of Hunterdon & Somerset Cos)

**Asp. John McKeon and Mila Jasey** (D, Dist. 27 – parts of Essex & Morris Cos)

**Asm. Clinton Calabrese**, (D, Dist. 36 – Passaic and parts of Bergen Co)

Also one challenger: In District 26 (mostly parts of Essex and Morris Cos), **Democrat Christine Clarke** (pictured) is challenging two Republican environmentally-hostile opponents, Jay Webber and BettyLou DeCrocce. Clarke is making climate change, public health, and renewable energy jobs the focus of her campaign. Our endorsement committee was so impressed with Clarke that she receives our first non-incumbent endorsement of this election cycle. To get involved with Ms. Clarke's campaign, especially if you live in District 26, please contact Rich Isaac at [risaacx@aol.com](mailto:risaacx@aol.com).



Some of the issues we are high-

lighting this year include:

- A ban on single-use plastic bags: prohibiting stores and food service businesses from providing plastic carryout bags to their customers. The proposed legislation would also prohibit establishments from providing plastic straws and Styrofoam containers.

- A concurrent resolution that would initiate a Constitutional Amendment placing a 25-year moratorium on oil and natural gas pipelines and power plant projects using fossil fuel.

- Another Amendment to the State Constitution to dedicate all monies collected from taxes on real estate transactions to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund: to construct or rehabilitate affordable housing and prevent developers from using the builder's remedy to develop farmland and open space when other parcels can be re-developed or existing structures adapted.

We are also placing more of an emphasis in our questionnaires on environmental justice issues: helping communities which have poorer air, water, and ground quality than other parts of the state. A disproportionate number of new commercial facilities with questionable environmental impacts continue to be built in these communities.

On the county level, we are also considering environmental and social justice issues such as water quality and lead poisoning, and also ways to improve recycling and public transit, and support for a lighting ordinance.

Our endorsements team will continue to assess candidates in state, county, and local races. Expect more extensive lists in our next issues. For more information, please contact me at the address in the byline above.

*Passaic River Coordinator's Report*

## Update: Lower 17-Mile Passaic River Restoration

By David Yennior (dyennior@gmail.com)

In the 1980s, dioxin-contaminated soil was discovered at the Diamond Alkali manufacturing facility in the Ironbound section of Newark, which produced the Agent Orange used by the military (as a defoliant) in the Vietnam War. In 1983 the NJ-DEP and US-EPA found contaminants both upstream and downstream in the (tidal) Passaic River. The Diamond Alkali site was added to the National Priorities List (Superfund) in 1983. An interim remedy, decided in 2001, included capping at the factory site. In 2007 the EPA signed an agreement with a group of manufacturers to pay for a study of the lower 17 miles of the Passaic River. The study found the lowest 8.3 miles to be seriously contaminated. The upper 9 miles was found to have "hot spots" of contamination.

Included in the EPA's oversight was the advisory function of a committee of residents, including yours truly, called the CAG or Community Advisory Group. The EPA presented us with its plans to address the contamination. There were basically two options: (1) dredge and completely remove the contaminants to restore the River to its original state. (2) cap the River bank-to-bank, which would include minor dredging, adding crushed stone, covering it with a fabric, and then adding sand over the fabric to simulate a river bottom.

The Sierra Club and the Passaic River Coalition both opposed the capping

because the dangerous contaminants would remain in the river, because no tidal river has ever been successfully capped, and because of the many restrictions on boating that would be needed to protect the cap – such as no anchoring. We also thought it likely that a 100-year storm like Superstorm Sandy would destroy much of the cap. However, in 2016 the EPA, with the backing of various political figures and the majority of the CAG, decided to go forward with the Capping Remedy.

The EPA has continued its quarterly meetings with the CAG, providing updates on the progress of the Remedy. Our most recent meeting was on May 9, at which preliminary designs for the first 30% of the project were presented. The 30% plan won't be approved until September. At that time another 60% of the planning will commence; the final 100% plan will be completed in 2021.

Our next meeting is scheduled for July 18th and will be "on the river": i.e. a tour in boats. Since I live by the river I have often been "on the river," but I do plan to participate. Our subsequent meeting will be in September, at NJIT. We are requesting a presentation from the US Army Corp of Engineers about their Flood Remediation Project for the Passaic River.

CAG meetings are open the public. Let me know if you are interested in attending a future meeting.

### YOU HAVE MORE TO GIVE THAN YOU KNOW

Maybe you can't make a gift to protect the environment during your lifetime, but you can become a financial hero by remembering the Sierra Club in your will. You can even direct your gift to a special Club program or to the New Jersey Chapter.

For information about making a bequest to the New Jersey Chapter call Paul Sanderson at 908-233-2414

### JERSEY SIERRAN AVAILABLE BY EMAIL

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*Is there an environmental issue that we're MISSING? If so, please call or write to Club officers.*



## Editorial

# NJ's Green Amendment and the Green New Deal



By Dick Colby (dick.colby@stockton.edu)

Here's the essential text of a proposed amendment to the New Jersey Constitution, championed by Maya K. van Rossum (the Delaware Riverkeeper) and incorporated in proposed legislation (ACR85 and SCR134) sponsored by legislators Linda Greenstein, Kip Bateman, Nancy Pinkin, John McKeon and Daniel Benson:

"(a) Every person has a right to a clean and healthy environment, including pure water, clean air, and ecologically healthy habitats, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic qualities of the environment. The State shall not infringe upon these rights, by action or inaction.

(b) The State's public natural resources, among them its waters, air, flora, fauna, climate, and public lands, are the common property of all the people, including both present and future generations. The State shall serve as trustee of these resources, and shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all people."

As explained in a statement titled "For the Generations," authored by van Rossum and Greenstein, "While state constitutions across our nation guarantee the rights of free speech, freedom of religion, trial by jury, and many other fundamental freedoms, they do not recognize and protect our inalienable right to clean water, clean air and healthy environments. The same is true with our federal constitution." They note that Pennsylvania and Montana do have such constitutional amendments, approved in the 1970s.

One argument for the constitutional route of this protection is its alleged insulation from predatory politicians such as Chris Christie and Donald Trump. A counter-argument might be the tendency for such politicians to stack the courts to their pleasures.

A consequence of the constitutional route is to shift the focus of enforcement from the executive branch of government to the judicial branch: constitutional decisions take years of appeals, and cost vast sums of money. Imagine the difficulty with which the courts would have to decide whether 10 parts per billion of a chemical in drinking water is actionable, and then who is responsible for remediation, and how, and who should pay, and where the money should come from. Do we really want this to be decided by the courts?

Constitutional protections can be tricky: they have produced a nation besotted with lethal weapons and corporate campaign contributions. Even the right to free speech (for which cause I was once arrested in the Berkeley Free Speech Movement) has suffered restrictions on campuses which argue for the higher right for students to be protected from "unpleasant" speech, and (on my own campus) a prohibition against politicians appearing during election campaigns.

Short of *Utopia*, in which Sir Thomas More proposed (in 1515) that all dwellings be reassigned randomly every ten years, wealthy people will always be able to afford larger, safer, nicer places than poor people. There will always be gradients of environmental desirability and healthiness. For example, there will always be some level of lead in drinking water, and some people who deserve remediation. I think we need laws and regulations for that, not a constitutional amendment.

I googled <Pennsylvania Green Amendment> - to learn what use has been made of it, since 1971, especially considering the continuing extraction of natural gas by fracking the Marcellus Shale. Two court decisions seem most prominent: one in which the Amendment successfully forced all fracking fees to be used for environmental purposes. The other allows municipalities to forbid fracking on their territories. Nothing on plastic bags, Styrofoam, coal-fired power plants, solar energy, lead in drinking water, public transit, EJ, etc.

The Green New Deal is federal and something completely different: a Congressional 14-page resolution proposed by Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed Markey. It expresses a "sense" that it is the "duty of the Federal Government" to engage in a ten-year bundle of environmental campaigns that include the goals of "net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, . . . millions of good, high-wage jobs, . . . clean air and water, climate and community resiliency, healthy food, access to nature and a sustainable environment, . . . repairing historic oppression of indigenous peoples, communities of color, migrant communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth, . . .", etc. It stands no chance in a Republican-led Senate (at least).

## Chair's Message

# Light Pollution – Another Issue to Look At



By Richard Isaac (risaacx@aol.com)

When I was 19, I spent some time near the desert in Israel, and noticed at night something I had never seen before – a pale white band of light stretching in an arc across the heavens. Eventually I realized I was seeing the Milky Way, the galaxy we spend our lives in.

It turns out I was not alone. According to an article in the April 2019 issue of National Geographic, by Nadia Drake, nearly 80% of those living in North America can't see the Milky Way. When Los Angeles suffered a city-wide power outage in 1994 due to an earthquake, many residents called emergency response centers to report a "mysterious cloud" overhead.

While most of us are aware that light pollution wastes energy, interferes with astronomy, and is aesthetically displeasing, some may not know that excessive night lighting can hurt many animal species, including birds (warblers, sparrows,

juncos), bats, and sea turtle hatchlings.

As remedies, we could install timers, motion sensors, and dimmers to reduce outdoor lighting, switch to compact fluorescents and low-temperature LEDs, and install shields that reduce the lit area and minimize glare.

While that may not help us see the Milky Way, it will at least help some species where we live.

### References:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/04/nights-are-getting-brighter-earth-paying-the-price-light-pollution-dark-skies/>

<https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/3/11/e1701528.abstract>

<https://www.darksky.org/five-years-of-satellite-images-show-global-light-pollution-increasing-at-a-rate-of-two-percent-per-year/>

## Utah Issues Coordinator's Report

# Update: Protecting Utah's Red Rock Wilderness

By Deb Young (debyoung31@comcast.net)

In April, a coalition of wilderness supporters held meetings with our Representatives in Washington DC, asking for support and co-sponsorship for America's Red Rock Wilderness Act. I'm delighted to report that our NJ representatives' doors were open; as always, they listen, question and engage. It made me proud to be a New Jersey resident.



This legislation would preserve 8.7 million acres of majestic lands in southeastern Utah: important cultural sites, soul-changing solitude, and majestic wilderness. We must bestow wilderness status before these lands are mined, drilled, looted of irreplaceable cultural artifacts, and otherwise developed.

Some of our Congresspersons are champions: original co-sponsors of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act this Congress. We thank Reps. Watson Coleman (D-12) and Van Drew (D-2) for their early support. We are hopeful for full NJ representation on this Act.

I have had the opportunity to spend time in these unique and majestic lands. I had thought I would grow accustomed to walking the canyons and mesas, that they would become commonplace. The opposite has happened. The grandeur of place, the soaring canyon walls, the flutter of bird's wings, the hours of solitude amongst overwhelming beauty, continue to strengthen my love, and my need to protect this landscape.

The attack by developers is real and it is happening right now. Legislation is being pushed that would enable trails,



cow-paths and dry stream-beds to be designated as "highways" to disqualify these spectacular lands from wilderness status. We have seen the retraction of millions of acres from National Monuments (Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante) in Utah. There are many layers of attacks; the bottom line is that preservation is necessary.

Utah's public lands may seem far away, but they belong to you and me. They should be ours to explore, and to experience nature in its most basic magnificence. Even if you never get the chance to visit, simply knowing that large wilderness lands are protected from threats, for us and for future generations, for its intrinsic value alone, is vital!

Please encourage your NJ representative to co-sponsor America's Red Rock Wilderness Act.

(Photos supplied by Deb.)

## Resolutions:

### Approved by the Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) in March, April and May, 2019

**March:** Another Issue Coordinator was welcomed: **Josef Corso** for **Agriculture and Forestry**.

**May** (by conference call on May 3): **Political endorsements** in advance of New Jersey's June 4 Primary Election: Incumbent Assemblypersons Benson (D-14), Calabrese (D-36), Jasey (D-27), McKeon (D-27) and Zwicker (D-16). Also challenger Christine Clarke (D-26). See John Kashwick's report on p. 2.

**May** (regular meeting): **Light pollution:** We initiated a process that will invite the Club's national Board of Directors to strengthen the Club's policy opposing atmospheric pollution by light - considering new discoveries of its effects on many species of animals.

**May** (by conference call on May 28): **Two more political endorsements** - for the June 4 Primary Election and (if successful) the Nov 5 General Election: Democrat challengers for State Assembly in District 32 (some of Hudson and Bergen Cos): Mahmoud Mahmoud and Roger Quesada.

Our resolutions are now available online: [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/chapter-resolutions](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/chapter-resolutions).



## Members' Reports

# High Environmental and Human Costs of Private Cars

By member Daniel Aronson, of our Raritan Valley Group (Daniel.Aronson@RaritanVal.edu)

"The High Cost of Free Parking" is the title of a 2005 book by Donald Shoup. The point of the title is that, since subsidies for driving undercut the market for transit alternatives, there'll be a deficiency of convenient transit – which imposes the costly burden of total automobile dependence. But a still greater cost is imposed. The need to reserve phenomenal amounts of land for parking constrains the supply, and raises the price, of housing. In addition, the sedentary lifestyle associated with automobile dependence increases the incidence of costly chronic disease.

So, because drivers don't pay their way, we end up working without end to pay for (1) cars so as to sit in traffic, (2) artificially high priced housing, and (3) costly chronic disease stemming from a sedentary lifestyle. Even hamsters on a treadmill get the benefit of exercise. Working to pay for a lifestyle inferior to that of hamsters on a treadmill is not a worthwhile lifestyle for New Jersey's residents.

To lower the cost of living we should implement the stated policy of the Sierra Club: have drivers pay their way in higher user fees. The potential for comprehensive cost savings is significant: increased user fees would create a market, and generate revenues, for low-cost transit alternatives. (The newly generated revenues should be constitutionally dedicated to such alternatives.) Superfluous parking lots could be converted to mid-rise housing, the expanded supply of which would

lower prices for future home-buyers.

Housing supply determines housing prices. Jason Furman, who served as chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under Pres. Obama, observed that housing prices in regions with substantial restrictions on supply ran up to 50% higher than in regions without those restrictions. Another factor is housing density: reducing restrictions on building height would further enable future buyers to enjoy more affordable housing costs.

One obstacle that impedes progress toward this low-cost scenario is that, given the current absence of effective transit alternatives, higher user fees for driving will be burdensome, especially for the poor. This problem can be addressed by first utilizing the following palatable methods for bolstering the market for transit: (1) expand usage of traffic signal priority devices, which extend green lights; (2) educate consumers about pay-as-you-drive insurance options, which reduce premiums when alternative transit is chosen; and (3) ensure that employers offer employees the opportunity to utilize existing tax breaks for alternative transit. (Details on these methods for bolstering the market for transit are discussed in my longer essay in the electronic supplement to this newsletter.) Of course, prior to imposing higher automobile-user fees, the state should expand transit options.

These transit-bolstering measures would enable people to choose to avoid

the higher user fees for driving. The state could then incrementally increase gas taxes and tolls, using the newly generated revenues to further improve transit. Bringing this process to fruition would not only enable consumers to avoid the higher cost of driving, it would enable them to enjoy better transportation (because of reduced congestion) at reduced cost.

Two points bear mentioning. Firstly, technological advances in transportation make it possible to offer genuinely convenient transit, even in low density suburbs. (No one is suggesting that riders should endure the low-quality of public transit currently ubiquitous in the US.) Secondly, many studies suggest that there will never be a sufficient market for effective transit alternatives unless current subsidies for driving are reduced.

The case for higher automobile-user fees will be a tough sell, but environmentalists could join forces with leaders representing business, labor, and low income households – all of whose constituencies stand to benefit from improved transit. Also, there is precedent for state and local governments to take action. In the early 90s, Pasadena CA dedicated the revenues from a hike in parking fees to downtown improvements. Its blighted Central Business District was transformed into an attractive historic district, leading to a sharp increase in sales for local businesses. New York State has finally authorized congestion pricing, and since the new revenues will be statutorily dedicat-

ed to transit, commuters will enjoy significant savings.

The expectation of cost savings is reasonable: The Tri-State Transportation Campaign issued a report, Road Pricing in London, Stockholm, and Singapore, indicating that all of those jurisdictions now enjoy improved public transit.

I conclude by considering the question of a regressive burden on poor people. New York State passed congestion pricing legislation after a study found that the overwhelming majority of automobile commuters from Queens and Brooklyn were from middle or upper income households, suggesting that low-income households would barely be affected. But this finding misses the main point. By far the most punishing regressive burden is the high cost of housing resulting from the use of land to house cars instead of people.

Sierra Club policy opposes subsidies for driving. This stands to particularly benefit New Jersey, given our high housing costs, deteriorated road surfaces, and excessive traffic congestion. So we should welcome the political challenge of advocacy. It's time to lobby our legislators to achieve impressive reductions in household costs.

An essay by Prof. Aronson that elaborates on the above points is in the electronic supplement to this newsletter: in the web version available from the Chapter website: [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/) - click newsletters.

## Fluorinated Contaminants in Drinking Water – New Jersey Takes Action

By Mark Fukayama (markexams@aol.com), our Toxicology Advisor

The state of New Jersey is leading the nation in limiting exposure to polyfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS) and polyfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) from our drinking water, and taking actions against the polluters, but more actions are needed.

On April 1, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) proposed drinking water Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) of 13 parts per trillion (ppt) and 14 ppt for these two chemicals, respectively: the strictest MCLs in the nation.<sup>1, 2</sup> These MCLs are much lower than the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) suggested guideline level of 70 ppt.<sup>3</sup>

These ubiquitous man-made chemicals have been linked to various adverse health effects including cancer, decreased vaccination response, and reproductive and developmental effects.<sup>4, 5</sup>

In addition to setting MCLs, the DEP issued a Directive on March 25 that takes the 'groundbreaking' action of ordering Solvay, Dupont and its related companies (Chemours and Dow Dupont) to pay for the cleanup of their contaminated NJ manufacturing sites for these substances.<sup>6, 7</sup>

3M has also been named as a responsible party – because they first developed and sold these substances and supplied

the other companies. On March 27, Attorney General Grewal and DEP Commissioner McCabe followed up on the Directive by filing environmental lawsuits against Dupont, Chemours and 3M, seeking damages for the fluorinated chemical contamination at the sites.<sup>8</sup>

And, on May 8, Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (6th District) introduced to Congress H.R. 2533, the Providing Financial Assistance for Safe Drinking Water Act. This legislation would create a grant program to financially support upgrading of drinking water systems to remove PFOA, PFOS and other related chemicals.<sup>9</sup>

PFOA and PFOS are members of a very large family of chemicals called PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). They have been used since the 1950's in the coatings that make clothes and fabrics water-resistant, carpets stain-resistant, cookware nonstick; also in paper and food packaging materials, and fire-fighting foams. They are the two most commonly used members of a large chemical family, but, here in the U.S., have been phased out of many consumer products. They have also been studied the most for their toxicity and environmental properties. Unfortunately, safety information on other members of this class is limited.<sup>10, 11</sup>

Once released into the environment, PFOS and PFOA are highly mobile, persistent, and bioaccumulative; they do not readily degrade.<sup>12, 13</sup> Thus they have been found far away in Arctic snow, polar bears and other arctic animals.<sup>14, 15, 16, 17</sup> Most alarming is their presence at trace levels in the blood of over 98% of the U.S. population, including adolescents, and in umbilical cord blood and breast milk.<sup>18, 19, 20</sup>

The contaminated sites identified in the DEP Directive include the Solvay facility in West Deptford Twp (Gloucester Co), the DuPont/Chemours' Chambers Works in Pennsville and Carney's Point (Salem Co), and the DuPont Parlin Site in Sayreville (Middlesex Co).

In its lawsuit, the State alleges that DuPont and 3M knew for decades about the health and environmental risks, but that they continued to use and release PFAS into the environment without disclosing the risks to regulators or the public. The State also alleges that 3M "sought to suppress scientific research on the hazards" and "mounted a campaign to control the scientific dialogue" on their PFAS products.<sup>21</sup>

The actions by the DEP and Attorney General deserve praise. However, more can and should be done to limit our

exposures. Although the main source of exposure for the general population is drinking water, another route may be via food packaging materials. But further research is needed, as proposed by Nancy Pinkin and Patrick Diegnan, Jr. (both District 19, Middlesex), who have sponsored a bill (A5099/S2879) directing the DEP to investigate and, if necessary, to regulate PFAS in food containers.<sup>22</sup>

Across the nation 126 military sites and their water systems, including Naval Weapons Station Earle, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, and the former Naval Air Warfare Station Trenton,<sup>23</sup> are highly contaminated – mostly from the release of PFAS firefighting foams in training operations.<sup>24, 25</sup> Washington State recently banned these foams,<sup>26</sup> and 10 other states (but not NJ) are considering similar restrictions.<sup>27</sup> The banned foams would be replaced with fluorine-free foams that are reported to be safer for the environment and human health, and that perform as well, and that have been adopted by many other countries and non-US international airports.<sup>28</sup> Our NJ legislators should also ban PFAS foams.

Fortunately, the New Jersey DEP is filling the void of non-action by the U.S. EPA. But our state and federal representatives should do more.

(Footnotes on page 20 of the Electronic Supplement)

## FOSSIL FUEL PLANTS

(Continued from page 1)

That figure is now 19%, and will rise with more fossil-fuel infrastructure.

President Trump's denial of climate change, and sabotage of clean energy, heightens the urgency for action by Gov.

Murphy. He could become an environmental champion, cutting greenhouse gases, creating green jobs and developing our own version of a Green New Deal. So how about an immediate moratorium on

fossil-fuel infrastructure?

The Empower NJ- Stop Fossil Fuel Campaign is a coalition of 58 environmental, citizen, faith and progressive groups. Participants include: NJ Sierra

Club, Green Faith, Indivisibles, Blue Wave, People Over Pipelines, Central Jersey Environmental Defenders, UU Faith Action NJ, Environment NJ, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Clean Ocean Action, Surfrider Foundation.

## Issue Advisor's Column

# WARNING: Knowledge Not a Panacea for Preventing Environmental Harm

By Claudia Mausner, our expert on the Psychology of Sustainability (C.Mausner.Phd@gmail.com)



Do you ever get a blank stare when describing Sierra Club issues to friends and family? This lament, expressed by a member after reading my first Jersey Sierran column, stimulated this follow-up on the relationship between environmental knowledge, identity and pro-environmental behavior.

I identify myself as an environmentalist and assume that, as a fellow Sierra Club member, you probably do too. But do you also self-identify as Green? A Tree Hugger? Naturalist? Conservationist? Outdoor recreationist? Environmental scientist? Teaching undergraduate business majors at a local university, I was surprised to discover very disparate reactions to each of these terms, with environmentalist and tree hugger most anathema to their self-identities and often met with derision and even outright hostility. Over time I became increasingly sensi-

tized to any assumptions, judgements or expectations that may have crept unintentionally into my lectures; I made a concerted effort to create a space for open, honest discussion of all environmental values, feelings, and identities, whether or not students shared my perspective. By semester's end most students were able to recognize and appreciate the relevance of sustainability to their lives and found personal motivations for adopting at least one new pro-environmental behavior.

This classroom experience exposed the widespread yet false assumption that more knowledge will generate increased pro-environmental behavior, a "rationalist model" disproved by social science research time and again since the 1970s. Numerous theoretical frameworks have been used to study the relationship between attitudes and behaviors, proven to be surprisingly weak, and to better understand the role of knowledge in changing environmental behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2010; Ritchie, 2017). In particular, it has been shown that knowledge has the biggest impact on adults already concerned about the envi-

ronment and for children and youth still in the formative stages.

One well-researched framework uses an Environmental Identity Scale to measure the extent to which nature has influenced the individual's self-definition (Clayton, 2003). Another related but distinct measure is the Connectedness to Nature Scale (Mayer & Frantz, 2004) used to determine personal feelings of emotional, cognitive and experiential connection to the natural world. These scales are both good predictors of pro-environmental or "eco-friendly" behaviors such as recycling and energy conservation. Moreover, research suggests that strong identification with, and connection to, nature may also predict a decreased tendency to ignore and/or contribute to environmental degradation.

In 2008, author Richard Louv wrote a national best-seller titled *Last Child in the Woods*, in which he synthesizes decades of social science research to support his thesis that children must be given more opportunities to spend quality, unstructured time out-of-doors. He coins the term "nature deficit disorder" to describe how children are losing touch

with nature, and blames excessive screen time as well as other societal factors for this trend. Louv's seminal book inspired the movement called No Child Left Inside, which seeks to formally incorporate environmental literacy into the K - 12 curriculum. Although federal legislation with this objective was proposed by Senator Jack Reed (RI) in 2011 and Congressman John Sarbanes (MD) in 2015, efforts to accomplish this goal seem to have stalled despite widespread support from local, state and national organizations including the Sierra Club (Stone & Barlow, 2005). While no comparable legislation has been introduced in New Jersey, that possibility always remains.

So the next time you feel frustrated by family, friends or colleagues who disregard or dismiss your environmental concerns and activism, encourage them to reconnect with and reminisce about positive experiences they have had with the natural world; try to identify environmental knowledge of relevance to their worldview and lifestyle priorities; and most of all, invite them on a Sierra Club Outing to connect with the wonders of nature first-hand!

(References on pg. 19 in the Electronic Supplement)



## Alaska Issues Coordinator's Report

## Protecting Alaska's Coastal Plain, in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

By Amelia Weeder (aweeder@comcast.net)

There is a pitched battle underway to prevent seismic exploration and oil lease sales in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) from occurring this year. Sierra members at the national and local levels consistently work in coalition with other environmental groups to successfully delay exploration and drilling... and to support legislation to negate the provision in the 2017 budget/tax act which currently mandates oil leasing/drilling in the ANWR coastal plain.

The ANWR coastal plain is a rare, ecologically intact, pristine wilderness. Geographically protected between the mountains and the ocean, it is the birthing ground and nursery for hundreds of species; polar bears, wolves, muskox, the calving grounds for a migratory caribou herd protected by international Canadian-US treaty, summer nesting area for migrating birds from all 50 states and 5 continents, and is vital to the culture and survival of the native Gwich'in people, who have depended on this land for sustenance for thousands of years.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has contracted with SAExploration to

explore the Coastal Plain for oil and gas deposits. Landing strips, roads and crew camps will be built. 24 to 30 massive 'thumper' trucks, each weighing 90,000 pounds (more than a fully loaded 18-wheeler) will drive over every square inch of the 1.5 million acre ecologically critical Coastal Plain while constantly unleashing 64,000 pound waves of seismic pressure into the ground. The crews are chartered to work across the entire area... 24/7, for months, non-stop.

The devastation to the pristine wilderness, fragile tundra and the effects of the unrelenting sonic blasts on animals is enormous, particularly on denning/hibernating (stationary) wildlife. In addition, the sheer weight of the trucks changes the tundra forever, impacting the permafrost, hydrology and vegetation. (In 1985 seismic exploration was conducted in a region outside of ANWR, using smaller trucks and less force. Now, 40 years later, there are still ½ foot deep tire depression trenches left by the trucks, scaring the landscape.)

The Democratic House has proposed bills protecting ANWR. However, the

Republican-controlled Senate will not consider a companion bill, so the seismic exploration and oil lease sales scheduled for this year continue to move forward, on schedule.

Sierra members have been successful in contacting their representatives and securing their support as co-sponsors for bill H.R. 1146, the Restore Protection Act, including new NJ Congressman Tom Malinowski (D-NJ-7). When we met with him, Rep. Malinowski had a firm grasp of the issues and well-defined, thoughtful positions. He not only co-sponsored ANWR protection legislation, he also helped further our efforts, referring us to a congressional peer, Bonnie Watson-Coleman (D-NJ-12), who was recently seated on the House Interior Appropriations Committee,

The House Appropriations Committee controls the purse-strings for government projects. If the leasing/drilling mandated in the 2017 budget/tax act cannot, yet, be overturned, there are legislative methods that may be able to slow or stop the impending exploration/lease sale by

slowing the permitting process or withdrawing funding for the project(s). Sierra members met with NJ Congresswoman Watson-Coleman's Deputy Chief of Staff. We requested her assistance in bringing the Arctic-impacting projects up in front of the Committee for review and to press for defunding all Arctic seismic exploration and leasing activities.

We've met with several NJ representatives who support full protection for the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. ...It is important that your representatives hear from you! As a constituent your voice carries weight! Please call or write to let your representative know that wilderness protection, and in particular that preservation of the Arctic National Wildlife Coastal Plain (H.R. 1146), is important to you!

Happy Note: Arctic Ocean Protection Celebration: In March, Federal District Judge Gleason vacated Trump's Executive Order mandating drilling in the Arctic Ocean. Trump had sought to reverse the protections Obama instituted, which protected 98% of the Arctic Ocean from future drilling.

## Report from Trenton

## The EPA, PCBs and the Hudson River

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on April 11

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has just reported on its efforts to remove polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from the Upper Hudson River (New York State). These carcinogenic chemicals, used in high-voltage electrical transformers, were released by their manufacturer, General Electric Co, in Schenectady, over a 70-year period in the 1900s. EPA's just-released five-year review defers a determination of further remedy until more years of fish tissue data can be gathered. EPA also issued a "Certification of Completion of the Remedial Action" - so that GE can discontinue its cleanup of the River.

Four years ago, the EPA approved a cleanup plan for 65% of the pollution, allowing the remaining PCBs to be capped in place. It didn't work, which is why we are

now asking for dredging of the remaining toxic hotspots. New York Governor Cuomo agrees that the EPA's cleanup plan has not worked. An estimated annual 500 pounds of PCBs are getting into the fish, bays, harbors and beaches of New Jersey.

New Jersey officials advise people not to eat locally-caught Striped Bass and Bluefish because of the PCBs. Rivers should not be Superfund Sites. The EPA should require GE to clean the River edge to remove all the PCBs as well as other toxins. The Hudson River deserves a thorough cleanup that will help return it to the community.



## Reports from Trenton

# State Budget Priorities Hurt Urban Areas and Parks

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on March 21st, edited by Irene Gnarra

On March 5, Governor Murphy unveiled his budget for FY 2020 to a joint session of the Legislature. On March 21, the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee held a public hearing to discuss the proposed budget of \$38.6 billion.

As the state budget grows, the budget for the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) declines. Compare 2019's appropriation of \$780.9 million with 2020's request for \$668.1 million, a drop of \$112.8 million. And \$200 million of the 2019 appropriation is being diverted! So it has long been: former Gov. Christie took over \$1.5 billion from the Clean Energy Fund, and Governor Murphy drew \$160 million from that fund last year. (This is money that is supposed to support home weatherization and energy efficiency; instead it is going to NJ Transit.)

DEP operations will be cut by \$27 million, requiring layoffs or non-replacement of retired staff. The current 2,500 full-time staff compares with 3,400 in 2008, and 4,400 in the mid-1990s. Fifteen years ago there 1,014 people operating the State Parks, now we are down to 400. You can perhaps understand the move to privatize and out-source DEP programs, and to charge user-fees. DEP has already abandoned its oversight of pollution remediation, accepting "Licensed Site Remediation Professionals" hired by the contractors.

This budget adversely targets our environment, especially parts of New Jersey that suffer from soil pollution and contaminated water sources. Money once used for urban renewal and for the revitalization of brownfields might be given instead to non-profits or to wealthy suburban areas for vanity projects, such as butterfly gardens in Harding Township (Morris Co). The diversion of these funds constitutes a regressive tax that hurts working families and the urban poor.

Two bills currently in the Legislature might have a major impact on the budget. According to A4578 (Land) / S3110 (Smith), \$50 million from the General Fund would be allocated to DEP. The bill specifies natural resource projects, and responds to public outrage over the Exxon spillout that was supposed to go to help people and places that suffered injury from Exxon's pollution: Newark, Bayonne, and Paulsboro — not to plant trees in the Pinelands.

Money for open space would increase slightly under the other bill, S2920 (Smith) / A4477 (McKeon, Pinkin, Zwicker, Jasey). It would allocate funding by constitutional dedication of Corporate Business Tax revenues for FY2020 and thereafter to the amount of \$500,000. The bill also revises the laws for open space and farmland preservation. We welcome money for capital repairs and improvements to our parks and open spaces.

Now public transportation: Governor Murphy has signed the NJ Transit Oversight bill into law. A 1% budget increase will add \$100 million in funding, most of which is the \$87.1 million stolen from the Clean Energy Fund. NJ Transit is also stealing \$460 million out of its capital for operations. This funding approach might be unsustainable, posing problems for rebuilding the transit system from the inside out.

We want DEP's complete budget to be restored. We must also stop diversions from programs that affect our land, air, and water. The cutting back of air, water and other monitoring has jeopardized the quality of life in New Jersey, especially when we consider lead in drinking water, and lead in our homes and schools. We need to resume cleanups of contaminated sites and holding polluters accountable. We need to fix our aging infrastructure. Thus, we support Gov. Murphy's proposals to restore a fair share of taxes on wealthy individuals and corporations. Last year's temporary tax hike of 10.75% on those earning more than one million dollars brought in revenue that helped to decrease diversions from the Clean Energy Fund by over 40%. Now, we support Murphy's "millionaire's tax," which could amount to \$447 million in FY2020, and we urge closing of tax loopholes. In sum, we advocate funds for programs that would assure a healthy environment in New Jersey.

## An Unexpected Boon: the Mothers' Milk of Politics

By Keith Ryzewicz, Chapter Communications Editor

The Young Democrats Club of Mountain Lakes High School (Morris Co.) had an important goal in mind for the school year just finished. Its members wanted to help the environment. They decided the best way to do it was to raise money for the New Jersey Sierra Club, and they certainly delivered. In February their advisor, Amy Harrington, sent us a check for \$750, plus an additional \$100 check from Kenny Gracefo, owner of KCG of Towaco.

Now in its second year, the Club raised the money through a "Coffee House" show at the high school in January — featuring about a dozen performances from singers and musicians. Members also conducted a bake sale. Harrington said Club members came up with the idea on their own. "They are so passionate and brilliant and accomplished. I feel more like they inspire me than the other way around. They have the big ideas. They do the leg work. They met with the principal and custodians to set up the stage. They organized, advertised, sang, danced, and played their hearts out to ensure a good future for all."

The New Jersey Chapter thanks the Young Democrats of Mountain Lakes High School, as well as Kenny Gracefo and everyone else who contributed to the fundraising campaign. Their efforts underscore the importance of getting more young people involved in environmental advocacy. It is today's youth who will not only bear the brunt of climate change impacts in the years to come, but inherit the responsibility to do something about them. These high school students understand that, and are already taking action.

"These young people are our hope for the future," said Harrington. "They want to make the world a better, more equitable and safer place for all. They are fighting for their futures and that includes fighting to save the planet."



# Group News

FROM  
AROUND  
THE  
STATE

## HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR GROUP (BY COUNTY)

**Skylands Group:** Sussex & northern Warren  
**South Highlands Group:** Hunterdon & southern Warren  
**North Jersey Group:** Bergen & Passaic  
**Gateway Group:** Essex  
**Hudson County Group:** Hudson  
**Loantaka Group:** Morris & Union  
**Central Jersey Group:** Mercer  
**Raritan Valley Group:** Somerset & Middlesex  
**Jersey Shore Group:** Monmouth  
**Ocean County Group:** Ocean  
**West Jersey Group:** Burlington, Camden & Gloucester  
**South Jersey Group:** Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland & Salem

*These designations are approximate: members are welcome to participate in whichever Group(s) they find convenient*

(Groups are arranged in rough geographical sequence: North to South)

### Skylands Group

(Sussex and northern Warren Counties)

**Web-site:** <http://SkylandsGroup.org> or click from the NJ Chapter's web-site.

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC>

**E-mail:** [ggorman07419@embarqmail.com](mailto:ggorman07419@embarqmail.com); **Phone:** 973-886-7950

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** and other **OFFICERS:** (ExCom Members are elected to serve 2-year terms; term-expire date in parentheses):

<b>Chair:</b> (12/31/20)	Greg Gorman	<a href="mailto:ggorman07419@embarqmail.com">ggorman07419@embarqmail.com</a>
<b>Vice Chair:</b> (12/31/19)	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary:</b> (12/31/20)	Norene Haberski	<a href="mailto:norenehaberski2@gmail.com">norenehaberski2@gmail.com</a>
<b>Treasurer:</b> (12/31/19)	Jeri Doherty	<a href="mailto:bjd8974@gmail.com">bjd8974@gmail.com</a>
<b>ExCom at large:</b> (12/31/19)	Dave Alcock	<a href="mailto:dwhoob@hotmail.com">dwhoob@hotmail.com</a>
	(12/31/20) Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>
	(12/31/19) Scott Dieman	
	(12/31/19) Chris Dunbar	<a href="mailto:chrisdunbar458@gmail.com">chrisdunbar458@gmail.com</a>
	(12/31/19) Joanne Morgan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
	(12/31/19) Anthony Riccardi	<a href="mailto:anthony.j.riccardi@gmail.com">anthony.j.riccardi@gmail.com</a>
<b>Conservation Chair:</b>	Greg Gorman	<a href="mailto:ggorman07419@embarqmail.com">ggorman07419@embarqmail.com</a>
<b>Outings Chair:</b>	Dave Alcock	<a href="mailto:dwhoob@hotmail.com">dwhoob@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Outreach Chair:</b>	Joanne Mogan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Environmental Justice:</b>	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Political Co-Chairs:</b>	Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>
and:	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Co-Publicity Chairs:</b>	Jeri Doherty	<a href="mailto:bjd8974@gmail.com">bjd8974@gmail.com</a>
and:	Joanne Mogan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Webmaster:</b>	Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>

**Open position available: Membership Chair** – please contact Greg!

**GENERAL MEETINGS:** SECOND TUESDAY of each month and open to the public. We meet from 7-9pm at the Unitarian Fellowship, 1 West Nelson St, Newton.

The Skylands Group of the NJ Sierra Club serves the environmentally sensitive region of Sussex and Northern Warren Counties in Northwestern NJ.

We offer a variety of opportunities for the public to learn about and connect with their natural environment, including informative films and speakers at our monthly general meetings; exploration of the great outdoors on hikes, edible plant tours and picnics; public outreach via town tabling; and visits to schools to teach students about the environment. Our hope is to foster a love of and deep respect for our great outdoors.

As advocates, The Skylands Group works with other grassroots organizations to protect open spaces and water quality; promote clean energy; oppose privatization of our water and land public trust resources; and other local, national and global environmental issues as they arise.

We table annually at Luscroft Farm's Medicine Wheel Festival in May, host a summer picnic in July, conduct a Drive Electric Event in September at the GreenLife Market in Andover Township, and celebrate winter holidays in December. All our events are free of charge and open to the public.

**CURRENT CAMPAIGNS:** The Skylands Group advocates the protection of the Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area from logging done under the guise of creating 'healthy forests.'

The Skylands Group supports Green New Deal, Sunrise Movement, Sierra Club's Ready for 100 Campaign, and projects to move toward a Clean Energy Economy.

The Skylands Group supports the residents opposing ill-conceived dump sites such as those found in Wantage and Vernon.

The Skylands Group also opposes the Munsonhurst Planned Residential Development, which will adversely affect the ecology of a Natural Heritage Priority Site in Franklin Twp (Sussex Co).

### South Highlands Group

(Hunterdon and southern Warren Counties)

**Each Group is invited to designate a Group Environmental Justice Officer**

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/south-highlands/>  
**MEETUP:** <http://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/>  
**FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/53817136187/>

**OFFICERS:**

**Chair:** Jonathan Wall \* jonwall@jonwall.com  
**Vice Chair:** Celeste Martin \* onecentral@mac.com  
**Secretary:** Amy Weeder \* aweeder@comcast.net  
**Political Chair:** Karen Becker\* karbecker@gmail.com  
**Conservation Co-Chair:** Dawn Peterman \* dppb4@comcast.net  
**Conservation Co-Chair:** Nancy Carringer ncarringer@yahoo.com  
**Children's Program Coor:** Kimberly Borin\* storiesofourown@mac.com  
**Environmental & Social Justice:** Angela De Sapio \* angela.desapio@gmail.com  
**Environmental Education:** Dan Dolce \* dandolce48@hotmail.com  
**Highlands Issues:** Cinny MacGonagle cmacgonagle@yahoo.com  
**Outings:** Jonathan Wall \* jonwall@jonwall.com  
**Treasurer:** John Kashwick jkashwick@gmail.com  
**Webmaster/Listmaster:** John Kashwick jkashwick@gmail.com  
 (\* Group Executive Committee Member)

**GENERAL MEETINGS:** All our general meetings are held at the Hunterdon North County Library, 65 Halstead St, Clinton, 08809 on the first Wednesday of each month. Meet and Greet at 7pm followed by program at 7:15 pm. Meetings are free but donations are gladly accepted. There are no speaker programs in July and August. Please check [www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/](http://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/) for updates.

**Sept 4 (Wed):** Highland's Issues Update: Join us for a screening of The Highlands Rediscovered followed by a discussion of Highlands issues with Zac Cole of the New Jersey Highlands Coalition. The video illustrates how the region became the principle source of drinking water for more than 2/3 of NJ's population. The talk will focus on the challenges the region faces today to preserve its important forests from the pressure of unsustainable development and climate change.

**OTHER EVENTS:**

**July 10 (Wed):** Executive Committee/Planning Meeting. 7:30 pm, at the offices of Dr. Jonathan D. Wall, 21 Water Street, Clinton. The meeting is casual and informative. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend to learn more about the Club. Hear about and discuss issues, plan future events, and become more active. (Please contact jonwall@jonwall.com or sign-up on Meetup.co)

**July 14 (Sun):** Political Pot-Luck Picnic at Karen & Don's House 1pm-4pm: Meet and Greet Fellow members and get the chance to meet the politicians supportive of our environment. Reservations required. Please email Karen Becker at karbecker@gmail.com and let her know what you would like to bring.

**Sept 21 (Sat):** Equinox Hoffman Park Hike. 11am. Leaders: Angela De Sapio and John Kashwick. This will be an easy hike of about 2-3 miles hike (mostly flat terrain) on earthen paths. Bring snack and at least 1-2 quarts of water. Hiking boots recommended. Rain cancels (check our Meetup page if in doubt). Group limit: 10. Meet at Hoffman Park parking lot, 26 Baptist Church Rd., Hampton. Reservations required by emailing Angela at angela.desapio@gmail.com or by registering at Meetup.com/njsierraclub.

**North Jersey Group**  
 (Bergen and Passaic Counties)

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey>  
**MEETUP:** <http://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/>  
**FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/northjerseysierraclub>

**Officers:**

**Chair & Treasurer:** Buddy Jenssen \* buddy.jenssen@gmail.com  
**Vice Chair:** Diane Scarengella  
**Secretary:** *Open position!*  
**Conservation Co-Chairs:** Mary Walsh \* blehlwalsh@hotmail.com  
 and Laura Tracey Coll \* lauratraceycoll@hotmail.com  
**Political Chair:** Sandi Cortazzo Liberti \* dillon7744@yahoo.com  
**Climate Issues:** Jeff Rapaport jefrap@optonline.net  
**Membership Chair:** Robert Weiss \*  
**Outings Chair:** Mary Walsh \* blehlwalsh@hotmail.com  
**Publicity Co-Chairs:** Nicole Zanetakos and (vacant)  
**Social Media Coordinator:** *Open position!*  
**Trail Maintenance, ICO:** Marty Cohen martincohen@verizon.net  
**Webmaster/Listmaster:** *Open position!*  
 (\* Group Executive Committee Member)

The North Jersey Group continues its concerted efforts of political engagement, raising environmental awareness, and activism.

The present political push is a continuation of the effort to elect people with an environmental consciousness. Last fall Chairperson Buddy Jenssen, Political Chair Jermaine Spense and several other Sierra Club members went from door to door soliciting votes for representatives Gordon, Eustace, and Lagana. This year the effort will be on voter registration for the mid-term elections.

The Long Swamp issue is in limbo, as the neighboring buildings have hired a lawyer to prevent construction of a 14-story building (down from 17) between them. According to Laura Tracey-Coll, the developer imagines he is going to get a permit to do it.

**MEETINGS AND EVENTS:**

Unless otherwise noted, meetings and outings are free and open to general public. Please check our Meetup page, Facebook page, or web site for meeting dates, times, and topics (see above for URLs). You can also email us at northjerseysierraclub@gmail.com.

**Gateway Group**

*Serving Hillside, Elizabeth, and Essex County (except for Livingston, Millburn and Roseland)*

The Gateway Group was organized in January 2011. Please contact any of the leaders below if you are interested in joining our campaigns to protect the environment.

There are several Gateway Group positions open.

**Our website:** <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Gateway/>. (also accessible from the NJ Chapter website)

Please also join the Gateway Group on **Facebook** at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782>.

**OFFICERS:**

**Co-Chairs:** Suzanne Trimel 973-509-8335 suzanne.trimel@gmail.com  
 and David Yennior 973-844-1384 dyennior@gmail.com  
**Vice-Chair,**  
**Conserv'n Chr:** Caroline Kane 646-961-9003 ckane678@verizon.net  
**Secretary & Treasurer:** Anne Hirs 973-844-1121 annehirs@msn.com  
**Program Co-Chairs:** Suzanne Trimel 973-509-8335 suzanne.trimel@gmail.com  
 and Steven Yafet 908-354-2537 syafet@gmail.com  
**Publicity Chair:** *Open Position!*  
**Political Chair:** Bill Beren Beren1@verizon.net  
**Fundraising Chair:** *Open Position!*  
**Membership Chair:** Steven Yafet 908-354-2537 syafet@gmail.com  
**Water, Newark Issues:** Bill Chappel 973-623-6490 chappel.bill@gmail.com  
**Recycling,**  
**Passaic River Issues:** David Yennior (see above)  
**Elizabeth Issues:** *Open Position!*  
**Outings Chair:** Dionne Howe 206-430-0288 dionnelhowe@gmail.com  
**Group Executive Committee:** David Yennior, Bill Chappel, Suzanne Trimmel, Steven Yaffet, and Caroline Kane.

Please contact Suzanne Trimel or David Yennior, Gateway's Co-Chairs, if you have ideas or suggestions for a meeting-topic or program, or conservation project. We are very grateful for the contributions of Anna Whitley, John Beadle, Barbara Conover, ZaSah Khademi, Bill Chappel, Steven Yafet, Anne Hirs, Paula Borenstein, and Brenda Toyloy.

We invite YOU to join in our activism and ask your support as we strive to address the many issues facing our urban as well as suburban communities. Note several vacant positions listed above.

**LIST OF UPCOMING EVENTS:** There are no events currently on the calendar. For up to date information about programs please check our website.

**Hudson County Group**

**Website:** <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hudson-county>.  
**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/HudsonCountySierraClub>  
**E-mail:** hudsonsierraclub@gmail.com  
**Instagram:** @sierraclub\_hcg

**OFFICERS: (\*=ExCom)**

**Chair:** David 'Ace' Case\* acccase88@gmail.com  
**Vice-Chair:** Pramod Raju\* modisone@gmail.com  
**Secretary:** Patricia Hilliard\* hilliard\_patricia@hotmail.com  
**Treasurer:** Patricia Hilliard\* hilliard\_patricia@hotmail.com  
**Conservation Chair:** John Ottomanelli\* otto.pittsburgh@gmail.com  
**Political Chair:** Pramod Raju\* modisone@gmail.com  
**Ready for 100:** Allyson Samuels allyson.samuell@sierraclub.org  
**Delegate to ExCom:** Pramod Raju\* modisone@gmail.com  
**Membership:** Andrea Rodriguez\* aarodriguez87@gmail.com  
**Publicity:** Pramod Raju\* modisone@gmail.com  
**Outings / Events:** Steve Krinsky\* stevekrinsky@comcast.net  
**At-Large:** Nancy Booth\* boothnancy2011@hotmail.com  
**Instagram:** Johanny Tejada johtej7@yahoo.com  
**Web-Master:** Alberto Carcamo acarcamo77@hotmail.com

**MEETINGS AND EVENTS:**

**July 21 (Sun): Hudson County Sierra Club Group Annual Picnic: 12 noon to 3pm** at Liberty State Park picnic area at south end of park near Park Admin Office at the Green Reserve Tables. Look for the banner! Bring your favorite beverage and a "found-food" or a dish you prepared yourself to share with others. No Alcohol Allowed in Park.

**Outings:** We will be doing nature walks in our local parks. Check the online calendar or social media for updates.

**Current Campaigns:** Contact us if you are interested in helping with these:  
**#MoratoriumMondays!** Call Gov. Murphy to tell him you want a moratorium on all new fossil fuel projects in the state of NJ. Even here in Hudson County, we've seen enough of fossil fuels, tank farms and pipelines. Help make the change to renewable energy. Stop the Meadowlands Power Plant - no more Fossil Fuel Projects! [www.empowernewjersey.com](http://www.empowernewjersey.com)

**Climate Change:** #ReadyFor100 is a movement of people working to inspire our leaders to embrace a vision of healthier communities powered by 100% clean energy. We are building consensus to demand commitment to solutions to achieve 100% clean, renewable energy in NJ by the year 2050, or sooner. Get involved and be part of the solution locally.

**Hackensack River Greenway:** Sierra Club is working connect existing parks with new rights of way along the Hackensack River to create a "Hackensack River Walkway" from one end of the county to the other. We are working to see that the Hackensack becomes Hudson County's "Green Coast."

**Green New Deal:** Creating the green infrastructure of the future. Building our local economy, creating good paying union jobs, and empowering urban communities who have been the victims of environmental injustices for too long.

**Loantaka Group**

*(Morris and Union Counties (except for Elizabeth and Hillside), plus Livingston, Millburn and Roseland, approximately)*

(Continued on page 8)

## GROUP NEWS

(Continued from page 7)

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>  
Loantaka now has a FaceBook page. Please check it out and like it:  
**https://www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC**

### OFFICERS:

**Group Chair (Acting):** Paul Sanderson 908-233-2414 paulmsanderson@aol.com  
**Treasurer:** Paul Sanderson 908-233-2414 paulmsanderson@aol.com  
**Secretary:** *Open Position!*  
**Conservation Chairs:**  
**Morris County:** Len Fariello len@wildlifepreserves.org  
**Union County:** *Open Position!*  
**Political Chair:** Clea Carchia 908-892-7229 info@cleacarchia.com  
**Programs:** Ahlia Bethea 908-884-5017 ahlia.bethea@gmail.com  
**Fundraising Chair:** Eric Hausker 732-669-0719 ericbiomass@gmail.com  
**Outings Chair:** *Open Position!*  
**Publicity Chair:** Wynn Johanson 908-464-0442 johansons@comcast.net  
**Membership:** Bruce Ostrow 973-625-0792 ostrowb@gmail.com  
**Webmaster:** Wynn Johanson 908-464-0442 johansons@comcast.net  
**Upper Passaic River Coor:** Kathy O'Leary 908-647-2870 kolearypcnj@gmail.com

If you might be interested in getting involved, come to one of our Executive Committee Meetings on the first Tuesday of the month and get to know us. Or come to one of our General Meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. There are no obligations and there will be no pressure.

To find out our activities, go to: <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>  
To join our e-mailing list, go to: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/nj-loantaka-news.html>

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS:** are held on the FIRST TUESDAY of the month at 7:30 pm at Library of the Chathams, 214 Main St, Chatham. All members are welcome at Executive Committee meetings. Right now, we have open positions on it! If you would like to find out more, please contact Paul Sanderson.

**GENERAL MEETINGS:** are held on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of the month at 7:30 pm at the Library of the Chathams, 214 Main St, Chatham. Come learn something new and make some new friends. We'd welcome the chance to meet you and to introduce ourselves. Please see the schedule, below, and join us!

**DIRECTIONS:** posted on our website: <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>.

### MEETING SCHEDULE:

**July 10 & Aug 14:** Summer - No meeting is scheduled.

**Sept 11:** To be announced – please visit our website for updates.

**ACTIVITIES:** The Loantaka Group is working with concerned citizens and local environmental organizations to protect open space and wildlife habitat in Morris and Union Counties, and to safeguard the water resources on which we all depend. In addition, the Group is actively involved in State-wide initiatives involving air quality, transportation, and environmental legislation. Volunteers are always welcome. Call Paul at 908-233-2414.

Consult our website (<http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>) for more information.

## Central Jersey Group

(Mercer County and neighboring towns in adjoining counties)

**Web-site:** <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey>. Or click from the NJ Chapter's web-site. Please see the Outings List in this newsletter – or on Pineypaddlers.com.

### OFFICERS:

**Group Chair:** Joanne Pannone 609-443-6992 jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com  
**Group Vice Chair:** Xiaoping Du xiaping\_du@yahoo.com  
**Secretary:** Leona Fluck leona@pineypaddlers.com  
**Outings Coord:** George and Leona Fluck leona@pineypaddlers.com  
**Treasurer:** Steve Eisenberg steveis@optimum.net  
**Programs:** Joanne Pannone jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com  
**Conservation Chair:** Kip Cherry KipAtTheSierraClub@gmail.com  
**Recycling:** Sylvia Kay sylviakay222@gmail.com  
**Trails:** Dave Mattek MattekDC@aol.com  
**Webmaster:** *Open Position!*  
**Education:** *Open Position!*

**MEETINGS SCHEDULE:** The Central Jersey Group is continuing with its popular monthly meetings at Mercer County Community College.

MCCC is located at 1200 Old Trenton Rd, West Windsor, 08550. Plenty of parking will be available in the normally-closed lot at the entrance to the Student Center. Just drive around to the entrance and you should find the entrance-arm in the up-position.

Please RSVP to [kipatthesierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:kipatthesierraclub@gmail.com) so we buy enough pizza!

**ON THE CONSERVATION FRONT:** we have been fighting the Elcon Toxic Waste Treatment Facility, proposed for Falls Township, PA, a half-mile from the Delaware River – with other environmental groups: the issues are drinking water and air quality. Also A135/S1261, which would establish fire safety standards and protocols for certain light frame residential construction. We offered testimony to Hamilton Twp on a proposed solar field project on Sweetbriar Av: the plan calls for the destruction of more than 800 trees in a very wet location near Assumpink Creek. Robbinsville Boy Scouts will be helping with the Eastern Bluebird Nestbox and Trail Monitoring Program. We commented opposing the Meadowlands Power Plant. We are also working with the Transportation Committee's Campaign for Electric School Buses. We are pipeline fighters: against PennEast in the central and western part of the state, South Jersey Gas and New Jersey Natural Gas in the Pinelands, and the Pilgrim Pipeline in the north. These projects would all contribute to global climate change and endanger our local environ-

ment. At Governor Murphy's State of the State address, we lobbied for a moratorium on pipelines.

**Outings:** George and Leona Fluck conduct weekly outings. All the dates were not available at the writing of this article. Check Pineypaddlers.com, and the Outings section of this Newsletter.

## Raritan Valley Group

(Middlesex and Somerset Counties and surrounding areas)

**WEBSITE:** <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Raritan-Valley/>  
**FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC/>  
For current outings, please see the Outings List in this newsletter – or on Pineypaddlers.com.

### OFFICERS:

#### Chair and Conservation

**Chair:** Gary Frederick 609-203-3382 gary.frederick3@gmail.com  
**Membership:** *Open position!*  
**Political Chair:** Daphne Speck-Barynski 732-390-5311 speckbartyn@comcast.net  
**Publicity Chair:** *Open position!*  
**Secretary:** *Open position!*  
**Treasurer:** S.Pasricha spjersey@email.com  
**Webmaster:** Paul Ehrlich phehrlich-nj@outlook.com  
**Outings/Events**  
**Co-Chairs:** S. Parischa, Brianna Cerione, Bernadette Maher  
**College Liaison:** *Open position!*  
**Bee affairs:** Brenda Bradley

Our **monthly committee meetings** are held on FOURTH WEDNESDAY of each month, from 7pm to 8:30, in New Brunswick. Meetings are free and open to the public. We discuss the environmental news important to New Jersey and the Raritan Valley, plus discuss upcoming events, speakers, volunteer efforts, etc. To confirm the location of the meeting, please contact Gary Frederick at [gfredsierra@gmail.com](mailto:gfredsierra@gmail.com).

The issues of interest to our communities include but are not limited to:

1. **Opposition to gas and oil pipelines** that threaten our communities' air and water.
2. Conservation and protection of the **Raritan River basin** area.
3. Passage of and responsible enforcement of environmentally friendly **zoning and development ordinances**.
4. **Prevention of conserved land** from commercial or other development. We are for preservation of open space and preventing diversion of land from the state's Green Acres program to commercial development.

We encourage you to attend your town's planning/zoning board or land use board meetings. If you are aware of development proposals in your town that may have a negative environmental impact, please let us know by attending our meetings and by contacting Gary Frederick at [gfredsierra@gmail.com](mailto:gfredsierra@gmail.com). We are also interested in any environmental news or events affecting Middlesex and Somerset counties and invite you to submit those items, as well.

## Jersey Shore Group

(Monmouth County, approximately)

**WEBSITE:** <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/>  
**FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/>

### OFFICERS:

**Group Chair:** Dennis Anderson 732-970-4327 dennisaza@aol.com  
6 Maple Ave, Matawan NJ 07747  
**Vice-Chair:** Bob Grize 732-892-0684 nyucwnyppb@aol.com  
**Secretary:** John Luard 732-708-9221 John.Luard@gmail.com  
**Conser. Co-Chairs:** Faith Teitelbaum 732-513-5445 faithtei@aol.com  
and: Bob Sandberg 732-241-7757 Sandberg00@gmail.com  
and: Stan Greberis 732-431-0082 grapefruit@msn.com  
**Social Media Chair:** Yazmin Sourias yazming915@gmail.com  
**Treasurer:** Pat Fuschetto 732-308-4588 fusche40@yahoo.com  
**Political Co-Chairs:** Robin & Harold Zullo drzullo@optonline.net  
**Outings Chair:** John Luard 732-708-9221 John.Luard@gmail.com  
**Outings Leaders:** Needed!  
**Membership Chair:** Bob Grize 732-892-0684 nyucwnyppb@aol.com  
**Program Chair:** George Moffatt 732-544-1726 gmoffattgt@aol.com  
**Climate Chair:** Steve Miller 732-671-5917 SteveMiller@Comcast.net  
**Fund-raising**  
**Co-Chairs:** Mark Fukayama 908-902-1555 markexams@aol.com  
and: Faith Teitelbaum 732-513-5445 faithtei@aol.com  
**Publicity Chair:** Open Position!  
**High School**  
**Coordinator:** Open Position!  
**Letter-writing**  
**Committee:** Mark Fukayama, Steve Miller and Stan Greberis

### Jersey Shore Group Happenings:

**Progress at Whale Pond Greenway** – The Jersey Shore Sierra Club is a partner of the Whale Pond Brook Watershed Association, whose goal is to restore the banks and water quality of Whale Pond Brook and create a greenway from the Long Branch shoreline to the uplands in Tinton Falls. On October 18, 2018, we had the official opening of Ross Lake Park, the first Long Branch section of the greenway. It was a great day; participating were Long Branch Mayor, John Pallone, boy scouts from Troop 148, Scott Cardelfe, our fabulous mason, and Chuck Ficca who created our trail.

Now we are turning our attention to the next section of the greenway which is in Ocean Township. It will include 350 acres which lie between Industrial Way West and W. Park Ave. The WPBWA, as a non-profit, has received permission from Ocean Township to hire a forester to tell us how to best manage the land and build a greenway. To help: contact Faith Teitelbaum at [Faithtei@aol.com](mailto:Faithtei@aol.com).



**MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

Our general membership meetings take place at 6pm on the fourth Monday of the month at Brookdale Community College's Lincroft Campus (BCC). We are delighted that the college has invited us to continue the joint meetings of Sierra members, BCC students and the public through 2019. Our meetings, billed by BCC as "Science Monday," average 75 attendees a month, with some talks peaking at 120 to 150 people. The cooperative effort between Sierra and BCC extends the "reach" of both organizations into the Monmouth community. Our BCC liaison is Dr. Patricia Dillon, biology professor in the college's Science Department.

We meet at BCC to share our speakers with environmentally-concerned BCC college students, the general public, and other environmental organizations. A buffet is available for the students and adults at 6pm. The programs start at 6:30pm.

To get to Brookdale, take GSP Exit 109 to Rte 520 West (Newman Springs Rd, which becomes E Main St at the Lincroft campus). Exit the traffic circle into the campus and follow the signs to the Warner Student Life Center (SLC), where the meeting usually is in the Twin Lights Rooms I and II. Use parking lot 7. As you walk towards the building complex, Warner will be down the slope on your left. If lot 7 is full, use parking lots 5 or 6. A campus map is at [http://www.brookdalecc.edu/PDFFiles/MAPS/MAP\\_04\\_08.pdf](http://www.brookdalecc.edu/PDFFiles/MAPS/MAP_04_08.pdf).

**June 24** – Yes, You Can – The lectern will be turned over to Club members for reports on Group or individual projects completed, planned and in progress: development of a park and nature preserve in Long Branch, letter writing campaigns to politicians, helping municipalities to reduce their carbon footprints, and overhauling our Group's electronic messaging to better communicate with our members.

**July** – Our Annual Picnic – All are welcome, bring a munchie. Check for date and details at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-shore>, or <https://www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC>

**August** – No Meeting Scheduled – Go fishing, swimming, golfing, or just goof off.

**Sept 23** – Rep. Pallone's Energy Agenda – Rep. Frank Pallone (D-6th District), newly elected chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, will outline his committee's energy plans. Pallone's committee has jurisdiction over issues pertaining to energy, environment, health care, commerce, and telecommunications. Pallone's legislative agenda during his years in Congress has been geared to the protection and restoration of environmental resources and making health care more affordable and accessible. And with more environmentally friendly members in the House, he has an opportunity to advance that agenda.

Speakers Contact – George Moffatt, Jersey Shore Program Chairman, 732-544-1726 or [gmoffatt@aol.com](mailto:gmoffatt@aol.com).

**Ocean County Group**

**WEBSITE:** MEETUP.COM/SIERRA-CLUB-OCEAN-GROUP

**OFFICERS:**

**Acting Chair & Conservation Chair:** Margit Meissner-Jackson [sylviaJ1910@yahoo.com](mailto:sylviaJ1910@yahoo.com)  
**Vice-Chair & Treasurer:** Laura Stone [Laura36@yahoo.com](mailto:Laura36@yahoo.com)  
**Outings & Envl Ed'n:** Terrance Brown [terrybrown@comcast.net](mailto:terrybrown@comcast.net)  
**Recording Secretary:** Nancy Brown [nancybrown624@comcast.net](mailto:nancybrown624@comcast.net)  
**Political Chair:** Margaret Mary Piccolo [gogreenp1@yahoo.com](mailto:gogreenp1@yahoo.com)  
**Membership Chairs:** Ray & Cathy Kozakerich [raykozak@comcast.net](mailto:raykozak@comcast.net)  
**Social Media Chair:** Annie Jones [AnnaLeighEilbacher@yahoo.com](mailto:AnnaLeighEilbacher@yahoo.com)  
**Fund-Raising Chair:** Joyce M. Isaza [realtymstr@aol.com](mailto:realtymstr@aol.com)  
**Group ExCom Members:** William Rodgers  
 And: Peter Leighton [JPLighton1@verizon.net](mailto:JPLighton1@verizon.net)

**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:** Held bi-monthly at the Skywalk Cafe in Toms River, except July and August.

**ACTIVITIES & ISSUES:** Our group is focused on a number of critical issues. Locally and state-wide we are fighting a myriad of over-development issues. Along with our allies we are working hard to save Barnegat Bay and The Pinelands, two natural gems in Ocean County.

**West Jersey Group**

*(Camden, Gloucester and Burlington Counties, approximately)*

**WEBSITE:** <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/West-Jersey/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC> Log on and Like Us

**Follow us on Twitter @WJsierraclub and Instagram @wjsierraclub**

**OFFICERS:**

**Group Chair:** Gina Carola 856-848-8831 [ginacee@verizon.net](mailto:ginacee@verizon.net)  
**Vice-Chair:** Frank Zinni [efzin4@aol.com](mailto:efzin4@aol.com)  
**Secretary:** Ellen Zinni [efzin4@aol.com](mailto:efzin4@aol.com)  
**Treasurer:** Trish Clements [patri3210@gmail.com](mailto:patri3210@gmail.com)  
**Publicity Chair:** Anne Caridi [annecaridi@yahoo.com](mailto:annecaridi@yahoo.com)  
**Political Chair:** Linda Rubiano [Linda\\_Maritza@yahoo.com](mailto:Linda_Maritza@yahoo.com)  
**Pinelands Rep:** Lee Snyder [pinelands1@hotmail.com](mailto:pinelands1@hotmail.com)  
**Greenways Coord's:** Frank and Ellen Zinni [efzin4@aol.com](mailto:efzin4@aol.com)  
**Conservation Chair:** Stacey Ayala [thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com](mailto:thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com)  
**Delegate at Large:** Aida Ayala [thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com](mailto:thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com)  
**Membership Chair:** Mike Brown 856-547-9221 [eyebrown@verizon.net](mailto:eyebrown@verizon.net)  
**Fundraising Chair:** *Open position!* Call Gina to volunteer. . 856-848-8831  
**Smart Growth Chair:** *Open position!* Call Gina to volunteer. . 856-848-8831  
**Programs Chair:** *Open position!* Call Gina to volunteer. . 856-848-8831  
**Outings Chair:** *Open position!* Call Gina to volunteer. . 856-848-8831  
**Media & Communications:** Tony Hagen [hagenajohn@verizon.net](mailto:hagenajohn@verizon.net)  
**Social Media Coord's:** Evan Kostka [evan.kostka@gmail.com](mailto:evan.kostka@gmail.com)  
 and Dayna Hovern [dayna.hovern@gmail.com](mailto:dayna.hovern@gmail.com)

**GENERAL MEETINGS:** are held at 7:30 pm on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of each month, September thru May, at the Quaker Meeting Hall on Friends Ave in Haddonfield. Inclement weather may cancel. Please call 856-848-8831 if unsure.

**Directions:** From I-295, take exit 34B onto Rte 70 West. Follow the signs for Rte 41 South, which is Kings Hwy (you will have to exit to the right into a jug handle and then turn left onto Rte 41 (Kings Hwy). Cross over Rte 70 and you will be briefly on Rte 154 (Brace Rd). Make the next right and then the next left onto Kings Hwy. After about 1 mile, you will cross Grove Rd (Indian King Tavern is on the right corner). After crossing Grove Rd, go two more blocks and turn right on to Friends Ave. Go one block to the Meeting House. Park in the lot next to the Meeting House and enter the auditorium through the doors on the right side of the building. Do not go into the Meeting House.

**June, July and August** – no meetings.

Please join us on a hike or paddling trip. Meetings resume on Sept 11.

**Sept 11:** New Jersey's State Parks – Take a tour of New Jersey's State Parks, Forests and Historic Sites via a slide show.

**South Jersey Group**

*(Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem Counties, approximately)*

**OFFICERS:**

**Group, Outings Chair:** Tom Boghosian 609-625-0878 [boghosian1@verizon.net](mailto:boghosian1@verizon.net)  
**Vice-Chair:** *Open Position!*  
**Conservation Chair:** *Open Position!*  
**Pol. Chair, Calendars:** Dick Colby 609-965-4453 [dick.colby@stockton.edu](mailto:dick.colby@stockton.edu)  
**Membership Chair:** *Open Position!*  
**Secretary/Treasurer:** Julie Akers 609-432-3280 [julieakers56@gmail.com](mailto:julieakers56@gmail.com)

Our consuming conservation issue,, adopted just after the Group was founded in the 1970s, continues to be protection of the Great Egg Harbor Wild & Scenic River, and continues to consume the energies of those few officers who remain active both within the Sierra Club and in the Watershed Association (GEHWA) that spun off from the South Jersey Group. Very few of our local members seem interested in the meetings we once scheduled (monthly, from the early 1980s until 2005). For now, we'll continue to be listed in this Newsletter, and offer a point of contact for Club members in South Jersey who want help with local issues. We strongly recommend GEHWA's website for keeping up with local issues, and for links to many other local, regional, state and national environmental organizations: [www.gehwa.org](http://www.gehwa.org). If you have topics (and places) for meetings, please let the officers know about them. We welcome general comments from Club members in South Jersey. To be placed on a carefully guarded distribution list for local issues and meetings, please e-mail [dick.colby@stockton.edu](mailto:dick.colby@stockton.edu). Dick is also an Atlantic County Parks Commissioner; contact him if you might be interested in attending monthly meetings of the Commission, which are open to the public.

Tom Boghosian is an avid kayaker (- certified as a Maine Guide!), both ocean-going and in fresh waters, possibly willing to lead trips. Julie Akers is also president of Atlantic County Friends of the Parks, and of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association

**Current Issues:** (1) We've been blue-blazing the southern portion of what will be a continuous footpath between the southern and northern tips of New Jersey. Many others (and other groups) are contributing. Contact Dick for copies of some of our preliminary maps. Dick has also produced a brochure describing 14 historic walks in Egg Harbor City. Every municipality ought to have its own such brochure: this is a hint for you to try your hand at it! (2) There is "movement" on the prospect for a Community Solar experiment in South Jersey, fueled by new legislation that prods the BPU, and a new president of Atlantic Electric Co. (3) If you know an Atlantic County Freeholder, please consider lobbying her/him to take on Clark's Landing as an historic county park. (4) With the passage of a plastic-bag-restricting ordinance in Longport, there's lobbying work to be done in each of our other municipalities! (5 etc.) Many other South Jersey issues are described in previous issues of this Newsletter, available on the Chapter website.

**Some Possibly Relevant Activities of Allied Organizations:**

**June 5, July 3, Aug 7 and Sept 4:** (first Wednesdays), 6:30pm: Atlantic County Friends of the Parks: Monthly meetings of a group which works to improve and promote the Atlantic County Park System. All are welcome. Warren Fox Nature Center (WFNC\*), Atlantic County Park in Estell Manor, Milepost 15 on NJ Rte 50, 3½ miles south of Mays Landing. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280. Website: <https://www.facebook.com/Atlantic-County-Friends-of-the-Parks>.

**June 12 and Aug 14:** (alternate second Wednesdays), 7pm: Bi-monthly meeting of Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries (another "Partnership River" under federal protection): Meeting place: George Luciano Center, Cumberland County College. Cumberland County development issues are commonly discussed, including art, historical and recreational attributes of the area. Contact Karla Rossini (CU) at 609-774-5853 or [karla.rossini@cumauriceriver.org](mailto:karla.rossini@cumauriceriver.org). Website: [www.cumauriceriver.org](http://www.cumauriceriver.org).

**June 19 and Aug 21:** (alternate third Wednesdays), 6:30pm: Great Egg Harbor Scenic and Recreational River Council: Representatives of the 12 municipalities discuss river management strategies. Open to the public. WFNC\*. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280.

**June 26, July 24, Aug 28 and Sept 25:** (fourth Wednesdays), 7pm: Atlantic Audubon Society is a lively member-organization with strong environmental programs and an excellent monthly on-line newsletter. Membership is free. Meetings are in the Galloway Twp Library, 306 E Jimmie Leeds Rd. [www.AtlanticAudubon.org](http://www.AtlanticAudubon.org).

**July 23, 5:30pm:** Great Egg Harbor River Watershed Association's annual picnic: Lake Lenape Park West: get yourself onto the electronic mailing list by contacting Lynn Maun, 856-649-2792 or email [lynnkmaun@comcast.net](mailto:lynnkmaun@comcast.net). On Sept 28 there will be an annual kayak/canoe outing on the River.

350.org South Jersey is an organization that opposes Climate Change, and that may or may not be extant. Leaders were (at least) Glenn Klotz: [glennk1949@gmail.com](mailto:glennk1949@gmail.com), and Ron Hutchison: [Ron.Hutchison@Stockton.edu](mailto:Ron.Hutchison@Stockton.edu).

*(continued on page 10)*

**Become active in one of your Group's conservation campaigns! Attend a Group meeting! Meetings offer interesting speakers and topics, nice fellow-members, and usually food!**

## GROUP NEWS

(Continued from page 9)

### Singles Section

(A chapter-wide, special interest section offering hikes/cleanups, social gatherings, meetings, etc.)

**Website:** <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles>

We're a friendly, active group of individuals who enjoy hiking, biking, canoeing/kayaking, as well as a variety of social and cultural activities throughout the year. This section was created to offer a variety of singles-oriented activities to NJ Sierra Club members.

#### OFFICERS:

**Interim Co-Chairs:** Ron Pate and Jimi Oleksiak  
**Outings Chair:** Joyce Haddad  
**Conservation Chair:** Position open  
**Treasurer:** Position open  
**Social Chair:** Position open  
**Vice Social Chair:** Jeff Sovelove  
**Programs:** Position open!  
**Publicity:** Position open  
**Membership:** Position open  
**Nominations:** Position open

**Executive committee members:** Rozanna Fanelli, Joyce Haddad, Ron Pate, Jeff Sovelove, Daphne Speck-Bartynski

**PURPOSE:** Our purpose is to acquaint single adults with the natural history and beauty of the surrounding area, to promote environmental conservation, and to provide recreational and social activities for members. All activities shall be consistent with Sierra Club purposes. We are not a local group; we're a statewide additional "layer" of club involvement. Everyone is welcome to join us.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** The best way to be notified of upcoming events is to join our free listserv. Anyone may subscribe by going to: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/NJ-SINGLES-NEWS.html> and clicking on "Join or leave the list." You may subscribe and unsubscribe at will; directions on how to unsubscribe are at the bottom of each announcement. We recommend joining the listserv to receive announcements for all of our events a few weeks before each event. Events are also list on the online calendar on the Chapter's web site: [sierraclub.org/new-jersey](http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey). You can also "like" us on Facebook: "Singles Group New Jersey Sierra Club." Activities will also be posted on Meetup.

#### SOCIAL GATHERINGS:

**Social dinners:** Join us for dinner the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm, at a variety of restaurants in different locations. Jimi Oleksiak, the leader, will announce the details one week in advance through a listserv message. An RSVP will be required as described in the announcement.

**HIKES AND OTHER OUTINGS:** The Singles Section sponsors many outings, ranging from beginners' level of hikes to advanced difficulty. Some of these are listed in this newsletter; others will be announced on our listserv, the Chapter's online calendar, Facebook and Meetup. Hikes are for anybody who is capable of hiking the distance described. It is up to the person who wants to hike to determine their own ability and limits. All hikers are required to sign a liability waiver.

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Section

Our mission of this Section is to support Sierra Club goals, and to promote activism within the LGBT community through letter writing, phone calls, and other active support for environmental issues. Anyone is welcome to join our outings regardless of sexual orientation.

**WEB SITE:** <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/>

**MEETUP:** <http://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub>

**FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt>

#### OFFICERS:

**Co-Chair:** Robert Zitzman \* [robertmz@att.net](mailto:robertmz@att.net)  
**Co-Chair:** John Kashwick \* [jkashwick@gmail.com](mailto:jkashwick@gmail.com)  
**Secretary:** OPEN POSITION--contact John or Robert if interested  
**Outings Co-Chair:** Jonathan Wall \* [dojdwall@gmail.com](mailto:dojdwall@gmail.com)  
**Outings Co-Chair:** Robert Zitzman \* [robertmz@att.net](mailto:robertmz@att.net)  
**Webmaster/Listmaster:** John Kashwick \* [jkashwick@gmail.com](mailto:jkashwick@gmail.com)  
**Ex-Com Member:** OPEN POSITION--contact John or Robert if interested

(\* Section Executive Committee Member)

#### MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

Check [Meetup.com/njsierraclub](http://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub) or [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/) for outings listings. You can also receive updated information by joining our email list. Please contact John at [jkashwick@gmail.com](mailto:jkashwick@gmail.com) to be included in the list.

Please see the website, and/or contact John Kashwick as above.

**Volunteers Needed!** We are continuing to recruit volunteers and outings leaders. For more information, please email John at [jkashwick@gmail.com](mailto:jkashwick@gmail.com) or Robert at [robertmz@att.net](mailto:robertmz@att.net).

## Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section

(A chapter-wide special interest section which offers a weekly to monthly calendar of activities and events, including hikes, clean ups, social gatherings, dinner get-togethers and other functions intended for those members over fifty)

More New Jersey events are posted on a web site: <http://www.funtravels.com>. In addition, a monthly Buy & Sell newsletter is sent out to members free of charge, in which they can list items they are searching for or want to buy.

The mission of this section is to support Sierra Club goals, and to promote activism through letter writing, phone calls, and other active support for environmental issues.

We work through a "list-serve," by which members learn about current environmental issues, and how they can be supported. Please find more news at web site <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/senior-section>.

Arline Zatz is the editor and Chair of the Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section. She can be reached at [azatz@funtravels.com](mailto:azatz@funtravels.com), and invites members to check her web site at [www.funtravels.com](http://www.funtravels.com) for trips, tips, and travel information regarding New Jersey and other states.

Paul Ehrlich is the Vice-Chair ([phehrlich-NJ@outlook.com](mailto:phehrlich-NJ@outlook.com)). He vice-edits the Essays Section of the Senior Section website. These essays are written by members of the NJ Sierra Club, and focus on environmental issues, including reports of environment-related news that may not be easily accessed by many members, opinions on how to deal with environmental problems, and support/criticism of environmental actions taken by organizations and individuals. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT YOU'D LIKE TO TELL A LARGE AUDIENCE? Send an essay to Arline and me for editing and approval and it will be posted on our website.

## Sierra Student Coalition

(a semi-autonomous organization of college and high-school students)

**National Website:** <http://www.ssc.org/>

## Introducing Children to the Outdoors Section

(another Chapter-wide special interest activity with the motto: No Child Left Inside!)

#### OFFICERS:

**Chair:** Marty Cohen [pe4191@gmail.com](mailto:pe4191@gmail.com)

In 2018 we took 38 students from Paterson's Clemente Middle School on a hike in Harriman State Park. We had enough leaders and assistants to break the group in two - for two separate hikes, a lot more enjoyable for all involved than an H. M. Stanley expedition. The weather cooperated so, despite the challenging trails and hills, there were smiles all around.

NJ-ICO is a public service program, one of 50 Sierra Club groups nationwide which provide about 1,000 nature outings per year, oriented towards children. About five such outings take place in New Jersey each year. That's right: only five - but they are great! We sure could use a couple of steering committee members to help expand this wonderful program.

If you would like information about volunteering or if you would just like to be placed on our email list for our sporadically issued e-newsletters, please send me an e-mail.

## On the Trail in Camden's Gateway Park

By Tony Hagen, Media and Communications Chair of our West Jersey Group ([hagenajohn@verizon.net](mailto:hagenajohn@verizon.net))



As a national landmark, Admiral Wilson Boulevard in Camden has a speckled past. In the 1920s it was envisioned as a showcase accessway to the Ben Franklin Bridge, which crosses the Delaware River to Philadelphia. Landscape architect Charles Wellford Leavitt was called in to give it appeal. A number of ideas were floated: a tree-lined boulevard, a hotel at the foot of the bridge, and a conduit in the early automobile days to various points in South Jersey.

As all great visions go, it saw some wear and tear over time. And not a little degradation. The not-so-bad stuff included a Sears department store, the husk of which was removed in 2013, and the world's first drive-in movie theater, the brainchild of Richard Hollingshead Jr., who is said not to have made much money from the rights to his invention. Time and urban sprawl transformed the area into a capitalist's idea of appropriate development: America's first highway strip.

In the 1970s bad was heaped upon bad. First came a go-go club, then hourly rate motels (most notoriously the Oasis), more strip clubs, and liquor stores. Prostitution and other crime became rampant in the area. The more respectable businesses moved out.

Then the Republican Party decided to hold its 2000 presidential nominating convention in Philadelphia. The unsightly mess on Admiral Wilson Boulevard simply would not do. So then-Gov. Christie Todd Whitman earmarked \$45 million to restore the boulevard to its original beauty. In time for the convention, the objectionable buildings were razed, and part

of Leavitt's original master plan was resurrected - but never actually carried out.

Now for the happy ending. On March 11, regional mayors, other public authorities, and environmental groups, including New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF), celebrated a ribbon cutting for Gateway Park, a 25-acre portion of the boulevard area that borders on the Cooper River. The park was hailed as a dramatic transformation that would provide outdoor recreation opportunities and a chance to commune with nature for nearby residents, especially youngsters, for whom such convenient enjoyments are rare.

The new Gateway Park is an important part of the revitalization effort in Camden. Contaminated soil will be removed by the Delaware River Port Authority, greenery will be installed, and people will be able to picnic, walk, bike, and fish. "We look forward to the park becoming a vital part of this thriving urban community," said Michele S. Byers, executive director of the NJCF, which will manage the park in cooperation with the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority.

A bald eagle flew overhead during the ceremony, clearly a sign that this new form of development will be welcomed by the wildlife community. It may also satisfy the restless spirit of Rear Admiral Henry Braid Wilson, the boulevard's namesake, who unsuccessfully petitioned in 1949 to have the road named something else, after a bar called The Admiral opened there. He vowed never to drive the road again.

(Continued on page 11)



# ON THE TRAIL

(Continued from page 10)

Another plus: the Cross-Camden County Trail is in the formative stages; it will traverse this property on its way from the Ben Franklin Bridge to the Atlantic County line at Hammonton, just south of Wharton State Forest. The goal is to utilize Conrail trackbed, in addition to public and utility property, for a route that will offer bicycle commuting poten-

tial as well as plain, old-fashioned outdoor recreation.

### References

- <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/admiral-wilson-boulevard/>
- [https://www.njconservation.org/press\\_release/gateway-park-opening-celebrated-in-camden/](https://www.njconservation.org/press_release/gateway-park-opening-celebrated-in-camden/)
- <http://www.camdencounty.com/service/parks/cross-county-trail/>



**Outings** Learn more about your environment... take a Sierra Club educational hike!

## GROUP OUTINGS COORDINATORS

(roughly north to south)

- Skylands:** Dave Alcock: [dwhoob@hotmail.com](mailto:dwhoob@hotmail.com)
- South Highlands:** Jonathan Wall [psychologist@jonwall.com](mailto:psychologist@jonwall.com)
- North Jersey: Co-Chairs:** Ellen Blumenkrantz [ellenblumenkrantz@hotmail.com](mailto:ellenblumenkrantz@hotmail.com), 201-784-8417 and Mary Walsh: [blehwalsh@hotmail.com](mailto:blehwalsh@hotmail.com)
- Gateway:** Vacant
- Hudson Co:** Natalya DeRobertis-Theye [natalyadt@gmail.com](mailto:natalyadt@gmail.com)
- Loantaka:** Vacant
- Central Jersey:** Leona & George Fluck [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com)
- Raritan Valley:** Vacant
- Jersey Shore:** John Luard: [John.Luard@gmail.com](mailto:John.Luard@gmail.com)
- Ocean County:** Terrance Brown: 848-333-7331 [terrybrown@comcast.net](mailto:terrybrown@comcast.net)
- West Jersey:** Vacant
- South Jersey:** Tom Boghosian, 609-625-0878 (H) 4794 Andorea Drive, Mays Landing, 08330 [boghosian1@verizon.net](mailto:boghosian1@verizon.net)
- Singles Section:** Joyce Haddad, [jkhaddad@juno.com](mailto:jkhaddad@juno.com)
- LGBT Section:** Jonathan Wall: [dojdwall@gmail.com](mailto:dojdwall@gmail.com), and Robert Zitzman: [robertmz@att.net](mailto:robertmz@att.net)
- ICO:** Anne Dyjak 732-560-0953 (H) NJ-ICO, 17 Mt. Horeb Rd, Warren, 07059
- River Touring:** Fred Tocce, 908-453-2205 (H) RD-1, Box 277, Washington, 07882
- Chapter Outings Chair:** Ellen Blumenkrantz [ellenblumenkrantz@hotmail.com](mailto:ellenblumenkrantz@hotmail.com), 201-784-8417

**Outing Leaders:** Please send Oct-Dec 2019 write-ups to your Group Outings Coordinator (or, if you don't associate yourself with a single Group, directly to Ellen Blumenkrantz, the Chapter Outings Chair) before Aug 5. If you are planning to lead an outing close to the beginning of one of our quarterly publication periods, please submit it also for the previous Sierran, due to the occasional lag in mailing. Also, please send outing rosters or sign-up sheets to the Chapter Office as soon as possible after each outing.

**Note:** Group Outings Coordinators: Please submit your Oct-Dec 2019 trip write-ups by Aug 10.

**NOTES ON OUTINGS:** All Outings are generally open to Club members, guests and anyone interested in outings. Unless otherwise specified, the events are free and open to the public. ALL participants must sign liability waivers on ALL outings sponsored by the Sierra Club. Please check with the leader before bringing small children on an outing. A parent or other responsible adult must accompany persons under 18. At their discretion, leaders may permit pets on outings if the event description specifically includes bringing pets.

Sierra Club outings are arranged by volunteer leaders who are in charge of the trip and responsible for the safety, wel-

fare and enjoyment of all participants. Leaders determine qualifications to participate, adequacy of equipment, routes to be followed, and special precautions to be taken. Please arrive adequately prepared and equipped. If you have any allergies, please remember to bring your medication. The leader has the final word in the conduct of the trip. Your cooperation will help assure a safe and pleasant outing.

Please arrive early at the meeting place so that the outing can start on time. For day hikes, lunch, water (at least a liter), extra clothing, rain gear, and emergency equipment should be carried in a small daypack. For all except easy hikes, sturdy over-the-ankle shoes or boots should be worn. For most trips, you are expected to have your own equipment. In some cases, it may be rented from outdoor/camping suppliers - check the yellow pages or call the trip leader. If the weather is questionable on the date of the outing, you may assume that it will take place, unless the schedule indicates otherwise.

Unless registration is required, or if you have a question about the outing, it is not necessary to contact the leader before the trip. However, as these outings are planned many months in advance, we do advise that you contact the trip leader 1-2 days before the outing to make sure it is not cancelled. Do not call to join a trip after the posted deadline date. When phoning a leader, please honor his or her requested calling times and call 3 to 5 days before the outing. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) when writing to a leader. On popular trips, Sierra Club members will be given preference.

Watercraft trips let you experience the unspoiled parts of our region, but water safety does impose special requirements. The size and skill of each party must be appropriate to each river, so participation in each trip must be at the discretion of the leader. We ask you to register at least one week in advance. Unless a phone number is provided, please send a SASE with an honest assessment of your paddling experience, whether you need or can offer a ride, your phone number, and any questions you may have. You will receive a description of the trip, with directions, where you can rent a canoe, and what you will need to bring. Almost all trips can arrange partners to share a canoe if you are coming by yourself. Unless stated otherwise: rental canoes are available, trips do not require advanced paddling skill or exceptional physical conditioning, public transportation is not available, non-members may participate, and responsible smokers are welcome.

If you are a Sierra Club member interested in becoming an Outing Leader or have suggestions for new outings, contact your Group Outings Chair or the Chapter Outings Chair for assistance and further information. The Sierra Group contributing each outing is given at the end of the write-up, as follows:

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| (C) - Central Jersey  | (JS) - Jersey Shore       |
| (G) - Gateway         | (L) - Loantaka            |
| (N) - North Jersey    | (Sk) - Skylands           |
| (RV) - Raritan Valley | (S) - South Jersey        |
| (W) - West Jersey     | (NJ) - NJ Chapter         |
| (RT) - River Touring  | (ACOC) - Atlantic Chapter |

**Jul 17 (Wed): National Hot Dog Day Canoe/Kayak the Delaware River (Hunterdon Co).** 10am. We're paddling 8 miles from Kingwood Access to Bulls Island. We'll have our lunch break at the Hot Dog Man's River "Restaurant"; bring or buy lunch. Paddling helmets required for all participants; spray skirts recommended for kayakers. Rentals are not available. Current Sierra Club membership required. Contact leaders to confirm trip and meeting location: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Jul 20 (Sat): Jockey Hollow Leader's Choice (Morris Co).** 9:45am. Meet at the Visitors Center for a 10am start. GPS address: 586 Tempe Wick Rd, Morristown 07960. (This address is approximate.) Leader's choice of trails depending on conditions at Morristown National Historical Park. For directions and information see <http://www.nps.gov/morr/playourvisit/directions.htm>. Bring lots of water, a snack, and wear hiking boots. Heavy/steady rain cancels. No pets please. Leader: Jeffrey Sovelove: [Hiker\\_Dood@yahoo.com](mailto:Hiker_Dood@yahoo.com). Joint ADK/Sierra Club hike.

**Jul 20 (Sat): Canoe/Kayak the Delaware River Water Gap (Warren Co).** 9am. Let's Go to The Gap! The Delaware River is the longest undammed river in the East. Our trip will be 16 miles. Paddling helmets required for all paddlers; spray skirts recommended for kayakers. Rentals are not available. Current Sierra Club membership required. Contact leaders for further information: Leona & George F: 609-259-3734 or [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Jul 22 (Mon): Canoe/Kayak the Great Egg Harbor River (Atlantic Co).** 10am. We'll paddle 10+ miles from Penny Pot to Weymouth. Palace Outfitters will shuttle our group. Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Jul 27 (Sat): South Mountain Reservation hike (Essex Co).** 10am. Meet at the Turtle Back Parking Area, off Walker Rd, West Orange. A moderately difficult hike of 6 miles to Hemlock Falls and return on the Rahway trail. Wear hiking boots, bring lunch, rain cancels. Leader: Ron Pate: [ronpate31@verizon.net](mailto:ronpate31@verizon.net).

**Jul 28 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak Cedar Creek (Ocean Co).** 9am. We'll paddle 7 miles from Ore Pond to Dudley Park. Rental boats are available from Cedar Creek Campground: [www.cedarcreeknj.com/kayak-canoe](http://www.cedarcreeknj.com/kayak-canoe). Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

## AUGUST

**Aug 1 (Thurs): Canoe/Kayak the Wading River (Burlington Co).** 9am. We're paddling 10 miles from Hawkin Bridge to Beaver Branch. Canoes and kayaks can be rented from Mick's Pine Barrens Canoe and Kayak Rental (609-726-1380 or [www.mickscanoental.com](http://www.mickscanoental.com)). Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Aug 4 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak the Delaware River (Warren Co).** 9am. Paddle 10 miles. Helmets required for all participants; spray skirts recommended for kayakers. Rentals are not available. Current Sierra Club membership required. Contact leaders to confirm trip section and meeting location: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Aug 9 (Fri): Canoe/Kayak the Rancocas Creek (Burlington Co).** 9:30am. The section we paddle will depend on weather conditions. Rental boats are not available. Contact leaders to confirm trip and details. Option for early breakfast at the Vincentown Diner. George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Aug 10 (Sat): Patriots Path Stroll (Morris Co).** 10am. Come take an easy stroll on Patriots Path in Morristown. This 5-mile stroll will start out from the Speedwell Park parking lot: across the street from Historic Speedwell. See the Morris County Parks website (<http://www.morrisparks.org>) for directions, or put the following address into your preferred map engine: "Speedwell Park, Morristown NJ 07960". Please bring plenty of water and a light snack. Great for beginners. Heavy/steady rain cancels. No pets please. Leader: Jeffrey Sovelove: [Hiker\\_Dood@yahoo.com](mailto:Hiker_Dood@yahoo.com). Joint ADK/Sierra Club hike.

**Aug 10 (Sat): Camp Mohican Hike and Swim, Delaware Water Gap, Blairstown (Morris Co).** 10am. <https://www.nps.gov/dewa/index.htm>. The hike will cover 7 miles in 4 hours. Hilly terrain. Moderate to strenuous difficulty. Features: Views of the Delaware River valley, Clean water in Catfish Pond, the Coppermine Trail, the Appalachian Trail, Backcountry Wilderness Facilities: Port-a-john in the parking lot, and restrooms at Camp Mohican. Required: Hiking Boots, knapsack and water, bring a lunch. Registration required via Web: Start with the calendar at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey> and click on the Camp Mohican Hike and Swim, then click on RSVP. Directions for the meeting place will be sent via email to members who register. Leader: Jimi Oleksiak: [The\\_Hikist@mac.com](mailto:The_Hikist@mac.com).

**Aug 11 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak Cedar Creek (Ocean Co).** 9am. We'll paddle 7 miles from Ore Pond to Dudley Park. Rental boats are available from Cedar Creek Campground: [www.cedarcreeknj.com/kayak-canoe](http://www.cedarcreeknj.com/kayak-canoe). Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Aug 14 (Wed): Canoe/Kayak the Batsto River (Burlington Co).** 10:30am. We'll enjoy a later start on our 7-mile Pinelands paddle from Quaker Bridge to Batsto Lake. We'll use Pinelands Adventures for our trip shuttle ([www.pinelandsadventures.org](http://www.pinelandsadventures.org)). Contact leaders to confirm the trip, meeting location and your participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Aug 18 (Sun): Hike Shark River Park, Wall (Monmouth Co).** 10am. After a circuit through the outer reaches of the park, we will enjoy the babbling brook that's Shark River in this area. About 5 miles at an easy pace, some short climbs, mostly flat. Beginners welcome, supportive footwear recommended, bring plenty of water. Contact leader to register and learn meeting place: [John.Luard@gmail.com](mailto:John.Luard@gmail.com). (JS)

**Aug 18 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak the Delaware River (Warren Co).** 9am. Paddle 10 miles. Helmets required for all participants; spray skirts recommended for kayakers. Rentals are not available. Current Sierra Club membership required. Contact leaders to confirm trip section and meeting location: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Aug 21 (Wed): Canoe/Kayak the Great Egg Harbor River (Atlantic Co).** 10am. We'll paddle 7 miles to Lake Lenape. Palace Outfitters will shuttle our group. Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Aug 24 (Sat): Hike in Harriman State Park (Rockland Co, NY).** 9:30am. A moderately paced hike (about 2 miles/hour) for 7-8 miles along scenic trails with views of the lakes and rock formations of Harriman State Park. Group limited to 12 participants, who must preregister with leader via email: [EllenBlumenkrantz@hotmail.com](mailto:EllenBlumenkrantz@hotmail.com). Rain cancels. (N)

**Aug 26 (Mon): Canoe/Kayak the Delaware River from Bordentown to Burlington – "Elcon Update" (Burlington Co).** 10am. This is a 10-mile tidal trip from Bordentown to Bucks County. Learn about the status and risks of a raw industrial liquid hazardous waste treatment facility that is proposed by Elcon; sited in PA: directly across from Bordentown, on the Delaware River: [Communitynews.org/2019/05/01/controversial-elcon-facility-in-bucks-county-poses-toxic-threat-to-new-jersey/](http://Communitynews.org/2019/05/01/controversial-elcon-facility-in-bucks-county-poses-toxic-threat-to-new-jersey/). Kayaks must be 12 ft or over. We can expect power boat traffic and boat wakes. Bring lunch and water. Current Sierra Club membership required. Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com). (C)

## SEPTEMBER

**Sept 2 (Mon): Canoe/Kayak the Delaware River on Labor Day (Hunterdon Co).** 10am. We're paddling 8 miles from Kingwood Access to Bulls Island; lunch break at the Hot Dog Man's River "Restaurant"; bring or buy lunch. Paddling helmets required for all participants; spray skirts recommended for kayakers. Rentals are not available. Current Sierra Club membership required. Contact leaders to confirm trip and meeting location: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Sept 5 (Thurs): Mercer Park - Land and Water Cleanup – Sierra Club Water Sentinels and Princeton University Community Action (Mercer Co).** 10am - 1pm. Lake Mercer was formed by Assunpink Dam #20 and is part of the Delaware River Watershed. Join the NJ Sierra Club and the Princeton University Community Action team for our 10th Annual Cleanup at Mercer County Park. Help us pick up litter and trash as we enjoy a scenic walk along Lake Mercer and the lovely wooded trails. Or you can bring your kayak/canoe to collect trash on the lake (life jackets must be worn). Bring lunch and water. Bring gloves; trash bags will be provided. Contact leaders to confirm the cleanup: Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com), and Joanne P: 609-443-6992 or [jpatmcaowbrook@gmail.com](mailto:jpatmcaowbrook@gmail.com). (C)

**Sept 8 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak the Oswego River (Burlington Co).** 10am. We'll paddle 8 miles from Lake Oswego to Harrisville Lake. Meet at Lake Oswego. Boats can be rented from Mick's Pine Barrens Canoe/Kayak Rental (609-726-1380 or [www.mickscanoental.com](http://www.mickscanoental.com)). Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

**Sept 14 (Sat): Canoe/Kayak Cedar Creek (Ocean Co).** 9am. It's the Virgo b'day paddle!! We'll eat cake and paddle 7 miles from Ore Pond to Dudley Park. Cedar Creek is one of the prettiest Pines streams. Boats can be rented from Cedar Creek Campgrounds ([www.cedarcreeknj.com/](http://www.cedarcreeknj.com/) or 732-269-1413). Contact leaders to confirm trip and meeting location: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com). (W)

(continued on page 12)

**Why not rank the environmental issues of most importance to you: sea-level rise, air pollution, loss of open space (wilderness), clean water supply, recycling, toxic sites, plastic, automobile dependence, etc. Now: how to act?**





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If no one is in the office to take your call, please leave a message on the answering machine. Please SPELL YOUR LAST NAME, and state whether the phone number you leave is for daytime or evening.

**OUTINGS**

(Continued from page 11)

**Sept 14 (Sat): Turtleback Rock, South Mountain Reservation (Essex Co). 10am.** We will start at Turtleback Rock trailhead. See the Essex County Parks Commission website (<http://www.essexcountyparks.org/parks/south-mountain-reservation>) for directions or Google <Walker Road, West Orange NJ>. Bring lots of water, and wear hiking boots. We will take the orange trail down to Hemlock Falls and also see the famous Turtleback Rock. Heavy/steady rain cancels. No pets please. Leader: Jeffrey SoveLove: Hiker\_Dood@Yahoo.com. Joint ADK/Sierra Club hike.

**Sept 14 (Sat): Skylands Manor Hike, Ringwood State Park (Passaic Co). 10am.** <https://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/ringwood.html>. The hike will cover 7 miles in 4 hours in hilly terrain, moderate to strenuous difficulty. Note: A second leader will lead a shorter version of the hike, 3-4 miles, moderate to easy Features: the NJ Botanical Gardens. Choice of a longer or shorter hike. Ilgenstein Rock Lookout for the longer hike. Facilities: there is a restroom building near the parking lot. Requirements: hiking boots and a day-pack with water and lunch. Registration required via web: start with the calendar at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey>, and click on the "Skylands Manor Hike", then click on RSVP. Directions for the meeting place will be sent via email to members who register. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak: The\_Hikist@Mac.com and Mary Walsh: blehlwalsh@hotmail.com.

**Sept 15 (Sun): Walk at Sandy Hook, near Highlands (Middletown/Monmouth Cos). 10am.** Late summer at the shore. This walk is mostly in a mixed dwarf forest (just behind the dunes) with lots of holly, juniper, and cedar, all within the National Recreation Area. Mostly flat, a portion (ocean views) is on the sandy ocean beach. Approx. 4 miles, easy pace, bring plenty of water, beginners welcome. Contact leader to register and learn meeting place: John.Luard@gmail.com. (JS)

**Sept 19 (Thurs): Canoe/Kayak Tuckerton Creek (Ocean Co). 10am.** We'll paddle Tuckerton Creek, weather conditions permitting. This is a tidal trip. Contact leaders for trip details and meeting information: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or Leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

**Sept 21 (Sat): Eagle Rock Reservation Hike (Essex Co). 10 am.** Meet at 9/11 Memorial parking area off Eagle Rock Ave. West Orange. 5 miles at an easy pace. Pretty view of NYC. Bring lunch; hiking boots a must. Rain cancels. Leader: Ron Pate: ronpate31@verizon.net.

**Sept 23 (Mon): Autumnal Equinox - Canoe/Kayak the Mullica River (Burlington Co). 8:30am.** This is a 12-mile trip for experienced Pines paddlers; expect downfalls and portages. Pinelands Preservation Alliance has launched Pinelands Adventures and we'll use Pinelands Adventures for our shuttle: <http://www.pinelandsadventures.org>. Contact leaders to confirm the trip, meeting location and your participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

**Sept 26 (Thurs): Canoe/Kayak the Delaware River (Mercer Co). 10am.** The trip is 10 miles from Kingwood to Bulls Island. Paddling helmets required for all participants; spray skirts recommended for kayakers. We'll stop at the Hot Dog Man's "River Restaurant". Rentals are not available. Current Sierra Club membership required. Contact leaders to confirm trip, meeting location and participation: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (W)

**Sept 29 (Sun): Canoe/Kayak the Delaware and Raritan Canal on World Rivers Day (Somerset Co). 10am.** World Rivers Day is a global celebration of the world's waterways, observed every last Sunday in September. The D&R Canal is a drinking water resource for almost 2 million residents of NJ. Our 7-mile round trip will be on the Griggstown - Blackwells Mills section of the canal. Rentals are available from Griggstown Canoe and Kayak Rental. Bring lunch and water. Please register with leaders for details and to confirm the trip. George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com (RV)

**Upcoming ExCom Meetings**

All members are welcome to attend these monthly statewide policy deliberations, held on SECOND SATURDAYS. Details, including agendas and travel instructions, are available from Rich Isaac, the Chapter Chair. (Best confirm!)

Conservation and/or Political Committee meetings usually start at 10am; Environmental Justice Committee at noon. Lunch is otherwise shared at noon. The main meeting starts at 1pm, and is usually followed by a meeting of the Transportation Committee.

**June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14:  
All at Reformed Church of Highland Park, 19-21 S. 2nd Ave.**



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*The Jersey Sierran* appears in January, April, July and October. The deadline for copy is on the 10th of the month, two months before appearance. Members are cordially invited to propose articles, essays, letters, poetry and artwork. (Group/Section News columns are prepared by Group/Section Chairs; Outings are vetted by the Chapter Outings Chair, Ellen Blumenkrantz.)

Opinions, unless otherwise attributed, are of the writer only. Advertised products and services carry no Club endorsement.

**Thank you to all who contributed to this issue!** This newsletter is produced mostly by volunteers.

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**Explore, enjoy and protect the planet**



## Reports from Trenton

## DEP Goes After Fluorochemicals, Holding Polluters Accountable

From a press release issued on March 25th

New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has identified five companies it says are responsible for extensive contamination, directing them to fund millions of dollars of assessment and cleanup. The directive requires the five companies – Solvay, DuPont, Dow DuPont, Chemours and 3M – to produce a detailed accounting of their use and discharge of polyfluoroalkyl and perfluoroalkyl substances, collectively known as PFAS chemicals, in the State. The directive uses the authorities granted by New Jersey's Spill Compensation and Control Act, Water Pollution Control Act and Air Pollution Control Act.

The Spill Act directive is one of the DEP's most powerful tools. Earlier in March, the DEP established interim specific groundwater quality standards for both PFAS's, at 10 parts per trillion, and will make 14ppt the actual standard. New Jersey is among the first states to regulate these compounds.

The health risks associated with these fluorochemicals include testicular and kidney cancer; liver tissue damage, weakened immune systems, increased cholesterol, and developmental problems including low birth weight, accelerated puberty and skeletal defects. Among other uses, these chemicals are primary ingredients of fire-fighting foam.

The companies are required to come up with a plan to clean up their toxic chemical spills. If they don't, DEP can assess damages. DEP can consider impacts both to wildlife and drinking water.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency detected levels of at least 20 parts per billion in 14 drinking water systems, including Ridgewood Water, Fair Lawn, Garfield, Wallington and Hawthorne. That's 2,000 times higher than the 10ppt standard. High levels were also found in Burlington County: in a stream that runs from a wastewater plant at the Maguire-Fort Dix-Lakehurst military base into Rancocas Creek.

In Salem and Gloucester Counties, the fluorochemicals found near the Solvay site were seven times over standard. They have been found in fish caught even in our most pristine streams.

New Jersey's standard for PFAS will be the strongest in the nation. More importantly it will protect this state's drinking water from the federal government's inaction: in its wisdom, the Trump Administration has declined to regulate PFAS's.

We thank Gov. Murphy and DEP Commissioner McCabe for adopting strict standards for PFAS's. (However, we could suggest more than a dozen other chemicals, found in our waterways, that deserve stricter standards.)

## DEP Should Move More Quickly on C1 Waterway Reclassification

From a press release issued on April 5th, edited by Tony Hagen

Very few of New Jersey's waterways meet swimmable, fishable, and drinkable criteria. Most of our streams, tributaries, and rivers are compromised by runoff pollution. So it was good news in March when the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) proposed a rule amendment that would designate 749 additional miles of our rivers and streams as Category One (C1). C1 means that water quality must be maintained – with development discouraged where that quality would be impaired. Additionally, under the Flood Hazard Control Act, these waterways would be afforded 300-foot development buffers, up from 150 feet currently.

The proposed changes were filed as potential amendments to the Surface Water Quality Standards Rule (SWQSR). A similar change was last enacted in 2008, when the state gave 686 miles of waterways the C1 designation.

The changes would affect 67 municipalities in the Upper and Lower Delaware, Northwest, Raritan and Atlantic Coastal regions. The reclassifications include portions of the Pequest River in Warren County, the Salem River in Salem County, the South Branch of the Raritan River in Somerset and Hunterdon counties, the Lamington River in Hunterdon and Somerset counties, and the Ramapo River in Bergen County.

Public comment on the proposal was taken on April 8. The deadline for written comments was extended to June 3. Unfortunately, this extension afforded opponents of the C1 reclassification more time to organize their resistance and possibly discourage the DEP from adopting the changes. The waterways intended for reclassification are currently Category Two, the bottom tier in the anti-degradation SWQSR system, which affords some protection but allows water quality to deteriorate based on overriding economic or social justifications. The highest classification is Outstanding National Resource Waters, which has been applied to waterbodies in the Pinelands and small parts of northern New Jersey.

Hunterdon County Freeholders are among those who have said they will fight the reclassification because of what they believe would be a negative impact on businesses and development. C1 won't stop development, but it would require that development doesn't pollute these rivers and streams, which are an essential natural resource to all residents of New Jersey as well as wildlife and plants. Not only should this proposed reclassification go through, but also higher protections should be afforded to more of New Jersey's much-abused waterways, especially all waterways in the Highlands, which are an important source of drinkable water.

Another reason to support these C1 reclassifications is the help they would provide in restricting the laying of new fossil fuel pipelines across much of New Jersey.

## Big Win for the Environment: B.L. England Has Closed

From a press release issued on Feb 28th, edited by Irene Gnarra

On February 27, RC Cape May Holdings, LLC, owner of the B.L. England Electric Generating Station at Beesleys Point, Cape May Co, informed the Appellate Court that, instead of repowering the plant with natural gas, it will be closed permanently, making the South Jersey Gas pipeline superfluous. [Indeed, the plant did close on May 1, and decommissioning is underway.] It is intended that contaminated soil at the 368-acre site will be removed by the end of 2019.

B.L. England was the last coal-fired plant in NJ, and the New Jersey Sierra Club has been urging its closure since 1998. With its outdated technology, the plant had been releasing thousands of tons of sulfur dioxide and other noxious emissions each year. It was the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in South Jersey, and was fined repeatedly for violating the Clean Air Act.

Now lets consider the South Jersey Gas Pipeline (SJG), which is tied to the PennEast pipeline: Without B.L. England, there should be no need for these pipelines, and plans for their construction should be stopped. The Pinelands Commission, DEP and BPU approved the SJG pipeline so that it could fuel B.L. England. The Pinelands Commission has already informed SJG that its approval is void, and DEP and the BPU should also invalidate their authorizations. We have asked the Murphy Administration to impose a moratorium all gas pipelines, a necessary first step if Murphy is to honor his goal of 100% renewable energy by 2050.

NJ must transition to renewable energy: wind and solar, and it must create green jobs and a green economy. The BPU is considering three applications for offshore wind production. Among them, the Danish company Ørsted already holds a lease to develop a wind farm off Atlantic City, and is interested in using B.L. England's electrical switchyard to feed its power to the PJM Regional Grid. Ørsted proposes to generate 1100 megawatts, twice B.L. England's production.

Meanwhile, the Club continues its lawsuit against SJG. We must be vigilant: RC Holdings could still sell B.L. England to another natural gas company, and SJG could submit another application for its pipeline.

## Expansion of Federal Coastal Resource Zone Would Curb Sand Mining

From a press release issued on March 29th, edited by Tony Hagen

A proposed expansion of the federal Coastal Barrier Resource System (CBRS) by hundreds of thousands of acres along the East Coast could curb sand mining for beach replenishment in New Jersey, but is encountering major pushback from Jersey Shore towns and state authorities. The CBRS protects environmentally sensitive, relatively undeveloped areas where the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that extensive development is undesirable. The program restricts federal funding for development and access to those areas.

In New Jersey, the CBRS would restrict access to sand for beach replenishment, sparing fish and other wildlife, and leave natural Shore boundaries to readjust themselves in response to storms, coastal flooding, and erosion. CBRS protection would extend to an additional 71,352 acres of land and wetlands and other aquatic territory.

The proposal has inflamed the Cape May County towns of Avalon and Stone Harbor, whose life-blood is tourism and who fear loss of access to a sandbar at nearby Hereford Inlet. Should this sand become unavailable, or should federal funds for its removal be cut off, these towns might have to obtain sand from more distant and costly locations. A combination of federal, state, and local funds are currently used in beach replenishment projects; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which takes charge of these efforts, would be hamstrung by CBRS restrictions. The N.J. Department of Environmental Protection and the Army Corps have opposed the CBRS expansion plan.

The Sierra Club applauds the proposed expansion of CBRS protection. It would give wildlife elbow room to thrive, avoid marine disruption, protect migratory bird routes — a huge block of land and aquatic area along the marshy Delaware Bayshore is included in the expansion plan — and restrict shoreline development: reducing the dangers of sea level rise and storms generated by climate warming.

The New Jersey portion of the CBRS proposal is accessible at this url: <https://www.fws.gov/cbra/maps/Hurricane-Sandy-Project-Batch-2.html>.

### Other sources:

[https://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=service-requests-public-input-on-proposed-changes-to-coastal-barrier-&\\_ID=36350](https://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=service-requests-public-input-on-proposed-changes-to-coastal-barrier-&_ID=36350)

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/coastal-conservation-plan-sparks-fight-over-sand/>

<https://www.coastalreview.org/2019/02/push-on-to-change-sand-rule-interpretation/>  
<https://www.rstreet.org/2018/03/20/fws-wants-to-expand-the-coastal-barrier-resources-system-by-136000-acres/>

<https://www.fws.gov/cbra/maps/Hurricane-Sandy-Project-Bat>



## Reports from Trenton

# Beach Access Bill Undercuts Public Access

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on March 25th

The public beach access bill, S1074 (Smith) / A4221 (Pinkin), has been passed by both houses of the State Legislature. [As of April 29th, the Governor hadn't signed it.] The bill protects the public's right to access "tidal waters and adjacent shorelines." Our objection is to last-minute amendments that substantially weaken the bill.

Here's the original wording: "The State of New Jersey has a duty to promote, protect, and safeguard the public's rights and to ensure reasonable and meaningful public access to tidal waters and adjacent shorelines."

The amended version reads as follows: "Pursuant to the public trust doctrine, the State of New Jersey shall promote, protect, and safeguard the public's rights and ensure reasonable and meaningful public access to tidal waters and adjacent shorelines."

The change of language opens the bill to interpretation. Who "shall" protect the public: Deal, Avalon, counties, the DEP, or the developers? Whether it's wealthy homeowners in Edgewater who we have been battling for years for public access to the Hudson River, or shore-front residents of Long Beach Township, if the law becomes a "may," they are not going to do it.

Additional amendments apply specifically to the DEP: instead of giving it "the authority and the duty" to protect the public's right of access, the obligation becomes a mere "shall," and instead of the "maximum extent possible," the criterion becomes the "maximum extent practicable."

Practicable implies current practices or reasonableness. This means "practically" that nothing will change.

Other amendments state that, in determining the extent of public access that is required at a property, the DEP shall consider the scale of the changes to the footprint or use, the demand for public access, and any DEP-approved municipal public access plan or public access element of a municipal master plan.

There are too many places in New Jersey where private beachfront homeowners want the protection afforded by public money, but they don't want the public to be there.

We have asked Governor Murphy to conditionally veto the bill.

# Wildfire Danger Growing in the Pinelands

From a press release issued by Chapter Director Jeff Tittel on April 1

A wildfire that engulfed nearly 12,000 acres of the New Jersey Pinelands has been contained. No injuries or property damage were reported. The blaze that consumed 18 square miles of Penn State Forest (Burlington Co) serves as a fresh reminder of the danger of wildfires and the role that the failings of state policies play in increasing that danger.

(Of course wildfires are essential to the ecology of the Pine Barrens. Their absence threatens many of the endangered plant and animal species that are unique to that region. The trick is to manage fire so as to protect our own species at the same time as we preserve the native species.)

In recent times, larger fires in the Pines are becoming worse and more frequent. This is partly because of climate change and over-pumping of aquifers leading to drier and more dangerous conditions. We also continue stupidly to build homes in the middle of the Pinelands. Siting natural gas pipelines, such as NJNG's Southern Reliability Link, through the Pinelands could turn future forest fires into disasters if fire meets a flow of natural gas.

A 2016 article in Rolling Stone warned that America's worst forest fire could happen in New Jersey: considering environmental conditions, ongoing development and pipelines. The proposed Heritage Minerals project would put 4,000 new homes into the region. South Jersey Gas's proposed pipeline linking Cumberland and Cape May Counties is dead for now, but pipelines have a way of coming back.

Controlled burns, carried out under NJ's Prescribed Burn Act, are a good way to reduce undergrowth and reduce the chances of wildfires, at the same time as promoting some of the species that are adapted to fire. We urge that strong environmental and safety standards be improved for such burns, including consideration of climate impacts, air pollution, and liability. The soil can dry out, making it harder for forests to recover from the burns. If we want to preserve the Pinelands as wilderness, we need to keep homes out. It would help to have better maps that identify high-risk areas where development should not take place.

## On the Trail

# On the Trail in Burlington County

A "missing link" has just been completed on the Yellow Trail in Wharton State Forest near Batsto, crossing the Mullica River so as to connect the "west side" and "east side" trails between Batsto and Atsion. Credit to activists in the Outdoor Club of South Jersey and the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, many of whose members are of course also Sierra Club members. (Photo: Diane Mason)



# Parks Cannot Fix the Pension System

From a press release issued on Feb 19th, edited by Irene Gnarra

Interest in the privatization of New Jersey's parks has increased as the Murphy administration evaluates how public assets could generate revenue for the state's pension system. The NJ Department of Treasury has made a formal request for qualifications (RFQ) of a financial advisor to review a list of assets that might be monetized through such transactions as sale, lease, or naming rights. Those assets include roads, bridges, buildings, parks, and open spaces. While the chronically underfunded pension system needs money, the privatization of parks might jeopardize public service and access.

We are concerned that the lease or sale of these lands would break the public trust, for the public owns them and have entrusted them with our government. Commercialization might jeopardize public access to parks and historic sites, which constitute our heritage and our legacy. We cannot sacrifice them because of financial problems. As Jeff Tittle has noted, privatization of these lands could open them up to any use, including the installation of pipelines and power lines.

Monetization schemes for state assets are nothing new in New Jersey, although public outrage has derailed several attempts. For years, lawmakers have promoted ideas for generating revenue. More than a decade ago, Gov. Corzine wanted to enable the privatization of state assets, such as the New Jersey Turnpike, to pay down debt. His plan to close nine parks brought protesters to the Statehouse steps. Gov. Christie proposed unsuccessfully the privatization of portions of public lands so that parks would become self-sufficient.

The NJ Government has considered many strange ideas to commercialize public lands. Proposals for the area of Liberty State Park have included a casino, a Formula One racetrack, a marina, and a millionaire's golf course. Revitalization efforts in Atlantic City have included the proposal of a NASCAR track on public land. DEP considered leasing part of Norvin Green State Forest for a pay-to-play mountain bike park. DEP's staffing cuts add to the current pressures to privatize state assets. Last month, DEP began seeking private vendors to manage concessions in some state parks because it can no longer hire adequate personnel to handle those jobs. There is nothing wrong with having private concessions in our parks, so long as they remain open to the public and are not overpriced. There are suitable ways to blend private ventures into our parks, and we must assure that respect for the parks' mission is upheld.

The current interest in privatization has intensified after a nonpartisan commission of fiscal-policy experts, assembled by Senate President Steve Sweeney, offered recommendations to make government more cost-effective, including the monetizing of state properties. The RFQ seeking a financial advisor signals support from Gov. Murphy to explore monetization.

The Sierra Club has safeguarded public lands for 125 years. Moreover, we have fought to protect them from commercialization. Taxpayers have invested heavily in our future since the beginning of Green Acres, which has been one of the state's most successful programs. Since Gov. Christie Whitman's term and for almost 20 years thereafter, the state devoted \$200 million annually to save open spaces and farmland.

New Jersey's pension crisis assures that demands for revenue will escalate. Gov. Murphy has mapped out ambitious budget goals that will surely add to those pressures. While Gov. Christie dedicated lottery revenue toward pension systems, that contribution will not be enough unless there are major reforms. In the current fiscal climate, the idea of monetizing public assets could gain much support. We are troubled by all attempted projects that might endanger our parks and open spaces. Thus, we must continue our battle for land preservation. Privatization of public lands by profiteers will not make Government more cost-effective.

# Good News - U.S. Court of Appeals Grants Motion for Stay on PennEast Pipeline

From a press release issued on March 19th, edited by Joe Testa

The United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit granted the State of New Jersey their motion for a stay on the PennEast Pipeline. This means PennEast cannot start construction until the court case is decided, which could take up to three years. PennEast will be allowed to continue their surveys and apply for DEP permits.

PennEast would bring natural gas 110 miles from the Marcellus Shale Region of Pennsylvania through Hunterdon and Mercer Counties in New Jersey. It would threaten the entire Delaware River valley, including 91 acres of wetlands, 44 miles of forest, 88 waterways, and occupy 1,600 acres. Waterway crossings would include the Delaware River and the Delaware & Raritan Canal. Besides lacking state and federal permits, PennEast lacks approval from the Delaware River Basin Commission.

When it comes to pipeline or other natural gas projects, the more we can delay, the better the chance it can be stopped. Solar and wind alternatives are becoming steadily less expensive, and electrical devices are becoming more efficient.

Other good news includes the closing of the B.L. England coal and oil power plant in Cape May Co, and the blocking of the South Jersey Gas pipeline that would have refueled it. This has a ripple effect on PennEast because it is a partner of SJG. So SJG now has nowhere to send its allotment for PennEast. This impacts the financial viability of PennEast.

While this is a victory for now, nothing is certain in court. That is why we need a moratorium on fossil fuel projects. The Murphy Administration can also stop the pipeline in its tracks by rejecting its 401 Water Quality Certificate.

(See related articles: Fossil-Fuel Projects - p1, and Trump Fast Tracking - p.20)



## Member's Essay

# Community Leadership For an Environmental Lifestyle – a Labor and Transportation Perspective

by Dan Aronson, Prof. of Economics, Raritan Valley Community College (Daniel.Aronson@RaritanVal.edu)

Promoting a more energy efficient lifestyle has the potential, over time, to improve quality of life while significantly reducing household costs. In turn, lower household costs reduce necessary work time. In this sense, environmentalism is not just consistent with labor, it is labor.

But it's not just labor that stands to benefit from a high-quality/low-cost lifestyle. Given lower household costs, negotiations with public employees will, at least in part, hinge upon the gains from cost savings.

Achieving this advantageous scenario requires leaders representing diverse interests to address various challenges. Our community leaders have demonstrated an impressive willingness to discuss those challenges in a collegial manner.

**I. New Jersey's High Cost of Living**  
New Jersey's high cost of living is often regarded as a fact of life over which we have little control. The problem is addressed at the margins – for example, courts have issued affordable housing requirements – but the overall high cost of living is normally accepted as a given.

The high household costs, however, did not materialize in a vacuum. They've been caused by the policy of subsidizing driving, which undercuts the market for transit alternatives. The resulting deficiency of convenient transit imposes the costly burden of total automobile dependence. Also, setting aside land for parking reduces the supply of housing, leading to high housing prices.

Finally, the sedentary lifestyle resulting from car-centric travel leads to an increase in the incidence of costly chronic disease. (High property taxes also pose a burden, solutions to which will be discussed at the end of section XII.)

Setting aside phenomenal amounts of land for free- or below-cost parking is one of the main reasons why drivers don't see the full cost of their activity. Economist Tyler Cowen estimates that, under free-market conditions, a parking space that is currently free would cost at least \$100/month in many American cities and suburbs (*Why Free Parking Comes at a Price*, NYT, 8/15/10). Also, drivers don't pay for the costs of congestion, accidents, and pollution as they drive (*The True Costs of Driving*, theatlantic.com, 10/25/15). Again, since drivers don't see these costs as they drive, the market for transit alternatives is undermined.

The upshot is that, because of subsidies for driving, we work without end to pay for:

- automobiles so as to sit in traffic;
- artificially high-priced housing;
- costly chronic disease stemming from a sedentary lifestyle.

Even hamsters on a treadmill get the benefit of exercise. Even Sisyphus got the benefit of exercise. Working without end to pay for a lifestyle inferior to that of hamsters on a treadmill is not a deserving fate for New Jerseyans.

Consider the opposite approach. Higher user fees for driving would create a market – and generate revenues – for low-cost transit alternatives. Builders could construct residential housing on superfluous parking lots, thereby reducing housing prices for future buyers (via the increase in supply). Portions of unneeded parking lots could also be used for food gardens.

Residents of neighborhoods served by effective transit tend to engage in more physical activity (walking to transit stops, biking, etc). Food gardening offers health benefits as well. The point is, healthy lifestyles can reduce the incidence of costly chronic disease.

Let's elaborate on these cost reducing measures.

Dr. Michael Roizen, Chief Wellness Officer of the Cleveland Clinic, sent me data (see attached) derived from nine years of experience with Cleveland Clinic's 101,000 employees and dependents. Extrapolating from the cost savings achieved by the Cleveland Clinic's employee wellness program, Dr. Roizen demonstrates that the promotion of healthy lifestyles could save the federal government \$500 billion-\$1 trillion in health care costs over ten years.

Healthy lifestyles have the potential to reduce the demand for health services in old age. Multiple studies have found that the average person who engages in a healthy lifestyle suffers disease for a shorter period of time at life's end (*Compression of Morbidity 1980 – 2011: A Focused Review of Paradigms and Progress J of Aging Res.* 2011). Healthy lifestyles, therefore, can lead to a net reduction in costs rather than merely delay the onset of costly chronic disease.

With regard to housing, Jason Furman, chair of Pres. Obama's Council of Economic Advisers, observed that the cost of housing in regions with restrictions on housing supply ran about 50% higher than in regions without such restrictions (*Barriers to Shared Growth: The Case of Land Use Regulation and Economic Rents*, 11/20/15). Accordingly, the construction of housing on unneeded parking lots, and the gradual lifting of restrictions on building heights would reduce future housing costs.

Furman's observation is consistent with conclusions reached in a 2002 Brookings Institution paper, *The Link between Growth Management and Housing Affordability*. Also, increased housing supply in the 1950s significantly lowered housing prices. Supply matters.

Clearly, it is possible to lower the cost of living over time. In turn, lower household costs reduce necessary work time. In this sense, the promotion of an efficient, low-cost lifestyle is not just consistent with labor, it is labor.

**II. The Unique Willingness of Leaders in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties – Representing Business and Labor – To Address Challenging Issues**

Given the connection between an efficient lifestyle and labor, I submitted to my faculty union a resolution supporting financial incentives to promote transit alternatives. The resolution could have provoked a dismissive response: on union issues, even the most brilliant educators normally focus on the dollar: acquiring higher compensation to pay for a lifestyle inferior to that of hamsters on a treadmill. But my colleagues had the capacity to listen and demonstrate leadership, for they passed the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION ADOPTED February 2018 BY THE RVCC FACULTY FEDERATION:**

WHEREAS one of the constitutional purposes of the RVCC Faculty Federation is to advocate for better quality of life on campus for its members and non-members, including especially RVCC students; and

WHEREAS subsidies for driving, by undercutting the market for low-cost transit alternatives, impose the costly burden of increased automobile dependence; and

WHEREAS the setting aside of land for automobile parking increases the cost of housing; and

WHEREAS overuse of automobiles enhances a sedentary lifestyle and increases the incidence of costly chronic disease, and

WHEREAS all these factors contribute negatively to quality of life, both on and off campus, for Federation members and non-members alike, including especially RVCC students; and

WHEREAS public and private unions, many local, state and national organizations, as well as private businesses and corporations have taken up the mantle of solving quality of life issues and social responsibility issues through sustainability actions and proposals; and

WHEREAS the RVCC Faculty Federation actively supports social responsibility through sustainability; NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the RVCC Faculty Federation will undertake, and urges the RVCC administration to undertake with us, the following measures to decrease total automobile dependence:

1 Work with local officials to promote the use of traffic signal priority devices in public transit vehicles; and  
2 Promote public education on usage-based automobile insurance; and  
3 Join with advocates across the nation who support increasing user fees for driving while earmarking same for public transit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Federation continues to believe in, and will continue to endorse, those measures that will provide a better quality of life for its members and non-members alike, including especially RVCC students.

The resolution demonstrates how to start the process of creating a high-quality, low-cost lifestyle, which reduces necessary work time.

**Work Time Reduction:** Far from being an idealistic dream, work time reduction is a historic reality. According to a 1962 US Chamber of Commerce publication, between 1850 and 1950 the average workweek fell by 43% even as total pay increased. This outcome was made possible by technological progress. Since the middle of the last century, however, Americans forgot that technological progress could be used to cut the workweek. Meanwhile, other advanced economies continued using technology to shorten hours, thereby leaving Americans behind; as of 1997, *American employees became the most overworked among the advanced economies* (Press release, International Labor Organization, 9/6/99).

The reduction in American work hours between 1850 and 1950 didn't occur spontaneously. The idea of shorter hours was actively discussed among members of the general public and experts alike. These days, however, there's an odd unwillingness among the overwhelming majority of American labor leaders and progressives to discuss shorter hours, which explains why the issue is hardly on our radar.

Given this situation, when Gov. Chris Christie prevailed over the teachers unions, I urged New Jersey educators to turn our problems into an opportunity: if an increase in total pay was unattainable, we could press for an incremental reduction in workload. And by setting an example, we'd be doing this not just for ourselves, but for all employees – and for our students' future. [This policy would give educators more one-on-one time for students and for professional development. It is not about shirking.]

A few union activists, including four former union presidents, were receptive to my proposal. Ultimately, a total of 18 educators from three colleges publicly expressed a willingness to offer concessions in return for progress on workload. But 18 educators constituted too small a number to make a difference.

Then, during Earthweek 2017, I hosted a conference on work time reduction and

the environment, cosponsored by my faculty union and Sierra Club-NJ. Since certain businesses had recently reduced work time, I invited the Somerset County Business Partnership to cosponsor the conference as well. It was a long shot; I thought that it was naïve to even make the request. But, contrary to all expectations, the Business Partnership, along with the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, agreed to cosponsor.

At the conference, Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce representative Laura Cummins spoke about a former employer who gave his employees time off between Christmas and New Year's. The employees returned from vacation refreshed and ready to work, and were willing to go the extra mile when their boss was in a crunch. Mike Kerwin, President of the Somerset County Business Partnership, mentioned the plans of a major Somerset County employer to expand vacation time, while expecting peak performance when employees were at work.

American labor leaders, with rare exceptions, don't even discuss work time reduction, but the business leaders of Somerset and Hunterdon counties did just that – thereby creating an opportunity for labor. These business leaders also created an opportunity for themselves, because they unwittingly posed a challenge to labor: in order for the dialogue to continue, labor activists must suggest ways to reciprocate.

**III. Reciprocal Measures That Labor Can Discuss**

There are three measures and/or concessions that teachers unions, in return for gains, could offer management: (1) paying for parking, (2) committing to an organized regimen of healthy lifestyles, and (3) providing incentives for residential energy upgrades.

**Paying (or paying more) for parking.** This proposal is separate and distinct from the recommendation to increase user fees for driving mentioned in my union's resolution. The latter discusses user fees for driving for the general public, not for any particular organization. So, speaking strictly for myself, note that parking fees can offer long-term gains to union members. Paying for parking on a daily basis, by creating an incentive for carpooling and other low-cost alternatives, is a concession that is also an investment.

There is potential for this policy to make a community-wide impact, because teachers unions would not be acting alone. The NJ Chamber of Commerce, several labor unions, and environmental organizations supported the recent gas tax increase for the purpose of replenishing the Transportation Trust Fund. (Gas taxes and parking charges are both user fees for driving.) If educators were to not only add their voices to these diverse organizations, but also explain that higher user fees for driving would create a market, and generate funding for cost-saving transit alternatives, a critical mass in support of user fees for driving could be created.

**Committing to an organized regimen of healthy lifestyles.** This initiative stands to lower employee health insurance costs. While the extent of cost savings has been disputed, it's widely accepted that healthy lifestyles can yield significant long-term savings, as it takes time for chronic disease to develop.

Reducing the future risk of chronic disease is the opposite of sacrifice for employees. But in addition to reducing future risks, healthy lifestyles offer the immediate advantage of enhancing feelings of well-being. Exercise has been

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shown to be comparable to pharmaceuticals in enhancing mood (see *The exercise effect*, American Psychological Association, 2011).

Mood enhancement can also be achieved through healthier diets. In a study that followed 12,000 randomly selected individuals over six years, individuals that went from eating almost no fresh produce to having eight portions of fresh produce daily experienced a strong increase in life satisfaction. The gain in life satisfaction was so significant that it was equivalent to moving from unemployment to employment (Muicic R, Oswald AJ. *Evolution of Well-Being and Happiness After Increases in Consumption of Fruit and Vegetables*, AJPH, 2016).

Marxists used to declare: Workers of the world unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains! These days, the “correct slogan” should be: Workers of the world, embrace healthy lifestyles. You have nothing to lose...but the blues!

This last point is important because the recent West Virginia teachers revolt was provoked in part by a punitive health promotion plan. It must be emphasized that health promotion initiatives can involve a supportive rather than punitive approach.

**Providing incentives for residential energy upgrades.** Most households and businesses require a payback of three to five years when investing in energy efficiency or solar. That is, they insist on an IRR of over 15%, far exceeding the long run yield on stocks. To overcome this hurdle, a union could pool a portion of its member’s raises, using the funds to provide a small subsidy for residential energy upgrades. By steering employees toward safe, high-yield investments, the union would in effect be amplifying the value of its members’ raises. The union would also be steering employees to state and federal incentives for energy upgrades. Cisco Systems, 3M, and CUNY already offer incentives for residential solar upgrades for their employees.

Unlike the previous two reciprocal measures, incentives for energy upgrades do not offer tangible benefits to management. It’s a goodwill gesture on labor’s part that says: Given your willingness to breach barriers on workload, we are going to create benefits for ourselves that require nothing more of you.

The next section will discuss a more long-term, mutually beneficial proposal.

### IV. Pointing the Way to a High-Quality/Low-Cost Lifestyle

The resolution adopted by the RVCC faculty union explained how to start the process of creating a high-quality/low-cost lifestyle. Educational institutions could offer leadership on these ideas while reducing their own costs. In 2016, I visited San Mateo Community College, located in the heart of Silicon Valley. Being unable to pay salaries that would allow employees to afford sky high real estate prices, the college built employee housing on a former parking lot. Since the residents are spared the cost of land and property taxes, they enjoy upscale housing at below market rent. They enjoy a convenient walk to work while being spared automobile costs. And since the construction is energy-efficient, the residents enjoy complete comfort at negligible cost.

Affordable housing for educators has also been constructed in Milwaukee, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Newark, NJ. Miami has plans to build apartments for teachers next to (possibly in) a public school, but the idea of living in such close proximity to their school irritated some teachers. One way to overcome this problem is to construct employee housing on municipal parking lots near public transit. Freeing up municipal parking lots would be made possible by the expansion of transit – a long-term goal, but not unrealistic, given the growing market for this lifestyle (*Public Transportation Boosts Property Values*, National Association of Realtors, 6/16/14).

The potential savings for new employees are substantial. An upscale, energy-

efficient/solar apartment building can be constructed for \$150/ft<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, an 800 ft<sup>2</sup> one-bedroom apartment would require a monthly rent of just over \$900 to cover the cost of construction, insurance, and maintenance.\* For a 1200 ft<sup>2</sup> two-bedroom apartment, the rent would be about \$1250/mo. According to HUD, the 2018 fair market rents for one and two-bedroom apartments in our region (Middlesex, Somerset, and Hunterdon Counties) are \$1270 and \$1625, respectively. In other words, employees stand to save nearly \$400/mo, a major out-of-pocket benefit. What’s more, financial benefits in the form of cost savings fully accrue to employees; they can’t be taxed.

This is not only about construction of public employee housing. Our scenario illustrates the advantage to the entire community of housing people instead of housing cars, i.e. using unneeded lots to expand housing supply.

New Jersey Future (a think tank) conducted an inventory of parking lots by NJ Transit stations, investigating the potential for building on those sites. And local educators have taken a stand to start creating a market for the transit alternatives that would free up parking lots. Specifically, 18 Central Jersey educators, including four former union presidents, have gone on record supporting the idea of paying, or paying more for parking in return for gains from management.

Over time, implementing a high-quality/low-cost lifestyle would spare taxpayers the need to pay public employees a premium to afford the high cost of living. Being a proud union member, I want public employees to be well-paid. I just don’t want them to be paid for waste. In any case, employees will also experience gains under this scenario.

\*A 30-year mortgage for \$120,000 (800 ft.2 × \$150) @ 4.5% involves a monthly payment of \$608/mo. Adding \$300/mo for insurance and maintenance yields a total monthly payment of slightly over \$900.

### V. Ensuring That User Fees for Driving Don’t Pose a Burden

Higher user fees for driving don’t have to pose a burden if new transit services are implemented first. New transit options make it possible to avoid the higher user fees. But there must be a market for expanded transit options in order for those options to thrive, which is why the higher user fees for driving are crucial.

Having said that, let’s discuss methods for creating a market for transit other than increased user fees for driving. One method is to have public transit vehicles utilize traffic signal priority and preemption devices. New Jersey transit vehicles are already authorized to utilize signal priority devices, which extend green lights.

Public transit vehicles would be even more appealing if drivers could utilize signal preemption, which turns red lights to green, but that’s prohibited under state law. The intent of the law, as explained to me by the legislative aide who drafted it, is to avoid disruption of traffic signal synchronization. Such disruption aggravates congestion in high density areas. I pointed out that, in most parts of Somerset and Hunterdon Counties, traffic signal synchronization is not an issue. Municipal officials in low density areas willing to authorize transit vehicles to utilize signal preemption should not be constrained by one-size-fits-all legislation.

The legislative aide, whose Democratic boss touted her environmental credentials, was not receptive. But many transportation professionals agreed with my argument that preemption for transit vehicles should not be barred in suburbs and exurbs. And if the law were changed to permit preemption, it would place our low-density communities in a position to boost the market for transit alternatives. Improved transit would start reducing

congestion, gradually making it possible to utilize signal preemption in more high density neighborhoods. In that sense, leadership on transit can be initiated in our low-density area.

Another method for enhancing the market for transit alternatives is the promotion of pay-as-you-drive (PAYD) automobile insurance. Consumers who choose this policy can lower their premiums by driving fewer miles, creating an incentive to utilize transit or to carpool. Given new technology that indicates miles driven in real time, insurance companies have started to offer versions of this policy. A public education campaign on PAYD would explain the advantage of this policy option. High school seniors and most college students would particularly benefit from PAYD insurance – not only by alleviating exceptionally high premiums, but also by mitigating burdensome automobile costs. (PAYD insurance is expected to be the wave of the future. Nielsen’s 2015 Insurance Track survey found that Millennials are 44% more likely than the average consumer to accept a device that tracks driving behavior in exchange for discounts.)

Let’s turn to transit quality. Technological advances in transit will soon render obsolete the low-quality public transit that’s currently offered in the US. Most trips are random and local, not well served by fixed route train or bus lines. But it’s possible to implement a flexible van service with no fixed route by using GPS and software that instantaneously calculates optimal routes. The service is a cross between a bus and a taxi. Like a taxi, there’s no fixed route; but like a bus, it can handle multiple passengers, making the service affordable. Using vans that could handle up to 15 passengers, it would be far cheaper than a taxi. To make the service even more affordable, passengers would walk up to five minutes to strategically located stops.

Uber Pool uses this technology (minus the strategically located stops), but Uber drivers own their vehicles. Most people don’t own vans that can handle more than six passengers, much less 15. Also, Uber drivers will never be authorized to use traffic signal priority or preemption. It’s necessary, therefore, for a *bona fide* transit company or agency to provide an effective public transit service.

Implementing all of the above – signal priority/preemption, usage-based insurance, and improved quality – would help boost the market for transit alternatives. In turn, increased ridership would reduce subsidies per passenger, which on some routes can be 80% of operating expenses. But there will never be sufficient ridership as long as we subsidize, rather than charge user fees, for driving.

Some left-of-center New Jersey educators strongly object to higher user fees for driving – on the grounds that such fees are regressive, i.e. poor households will pay a higher percent of their income toward these fees than upper-income households. But subsidies for driving, by undermining the market for alternatives, impose the far more regressive burden of (1) total automobile dependence, and (2) high housing costs resulting from the practice of housing cars instead of housing people. Rent consumes over 50% of household income for over 30% of the 1.1 million New Jersey renter households (*Rent eats up at least half the paycheck of 343,000 N.J. residents*, NJ.com, 6/2/15). In any case, if expanded transit options are made available as the user fees are imposed, the poor will see lower, not higher costs.

All left-wing activists advocate better public transit, but when some (and fortunately it’s only some) of those activists argue that this goal could be met solely through more government spending on transit – without higher user fees for driving – they are mistaken. A 2017 article in the Journal of the American Planning Association, *The Driving Downturn: a Preliminary Assessment*, indicates that recent investments in public transit were not fol-

lowed by an increase in the number of passengers. The authors conclude that the price of driving needs to be increased. A 2012 article in the journal *Transport Reviews*, *Demand for Public Transport in Germany and the USA: An Analysis of Rider Characteristics*, concludes: “Without the necessary policies to make [car use] more expensive, American public transport is doomed to remain a marginal means of transport, used mainly by those who have no other choice.”

Many transportation professionals told me that they are aware of no studies indicating that public transit can thrive if the price of driving is kept artificially low. Attempting to promote transit without addressing the price of driving will just perpetuate low transit ridership and high operating subsidies, which discourage an expansion of transit.

A former RVCC student, Grant Barr, pointed out that maintaining subsidies for driving while paying outsized subsidies for transit is analogous to the government subsidizing tobacco while funding smoking cessation programs.

To summarize this section: Using multiple methods for promoting public transit other than higher user fees for driving will expand transit options, making it possible to implement the higher user fees that are needed to still further expand transit options. Finally, improved transit not only helps to circumvent burdens, it reduces household costs.

### VI. An Impressive List of Benefits for the Business Community and Labor Alike

Let’s return to the contractual arrangement that’s been advocated here, i.e. paying for parking in return for some incremental reduction in workload. The arrangement is educational in nature; it highlights (a) the benefits of parking fees, and (b) the potential for unions to decrease work time for employees generally. That being said, the arrangement offers four benefits to labor:

(1) Immediate and future gains. In order for the majority of members of a bargaining unit to accept parking charges, management would have to offer something in return. This stands in contrast to what we got in return for the state-mandated concessions over the past eight years, a big fat zero.

The primary future gain comes in the form of greater support for unions. Given American employees’ dubious distinction of being the most overworked among the advanced economies, it’s unsurprising that 85% of them would choose to work a day less if they could receive the same pay, according to a 2014 Huffington Post poll. Therefore, progress on work hours achieved by individual bargaining units, which creates community-wide standards, would make unions relevant to all employees – salaried as well as hourly.

In that sense, if unions were to resume the quest for shorter hours, they would garner crucial public support. The latter is the main criterion for union success, which portends well for future compensation.

Another future gain for teachers is having more time to take the graduate courses that lead to promotions.

(2) Cost savings. The profusion of transit alternatives and the construction of housing on former parking lots can, over time, offer substantial reductions in household costs. Financial gains can accrue from cost reductions as well as from increases in compensation.

(3) A higher quality of life. Upscale housing near transit is an amenity for which people are willing to pay a premium. Therefore, the residents of that housing are not just saving on costs; they are enjoying special amenities that possess a distinct financial value.

(4) The opportunity to gain allies. Labor unions that advocate for improved transit and abundant housing can join forces with organizations advocating for the environment and minorities. For example, the NAACP adopted a resolu-

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tion titled: Public Transit Is a Civil Right. The opportunity to gain allies should not be squandered given the setbacks labor has endured over the past generation.

This impressive list of benefits justifies the concessions discussed in Section III. The fact that all those concessions in and of themselves offer immediate and long-term benefits to labor makes our arrangement that much more compelling.

Employers also stand to enjoy multiple benefits from this arrangement:

(1) Productivity gains. There is overwhelming evidence that reductions in hours increase productivity. A comprehensive University of Iceland study, which observed data across countries and over time, found a strong correlation between shorter hours and higher hourly productivity (Challenge: The Magazine of Economic Affairs, Jan. 2007). Individual case studies reinforce this conclusion. After one of Toyota's worksites went to a 30-hour week, mechanics got more work done in the shorter workweek than mechanics at worksites with the conventional 40 hours (CEO Martin Banck of Toyota Center Gothenburg, YouTube speech). In 2015, San Diego-based Tower Paddle Boards' went to a 25-hour week. The results proved so successful that the San Diego Business Journal named Tower Paddle Boards the fastest-growing private company in the city (*How to Make a 5-Hour Workday Work for You*, entrepreneur.com, 7/27/16).

(2) Lower employee costs. It was stated above that, under our arrangement, labor should experience a resurgence. This implies higher pay, which appears to contradict "lower employee costs." But both objectives could be achieved by eliminating the costly waste that pervades current lifestyles.

To clarify, let's use an extreme example. Fifty years ago, prices were on average 1/7 of what they are today. So even the most militant union leaders would not have demanded average salaries of \$70,000 (a typical teacher's salary today). Union demands naturally have some relation to the cost of living. Keeping that in mind, we learned that it was possible to provide public employees with a higher quality of life while reducing housing costs by about \$400/month. Since these employees would be served by effective transit, they would also be spared the expense of additional cars, thereby enjoying still greater savings. Union members could find themselves in a very advantageous financial position with slightly more modest raises. This is not a zero-sum game. To take another example, a comprehensive employee health program could enable employees to enjoy improved health outcomes even as employers achieve cost savings on health insurance. In turn, decreasing the fixed costs of employee health insurance makes shorter hours more feasible. To repeat, it's not a zero-sum game.

(3) Avoidance of one-size-fits-all legislation. Although some businesspeople may be receptive to shorter hours, those same businesspeople tend to be adamantly opposed to shorter hours legislation. Since the arrangement being advocated here relies on negotiations between individual employers and bargaining units, legislation is avoided.

The unintended consequences of legislation can be of concern to labor as well. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938 was supposed to reduce unemployment by spreading out work hours. The means to achieve that goal was overtime. But when workers saw the potential for additional income, they started requesting overtime. Passage of the FLSA may have been instrumental in causing unions to abandon shorter hours – a point made by Ben Hunicutt in his 1988 book, *Work Without End*.

(4) Making technology work for the market economy. As mentioned earlier, between 1850 and 1950, the US used labor saving devices to reduce the average workweek by 43% as total wages

increased. During that time, the general public tended to benefit from the market economy. Over the past generation, however, instead of being used to shorten hours, labor saving devices have been used to lay off employees, the remaining employees working without end for fear of layoffs. The economy produced misery when it could have produced happiness, which has turned Millennials against private enterprise.

In contrast, our community's business leaders, by actively participating in the conference on work time reduction, addressed the challenges posed by accelerating technological progress. They helped to ensure that the market economy fulfills its potential for producing happiness instead of misery, and showed how to turn the "threat" of automation into an opportunity for business and labor alike. These leaders, therefore, were acting in the interests of the business community.

Our community's business leaders were also continuing a long-standing business tradition of addressing work hours:

After Henry Ford initiated the eight-hour day in 1926, he declared: "The five day week is not the ultimate, and neither is the eight-hour day....probably the next move will be in the direction of shortening the day rather than the week." (<https://www.thehenryford.org/collections-and-research/digital.../henry-ford-quotes>)

In 1928, Walter S Gifford, president of AT&T (then the world's largest corporation), stated:

"I believe the world's work can and will be done with less labor...than it is being done today. The future, if I'm correct, is going to add appreciably to our hours of freedom and industrial leisure... Every one of us will have more chance to do what he wills, which means more opportunity, both materially and spiritually." (American Magazine, Nov. 1928)

Two years later, Kellogg's initiated a 30-hour workweek. Productivity increased so rapidly that, five years into the experiment, Kellogg's was able to provide 40 hours' pay for 30 hours' work.

Two years after that, during the Great Depression, the president of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey chaired a national commission on work-sharing.

In 2014, Google cofounder Larry Page declared that technology should be used to reduce the workweek. And in 2016, Amazon assigned a 30-hour workweek to some of its teams.

The employees who stand to gain the most from work time reduction are overworked high earners. If unions, over time, were to obtain significant reductions in hours, salaried employees – seeing their subordinates enjoy a strikingly high quality of life – would seek to emulate that lifestyle.

The willingness of our community leaders to engage in constructive dialogue has highlighted the potential to achieve common ground. The next five sections will demonstrate that, to a surprising extent, Republican and/or conservative principles are entirely consistent with progressive goals, which increases the potential for common ground.

Notice in the following sections that authentic conservative principles will be invoked; this is not about Republicans moderating their principles.

### VII. Implementing Republican Principles Can Improve Public Health

During the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald Trump promised better health care for all, at lower cost. But the various bills since proposed by the Republican Congress, and endorsed by Pres. Trump, would have reduced the number of Americans with health insurance. After years of demonizing Obamacare, Republicans had nothing better to offer.

Yet the implementation of certain Republican principles, namely, eliminat-

ing harmful government subsidies and regulations, can improve public health – which in turn can reduce costs. Instead of just reacting against Obamacare, Republicans should apply their own principles.

A recent study found that obesity-causing foods receive a disproportionate amount of agricultural subsidies (*Association of Higher Consumption of Foods Derived from Subsidized Commodities with Adverse Cardiometabolic Risk among US Adults*, JAMA, 2016). Removing those subsidies, by making obesity-causing foods more expensive, would help contribute to a reduction in obesity.

It's difficult to get politicians from any party to reduce harmful subsidies. For example, if politicians attempt to eliminate unwarranted agricultural subsidies, the farmers who are directly affected will vehemently lobby to protect the subsidies, while the public at large may not be as motivated to remove them. Still, the Republican principle of opposing wasteful government subsidies – such as subsidies for obesity-causing foods – can be part of an effective healthcare policy.

In light of the difficulty in finding politicians who will staunchly oppose harmful subsidies, it's noteworthy that there is a rich history of Republican and/or conservative support for user fees, rather than subsidies, for driving. Let me next explain the connection between removing subsidies for driving and improved health outcomes, after which the Republican history in support of user fees for driving will be presented.

User fees for driving create a market and generate funds for transit alternatives. Multiple studies have found that residents of neighborhoods served by transit engage in more physical activity. One problem with these studies is that people who already prefer to walk or bike may have chosen to live in these neighborhoods, i.e. the availability of transit may not have generated the activity. But when Charlotte NC announced plans to build a light rail system, researchers had the opportunity to do a before-and-after study. The data indicated significantly higher physical activity after the transit system was implemented, confirming the health benefits of transit (*The effect of light rail transit on body mass index and physical activity*. MacDonald, JM, *Am J of Prev Med*, 2010). The results of the study with regard to obesity are worth quoting: "The use of light rail transit to commute to work was associated with an average -1.18 reduction in BMI ( $p < 0.05$ ) and an 81% reduced odds (95% CI=0.04, 0.92) of becoming obese over time." The importance of this finding is that obesity is responsible for a disproportionate amount of healthcare costs.

The health benefits of price signals that favor transit alternatives having been shown, consider the following list:

- Pres. Hoover imposed the first federal gas tax. Pres. Eisenhower increased it. Minutes of a White House meeting indicated that Eisenhower, concerned that interstates would bring more cars into cities, and that providing parking for all those automobiles would be a waste of space, broached the idea of congestion pricing (Eisenhower Papers as President, DDE Diary Series, July, '59).

- When prominent conservative William F Buckley ran for mayor of New York City in 1965, he proposed a form of congestion pricing. (He also proposed bike lanes – an unusual idea in '65 – partly to promote public health.) Pres. Reagan termed his gas tax hike a "user charge."

- NYC Mayor Bloomberg was a Republican when he proposed congestion pricing in 2007. Among the few politicians who supported Bloomberg's proposal was Pres. George W. Bush, whose administration offered NY State \$354 million in mass transit seed money contingent upon implementation of the policy. The Bush administration also supported Gov. Corzine's proposal to increase toll charges in New Jersey.

- Gov. Christie raised the gas tax. Prior to Christie, the last governor who increased the state gas tax was Tom Kean. In 2017, Trump advisor Steve Forbes recommended that road projects be funded via "user pays" financing, such as tolls; subsequently, Pres. Trump recommended that infrastructure projects be funded by placing more tolls on interstates.

This Republican history of support for user fees for driving is consistent with conservative principles. User fees for driving do not redistribute income from rich to poor, nor do they try to change values. They simply require drivers to pay their way.

Let's turn to Republican opposition to excessive regulation. Some regulations restricting agriculture on urban and suburban properties are arbitrary, a point made by law professor Sarah Schindler, in her 2012 article, *Of Backyard Chickens and Front Yard Gardens: The Conflict between Local Governments and Locavores*. Prof. Schindler noted that conservatives share common ground with progressives in advocating removal of arbitrary barriers so that agriculture can flourish.

Local policies matter, as there is a growing interest in local agriculture and gardening. Between 2008 and 2013, the number of households engaged in food gardening increased from 36 million to 42 million, according to a 2016 Harris Interactive survey. Among the health benefits of food gardening are: vegetables that ripen in the garden have more nutrients than store-bought veggies that are picked early; children who engage in gardening are five times more likely to eat vegetables, according to a 2015 study conducted by Cornell and Ohio State Universities; gardening entails moderate physical activity, and reduces stress.

Parking lots that are rendered superfluous (by Republican opposition to government subsidies) can be converted to sites for local agriculture. This has business implications. Local food sales in the U.S. grew from \$5 billion to \$12 billion between 2008 and 2014, according to food industry research firm Packaged Facts. Republican free-market policies would enable entrepreneurs to meet this demand for fresh, local produce, i.e. would allow entrepreneurs to use former parking lots to satisfy growing markets rather than being impeded by municipal regulations that reserve land for parking. Letting the free market work would enable New Jersey to become the authentic "Garden State."

Controversy surrounds the question of whether healthy lifestyles actually reduce costs, but such controversy need not dampen enthusiasm for promoting public health. The latter is valuable in and of itself; it does not have to be a means to an end. Subsidies and regulations that lead to poor health outcomes should be eliminated in any case. That's why Americans across the ideological spectrum should demand that Republican politicians drop the vitriolic language and embrace their own principles opposing (1) subsidies for driving and obesity-causing foods, and (2) arbitrary rules impeding local agriculture. Implementing those health promoting Republican principles will reveal the actual potential for healthy lifestyles to reduce costs. If substantial cost savings are achieved, the President's promise to cost-effectively provide comprehensive healthcare could be fulfilled.

### VIII. The Ultimate Irony Regarding Steve Forbes and Labor

Steve Forbes is one of the nation's strongest opponents of labor unions. That being noted, recall Mr. Forbes' advocacy of "user pays" financing on transportation – an approach that stands to substantially reduce household costs while increasing material well-being. Since lower household costs reduce necessary work time, the high-quality/low-cost lifestyle made possible by Mr. Forbes' principles would place jobseekers in an envi-

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able position. They could “comparison shop”, i.e. tell employers that they will only accept jobs that provide sufficient time off. This type of comparison-shopping is already happening. Fortune Magazine’s Geoff Colvin discussed a service that connects hospitals that can’t find physicians with physicians who are willing to work shorter hours. In pro-business Switzerland, notices for job openings highlight paid time off benefits in order to attract applicants.

Such comparison-shopping could become the wave of the future. Millennials place a high priority on work/life balance, according to multiple surveys, including a 2016 Millennial Survey by Deloitte, and a 2017 Workplace Benefits Report by Bank of America Merrill Lynch. We’ve arrived at an extremely important point. Implementing Steve Forbes’ user pays principles can significantly reduce necessary work time, giving jobseekers the leverage to demand shorter hours. In turn, work time reduction effectively reduces unemployment, as Germany demonstrated when it shortened hours during the 2008/09 recession. Low unemployment gives workers still greater bargaining power.

This bears repeating: The elimination of perverse subsidies can create a high-quality/low-cost lifestyle. Low household costs reduce necessary work time. The latter effectively reduces unemployment, giving more leverage to workers.

In contrast, the left-of-center educators who object to my advocacy of higher user fees for driving are ensuring that transportation and housing costs will remain high. They claim that they support transit alternatives, but in fact convenient transit options will never become a reality as long as driving continues to be subsidized. And by perpetuating a high cost lifestyle, these left-of-center educators are contributing to higher unemployment, because high costs force workers to seek more work hours. My critics, therefore, are more detrimental to labor than Steve Forbes is. That’s a truly remarkable feat.

A couple of clarifications are in order: First, many activists on the left do understand that user fees for driving are necessary to expand transit options, and their support is greatly appreciated. Second, both opponents and supporters of the free market can agree on the need to stop harmful subsidies.

### IX. On Race, Republicans Should Return to Their Roots

[A personal note: It’s been suggested that the following discussion of GOP suppression of the black vote could be offensive to Somerset and Hunterdon County leaders. Let’s clarify, therefore, that no one has accused New Jersey’s GOP of suppressing anyone’s vote. This is an out-of-state matter. Also, the following section explains how the GOP can resume its unqualified success in earning black votes; with critics like me, the GOP does not need friends.]

Republicans have not only written off the black vote, they have actively sought to suppress it with restrictive voter ID laws. Some Republicans claim that these laws are needed to prevent widespread voter fraud, but this claim is itself fraudulent, as revealed by comments made by Republicans themselves. A 9/16/16 NYTimes article (*Some Republicans Acknowledge Leveraging Voter ID Laws for Political Gain*) found quotes from no less than nine Republican officials across the country who acknowledged that the purpose of the voter ID laws was to impede Democratic votes. When a federal appeals court struck down a voter ID law passed by the North Carolina Republican state legislature, the court concluded that the state’s voting strictures, “...target African-Americans with almost surgical precision.”

While condemnation of this Republican strategy is thoroughly justified, a separate point bears mentioning. Since implementation of certain Republican principles would be beneficial to the

black community, Republicans – instead of trying to suppress black votes – should earn those votes by applying their own principles. To explain, let’s start by discussing unemployment.

The current black unemployment rate is at a record low, but at 5.9% (May ’18), it’s still problematic. John Maynard Keynes – whose ideas were applied in Obama’s stimulus package – once wrote, “Less work represents the ultimate solution to unemployment.” That statement was recently validated by Germany’s *kurzarbeit*, or short hours, which successfully reduced unemployment in the ‘08/’09 recession. On that note, there is an impressive list of Republican statements and actions on shorter hours. Let’s interject that, since shorter hours require neither more government spending nor new legislation (unions already have the means to negotiate hours), work time reduction is entirely consistent with conservative principles.

Now consider the following list, gleaned from the writings of Ben Hunicutt and Bill McGaughey:

- President Lincoln expressed support for Massachusetts shipyard workers who struck for the eight-hour day.

- James Garfield, campaigning for president in 1880, declared: “We may divide the whole struggle of the human race into two chapters: First, the fight to get leisure; and the second fight of civilization – what to do with our leisure when we get it?”

- President Taft suggested in 1910 that workers should receive three months’ annual vacation.

- In 1921, President Harding, inspired by clergy who warned that workers had insufficient family time, prevailed upon the steel industry to move from 12-hour to 8-hour shifts.

- In 1932, Pres. Hoover effusively praised Kellogg’s 30-hour workweek, and declared that work-time reduction was the most efficient way to combat unemployment.

- In his second inaugural address (1957), President Eisenhower predicted that cooperation between businesses and unions would lead to abundant leisure.

- The 1968 Republican Party Platform stated: “The forty-hour week adopted 30 years ago needs re-examination to determine whether or not a shorter work week, without loss of wages, would produce more jobs, increase productivity and stabilize prices.”

- The George W. Bush administration introduced a Comp Time bill giving private sector employees the option of using overtime to acquire time-and-a-half reduced hours instead of additional pay. While there were problems with the bill, the bill’s opponents never acknowledged that solving those problems would make it the first time the federal government reduced work hours in the private sector. (The 40-hour workweek established by the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 didn’t reduce work time because the average workweek was already about 40 hours.)

This impressive Republican history on work-time reduction is matched by the conservative history on leisure. T.S. Eliot, a prominent conservative, wrote the preface to *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*, one of two seminal books on leisure. Eliot’s poem, *The Wasteland*, bemoaned the fact that people in the modern world had no identity other than their work. Not surprisingly, therefore, it was Eliot who inspired Keynes to write the statement mentioned above: Less work represents the ultimate solution to unemployment.

Eliot’s protégé, Russell Kirk (who was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Ronald Reagan), welcomed greater leisure – with the proviso that leisure should be devoted to valuable, constructive pursuits.

In a periodical founded by Russell Kirk, John Bliese published *Conservatism and the Ideology of ‘Growth (Modern Age, 41, 1999)*, which discussed leisure in the context of environmental issues.

The contemporary conservative philosopher Roger Scruton also writes about leisure in connection with the environment.

Kevin Hassett, advisor to candidates McCain and Romney, and current chair of Trump’s Council of Economic Advisers, testified to a congressional committee in favor of a work-sharing bill during the Great Recession.

A necessary condition for shorter hours is the expansion of low-cost transit as well as housing supply, both of which are of prime importance to the black community. And it was shown earlier that Republican and/or conservative policies can be key to generating an expansion of transit and housing supply.

Also consistent with Republican/conservative tradition is the subsidization of public transit to keep fares low. During his 1965 mayoral run, William F. Buckley proposed subsidies for public transit to ensure affordability. It was the Nixon administration that started Amtrak, a far more affordable service in Nixon’s time because of his administration’s subsidies. And as mentioned earlier, the George W. Bush administration offered NYC \$354 million in mass transit funds contingent upon authorization of congestion pricing. Providing low-cost transit alternatives – as advocated or implemented by these Republicans – yields substantial reductions in household costs. A Republican decision to adopt this approach (and to pursue lower unemployment via shorter hours) would earn the votes of many black Americans.

The title of this section, “Republicans Should Return to Their Roots,” refers to the fact that the overwhelming majority of black Americans used to vote Republican. Given Republican principles and traditions, Republicans should once again earn, rather than attempt to suppress, the black vote.

### X. RVCC Political Science Professor Glenn Ricketts: The Conservative as True Progressive

RVCC Political Science Professor Glenn Ricketts is a conservative in the tradition of William F. Buckley. As a member of the National Association of Scholars (NAS), Prof. Ricketts helped edit a statement opposing new College Board guidelines for high school AP history courses. Those guidelines required that the teaching of American history revolve around gender and race, explicitly presenting women and racial minorities as members of an oppressed class. The NAS statement, which was endorsed by nationally prominent leaders, prompted the College Board to rescind the guidelines.

That being noted, Prof. Ricketts was one of the first educators who publicly supported my recommendation that labor unions (1) resume the pursuit of gradually shorter hours, and (2) offer to pay for parking to make the request for an incremental reduction in hours more credible. Possessing extensive knowledge on the subject of work-time, Ricketts referred me to the second seminal book on leisure, Sebastian de Grazia’s *Of Time, Work, and Leisure*. (Some community perspective: de Grazia resided in Princeton and worked at Rutgers’ Eagleton Institute, and bemoaned time wasted in suburban traffic.)

The intriguing aspect of Ricketts’ support for work-time reduction is that shorter hours was the goal that originally inspired workers to organize; it’s the ultimate progressive goal. But just as the conservatives T.S. Eliot, Roger Scruton, and Kevin Hassett displayed leadership on the issue of shorter hours, so did my conservative colleague display leadership on this progressive goal.

Ricketts supports the concession in the form of parking fees because it constitutes an investment in low-cost transit alternatives. Interestingly, Prof. Ricketts’ willingness to take a stand for improved transit options relates to diversity. On the one hand, he opposes the use of diversity as a means to promulgate political correctness. On the other hand, since a dis-

proportionate number of local transit passengers are minorities and/or immigrants, his willingness to support user fees for driving contributes to a scenario under which those “diverse” groups have greater access to our College. Moreover, Ricketts regards such diversity as valuable in and of itself. Ricketts doesn’t just talk the talk on diversity, but is willing to take a stand; once again, he is the true progressive.

**XI. “There is Nothing More Conservative than Conservation.”** With a view to funding infrastructure projects, US Chamber of Commerce President Tom Donahue has been pushing for an increase in the federal tax on gasoline. The NJ Chamber of Commerce, joined by the Somerset County Business Partnership, supported the recent state gas tax hike for the purpose of replenishing the Transportation Trust Fund. Steve Forbes and Pres. Trump support a “user pays” method of funding infrastructure projects.

Clearly, there’s a pattern of support from the business community and some Republicans for user fees for driving. This is noteworthy because, with the exception of dietary choices, transportation is the one aspect of our lifestyle that must change in order to combat global warming. This is not about progressive change. It’s about eliminating government subsidies to enable the private sector to respond to existing markets and values. Nevertheless, implementing more efficient transportation constitutes the single largest change required to combat global warming.

Here’s the point: While Donahue and Trump angrily oppose policies to combat global warming, both of them advocate the necessary condition for bringing about the single largest “change” to save the planet. Environmentalists, instead of just condemning Donahue and Trump (justifiable as that might be), should make the most of the fact that these leaders have actually taken a stand on user fees for driving.

Environmentalists should also point out that the other main initiative that is needed to reduce greenhouse gases, investing in efficiency/solar in buildings and industry, simply enables us to get what we want with less fuel – which requires neither a change in values nor behavior.

These points reveal that environmentalism is entirely consistent with conservative thinking. To quote Russell Kirk, “There is nothing more conservative than conservation.” Even the carbon tax that’s needed to promote efficiency and renewables is conservative. A carbon tax neither redistributes income from rich to poor, nor seeks to change values. It merely changes the price of fossil fuels.

To reinforce the argument, while a 2016 attempt in Washington State to impose a carbon tax was defeated by progressives who were concerned about its regressive nature, past members of the Reagan Administration – George Schultz, James Baker, and Arthur Laffer – have proposed taxing carbon while returning the revenues to taxpayers. This proposal has been endorsed by a new group called Americans for Carbon Dividends, members of which include Trent Lott, the former Senate Republican leader from Mississippi, and Mark McKinnon, an aide to Pres. George W. Bush. (Returning the revenues offsets the regressiveness of the carbon tax. But returning the revenues doesn’t negate the effect of the tax; the higher price on fossil fuels remains, creating an incentive to invest in efficiency/renewables.)

So-called conservative opponents of action on global warming should note that their much vaunted business ingenuity has succeeded in reducing the cost of renewables. Consequently, wind and solar have become smart business. Consider the following quote from Dale Ross, Republican Mayor of Georgetown, Texas: “Our municipal utility will move to 100%

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renewables...Environmental zealots have not taken over our city Council. Our move to wind and solar is chiefly a business decision" (Bloomberg and Pope, *Climate of Hope*, 2017, p 93).

Here at home, the Somerset County Freeholders have led the state on investments in energy upgrades in public buildings, saving taxpayers \$500,000/year. Does saving the taxpayers money make them Republicans in Name Only? The very idea is ridiculous.

Donations from the fossil fuels lobby have caused Republican politicians to support fossil fuel use, one sorry example of such influence being a proposal by the Trump Administration to subsidize failing coal plants. But the influence of fossil fuel money on Republican politicians will inexorably lead to GOP decline. Surveys indicate that Millennials strongly support efficiency and renewables; environmentalism is the wave of the future. This self-destructive approach adopted by the GOP is incredibly foolish; the information provided in this section demonstrates that environmentalism is a "natural" for the Republican Party.

### XII. The Very Identity of a "School," a "College," and a "Community College"

The ideas expressed in this essay go to the very identity of educational institutions. The term "school" meant "leisure" in the original Greek; a "scholar" was someone who had sufficient time to study. Leisure in this context referred to the higher things in life - education, physical activity, civic engagement - that could only be conducted when citizens were not constrained by drudgery. Leisure did not refer to trivial amusements.

This essay has also shown that, if leaders and activists representing different interests listen to each other in a collegial manner, they'll discover common ground. On that note, a "college" is an institution of colleagues who discuss ideas in a collegial manner. This idea of collegiality, far from being just academic, has eminently practical implications; discovering common ground makes possible constructive action to improve lives. To drive home the point, current dysfunction in public affairs resulting from a lack of collegiality constitutes the ultimate in impracticality.

These disparate points were all brought together in a paper by John Hemingway: *Leisure and Civility: Reflections on a Greek Ideal* (1988). Hemingway explained that, in ancient Greece, "civility" entailed not just courtesy, but deeper character traits: attentiveness, and a willingness to consider what is factual and true. It also entailed responsibility among members of the community to perceive "what is common and what is unique among us." This description of civility coincides with the elements of collegiality.

The Greeks believed that citizens should have time to engage in civic affairs, civic engagement being one of the higher things in life that constituted a legitimate use of leisure time. But having the time to participate was not sufficient;

it was of paramount importance to use our precious leisure in a constructive, "civil" manner that contributed to the well-being of the community. That being said, at the Earthweek 2017 conference, when our community leaders - representing divergent interests - engaged in a constructive discussion, they were exemplifying the Greek conception of authentic, civil discourse. Given that the conference addressed work-time reduction, our community is in a position to remind scholars throughout the world what their very identity is, i.e. people who have sufficient leisure to study. And given the manner in which our local leaders conducted themselves, our community is in a position to highlight another legitimate use of leisure time, i.e. civil discussion.

Re: the "community college": Public education is needed to explain that sometimes progress can most effectively be made at the state and local levels. While Americans feel helpless in the face of a gargantuan federal government, decision-making on transportation, housing, education, and crime is mostly a state or local matter. Also, individual bargaining units - not national union leaders - are in the best position to bring labor back to its roots on work hours. (Think: if national union leaders attempt action on work hours, it would be done through national legislation, which we've already learned can undermine the very goal it's seeking to achieve.)

On transportation, community colleges are especially suited to promote a high-tech, flexible van service. A Yale University administrator once showed me the behind-the-scenes workings of the flex transit that Yale offers its students. The service has great appeal; the automated call students receive two minutes prior to the van's arrival averts long waits on the street.

It's a private service offered by a private university. I thought: a community college should work with the community it serves to initiate such a service for all its residents.

The mission of the community college is to simultaneously provide excellence and access, but access is not truly meaningful in the absence of convenient transit - which is most cost-effectively provided for the entire community. At the same time, the community college can engage in the public education needed to bring about convenient transit for the community.

Local initiatives have great potential for influencing state (as opposed to federal) policy. And, the particular circumstances of different states can be effectively harnessed to achieve environmental progress. Southwestern states, experiencing a high percentage of cloud-free days, can make good use of solar energy. The plains states can increase their use of wind power. Iowa, for example, derives 37% of its electricity from wind.

The particular characteristics of our state - it's the most densely populated, and is a pass-through state - call for initiatives on transit. This situation offers a sig-

nificant policy advantage. Consider the following: The promotion of signal priority/preemption and usage-based insurance would generate an expansion of transit alternatives. Then it's possible to increase user fees for driving without creating undue burdens. In turn, the further expansion of transit alternatives would lower overall household costs. In other words, it's possible to raise fees and revenues in a manner that actually reduces costs over time. Even better, a portion of our gas taxes and tolls are paid by out-of-state drivers.

Some members of the public will object to the newly generated revenues going toward what they regard as wasteful government spending. Two points on this: First, a portion of the new revenues could be used to offset property taxes - a prospect that should not be taken for granted. Second, we've learned that effective transit alternatives could enable us to provide public employees with a high-quality/low-cost lifestyle, which could alleviate cost burdens for all.

This last idea - reducing consumption and costs for workers - has precedent in labor history. University of Iowa professor Ben Hunnicutt found quotes from labor leaders in the 1830s urging workers to consume less in order to protect time for education and other valuable pursuits. In his 1925 book, *The Tragedy of Waste*, Stuart Chase (who conducted research for labor unions) argued that worker prosperity required the elimination of pervasive waste. These days, the promotion of efficiency would enable us to increase material well-being while reducing costs. The case for reducing wasteful consumption and protecting leisure also has roots among early American leaders. Benjamin Franklin famously stated: "If every man and woman would work for four hours each day on something useful, that labor would produce sufficient to procure all the necessaries and comforts of life, want and misery would be banished out of the world, and the rest of the 24 hours might be leisure and pleasure."

The Seal of Georgia and the Seal of Virginia stated: *Deus Nobis Haec Oria Fecit*, Latin for "God has given us this leisure."

(Franklin and Jefferson quotes from presentation by Charles Sylvester, Emeritus Prof, Western Washington University, *Take Back Your Time* conference, Seattle, 2016.)

Jefferson wrote, "How soon the labor of men would make a paradise of the whole earth, were it not for misgovernment, and the diversion of all his energies from their proper object - the happiness of man... If we can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people...they must become happy."

Applying Jefferson's argument to current times, the free- or below-cost parking mandated by local government has given rise to the costly, wasteful lifestyle that forces us to work without end.

In *Society and Solitude*, Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose advocacy of "self-reliance" has been embraced by today's conservatives, wrote: "Works and days were

offered us, and we took works." He added, "He only is rich who owns the day." (AMS Press, 1968, pp. 166 and 168)

Walt Whitman editorialized that, "although we belong to that school which thinks that the less government or law interferes with labor...the better, we are fain to confess that if we should make any exception at all, it would be in favor of such law as the one lately passed in New Hampshire, called the 'ten hour law.'" (Hunnicut, B. *Walt Whitman's "Higher Progress" and Shorter Work Hours*, *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, V 26, 2008)

While today's standard workday is about eight hours, that doesn't mean we've achieved the goals of early American leaders. Work time per household has spiked. Also, high earners and impoverished employees holding multiple jobs work well over eight hours.

To conclude this section: the ideas in this essay not only go to the identity of educational institutions, they go to the heart of early American leadership.

### XIII. Our Community's Capacity to Lead

Residents of our community shouldn't take for granted what's transpiring here. For decades, shorter work time activists have rarely been able to get a hearing among labor leaders and environmentalists. But the business leaders of our community cosponsored and actively participated in a conference on work time reduction and the environment.

Also, union activists are rarely receptive to concerns about the costly waste that permeates our system; they choose instead to request additional hours to pay for a lifestyle inferior to hamsters on a treadmill. But members of the RVCC faculty union had the good sense to listen and take a stand.

Taking a stand makes a difference. After the RVCC faculty union passed the transportation-related resolution, AFT-NJ adopted the resolution at its state convention.

Ben Hunnicutt, a giant in the field of leisure studies who published in the *Wall Street Journal* and *Politico*, doesn't take our community for granted. Hunnicutt wrote: "Faculty at Raritan Valley Community College have been working with business leaders in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties to create strategies supporting an exemplary lifestyle; a lifestyle that provides not only high-quality experiences but also more free time to enjoy them. Their leadership is exemplary in part because of the remarkable coalition, engineered by RVCC, of county business leaders and labor (the faculty union and AFT-NJ). Last year I had the privilege of watching that coalition in action when I presented at RVCC - a rare sight that is inspiring in these times of so much partisan division."

Stuart Chase concluded *The Tragedy of Waste* by asking, "Where are the statesmen who will end the waste and despair?" Somerset and Hunterdon counties have answered that question. The leaders we need exist right here.

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## Reports from Trenton

# BPU Approves PSE&G Nuclear Subsidy: Biggest Sellout in State History

From a press release issued on April 18th, edited by Sylvia Kay

On April 18, the Board of Public Utilities approved a Zero Emission Certificate (ZEC) Program for Eligible Nuclear Power Plants (Docket No. EO18080899: In the Matter of the Implementation of PL 2018, c.16). Commissioner Chivukula cast the one dissenting vote.

The vote gives PSE&G \$300 million a year for ten years, one of the biggest subsidies in state history; it is estimated to increase the average home electricity cost by about \$35/year. It also shapes New Jersey's energy policy for generations to come, and makes it unlikely that we will reach our goal of 100% renewable energy by 2050. Instead, it commits us to buy 40% of our energy from nuclear sources, and reduces the likelihood of investments in wind and solar. The decision was reached behind closed doors.

Although the BPU seems to have heard of climate change, it has not refused several proposed fossil fuel projects in New Jersey: the Meadowlands Powerplant, and the Southern Reliability Link Pipeline. Commissioner Fiordaliso uses climate change to justify the nuclear subsidy.

A day before its April 18th approval, the BPU announced that it will delay its revision of New Jersey's Energy Master Plan to the Fall. The Plan is expected to explain how New Jersey will achieve Governor Murphy's Executive Order 28: for that 2050 target. The two events are related: both detract from wind and solar options. The nuclear subsidy has also put a chill on the legislature and administration, enabling them to delay consideration of renewable energy, energy storage, and electric vehicles.

The subsidy lacks a sunset provision, so it could go on indefinitely. Two of the four nuclear plants receiving subsidies, Salem 1 and 2, operate without cooling towers to mitigate for fish kills.

Three days before the April 18th approval, PSE&G had filed to retire three of the four nuclear plants. Conveniently, the notice stated that the retirements would not be necessary if ZECs were awarded. We think PSE&G was playing games. It is unlikely that its stock- and bondholders would endanger their \$10 billion asset. For one thing, 1,000 jobs would be lost. No doubt the subsidies will be most profitable for lawyers, lobbyists and stockholders. It is reported that Ralph Izzo, CEO of PSE&G, wants his company to make 8% profit on the nuclear plants.

# Trump Fast-Tracking Dangerous Pipelines

From a press release issued by our Chapter staff on April 10th, edited by Joe Testa

President Trump has signed an executive order that would undercut the ability of states to block pipeline projects that endanger their waterways. Trump ordered the EPA to revise its rules on how states can use their certification power under the Clean Water Act. He also wants to reduce environmental review periods and limit public comment.

The executive order would prevent states from blocking pipelines they find endanger their waterways. Trump wants to fast-track pipelines as quickly as possible, regardless of environmental impacts, and without proper review, oversight and scrutiny. He is trying to keep the public from having a proper opportunity to comment, and without regard for what states or communities think.

The executive order targets Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, which allows states to "certify" that projects comply with both the Act and their surface water quality standards. That means projects seeking federal permits from EPA, the Army Corps of Engineers, or FERC also must be approved, denied, or approved with conditions by states. Section 401 has been used successfully by states to stop natural gas pipelines.

Section 401 gives states the authority to review pipelines for their impact on water quality. For example, New York and Connecticut have used it to stop dangerous pipelines. New York blocked the Constitution pipeline and Connecticut halted the Islander East project. Both actions were upheld in federal court.

Trump's effort to evade the law would directly impact New Jersey. The PennEast pipeline would cross 54 high-quality streams; it has been held up for three years because of problems with their application. The NESE pipeline would endanger the ecology of the Raritan Bay as well as threaten the health and safety of people. NJ is considering eight pipeline proposals. We need the Clean Water Act to help fight those projects.

Worse: Trump also signed a second executive order focused on cross-border energy projects. The order specifies that the President has sole responsibility for approving or denying pipelines and other infrastructure that cross international boundaries.

Trump wants to fast-track these pipelines because fossil-fuel companies want to take advantage of the natural gas coming from fracking. The fracking process involves injecting a toxic mix of chemicals into the ground, also threatening our water supplies.

Trump's moves on pipelines continues his record of promoting fossil fuels. His order to lift a ban on offshore drilling was overruled in court, but that's not stopping his fossil-fuel push. The once-rejected Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines are back. He wants to subsidize coal and nuclear while reducing programs for solar and wind energy. He is undercutting environmental rules under NEPA, and ignoring court rulings that FERC must consider climate impacts in its strategic planning.

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