



POLITICAL CHAIR'S REPORT

A Win for Progress: Murphy Can Continue His Green Initiatives

By Karen Becker • political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

On Election Day, the polls closed at 8 p.m., but due to close results we had to wait almost 20 hours for the gubernatorial outcome. This election cycle was important for New Jersey residents because we voted for our Governor and the entire State Senate and Assembly. On the day after the election, we learned Gov. Phil Murphy won his race for reelection, marking the first time in 44 years that a sitting Democratic Governor in New Jersey was reelected.

The Sierra Club takes great interest in elections. We want our elected officials to have climate and environmental and social justice issues in the forefront when it comes to drafting bills and passing laws. In this election cycle, the Sierra Club endorsed candidates who we felt most closely aligned with our values, who had an exceptional environmental record or made environmental issues a top priority in their campaign. We endorsed Murphy, who during his first term in office established an Energy Master Plan, an environmental roadmap that addressed climate concerns and actions he proposed in creating an equitable green job workforce. Although in the early stages we applauded the plan for being ambitious, it lacked a robust timeline. However, in October 2019 a clear and well-thought-out strategy was put in place when the Governor released the state's first Climate Change Resiliency Strategy, appointed the state's first Chief Resilience Officer, established an [Interagency Council on Climate Resilience](#), and directed the Department of Environmental Protection to develop the strategy. The Council was established to develop short- and long-term action plans addressing the impacts of climate change.

Murphy Responded

When the Sierra Club invited the Governor and Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli to participate in our endorsement process, Murphy was the only candidate to respond. He completed our questionnaire and participated in an interview with key members of our Executive Committee. With his eagerness to partner with our organization, his environmental record and evidence of solidarity with our green initiatives, Murphy easily won the endorsement. We were disappointed that Ciattarelli chose not to participate, and we wonder if that was an indication of a reluctance to work with us had he been

elected. His website had a page about the environment, but he rarely addressed climate concern and these were clearly not a top priority for him. We do know he wanted to redirect money allocated for offshore wind farms to dredging projects. Overall, it is clear we made the right choice endorsing Murphy.

The election is over, but our efforts to advocate for environmental issues are not. We will continue to be your voice in Trenton. In turn, we ask that you stay connected to what is happening in your local community. Together we have an even stronger and more powerful voice.

New Jersey Chapter Endorsements and Results: 2021 State Elections

Election Results (✓ = won election)

Governor	Phil Murphy	✓
District	NJ State Senate	
5	Sen. Nilsa Cruz-Perez	✓
7	Sen. Troy Singleton	✓
11	Sen. Vin Gopal	✓
14	Sen. Linda Greenstein	✓
15	Sen. Shirley Turner	✓
16	Asm. Andrew Zwicker*	✓
17	Sen. Bob Smith	✓
18	Sen. Patrick J. Diegnan Jr.	✓
19	Sen. Joseph F. Vitale	✓
20	Sen. Joseph P. Cryan	✓
26	Christine Clarke*	✓
27	Sen. Richard Codey	✓
37	Asm. Gordon Johnson*	✓
District	NJ State Assembly	
7	Asm. Herb Conaway Jr.	✓
7	Asw. Carol A. Murphy	✓
11	Asw. Joann Downey	✓
12	Asm. Robert D. Clifton	✓
14	Asm. Daniel Benson	✓
15	Asm. Anthony S. Verrelli	✓
15	Asw. Verlina Reynolds-Jackson	✓
16	Asm. Roy Freiman	✓
17	Asm. Joe Daniels	✓
18	Asm. Sterley S. Stanley	✓
22	Asm. James Kennedy	✓
27	Asm. John F. McKeon	✓
27	Asw. Mila Jasey	✓
32	Asw. Angelica M. Jimenez	✓
33	Asm. Raj Mukherji	✓
34	Asm. Thomas P. Giblin	✓
34	Asw. Britnee Timberlake	✓
35	Asm. Benjie E. Wimberly	✓
35	Asw. Shavonda Sumter	✓
36	Asm. Clinton Calabrese	✓
36	Asm. Gary S. Schaeer	✓
38	Asm. Chris P. Tully	✓
38	Asw. Lisa Swain	✓

* Denotes newcomer

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE REPORT

Adopt ACT Rule to Reduce Diesel Exhaust and Harmful Pollutants

By Maria Lopez-Nuñez and Renée Pollard

Maria Lopez-Nuñez is the Deputy Director of Organizing and Advocacy at the Ironbound Community Corporation. Renée Pollard is the Environmental and Social Justice Chair at the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club. This column was adapted from an op-ed published on NJ.com July 24, 2021.

States across the nation have serious problems with pollution, including exhaust from vehicle traffic impacting communities of color more harshly than white communities, and New Jersey is no exception.

During our annual truck count, [we watch thousands of trucks](#) rumble through Newark's Ironbound, a vibrant, multi-ethnic community sandwiched between the airport and the Passaic River. All this pollution means that many neighbors here struggle with asthma and other respiratory issues and are at higher risk for heart disease.

This isn't a problem we see in wealthier, predominantly white communities such as Montclair and Summit. Newark is next to the largest port on the East Coast and is littered with warehouses that attract cavalcades of dirty diesel trucks amounting to more than [1.4 million trips a year](#). These trucks emit nitrogen oxide (NOx), particulate matter (PM2.5), black carbon, and other dangerous pollutants.

Smog and Health

In Newark, [one in every four children has asthma](#), which is three times higher than the national average. The New York-Newark metro area is the [12th worst in the world for ozone smog](#).

The studies and health impacts and our lived experiences make it clear: We need to act. For years, [environmental justice communities](#) like Newark have advocated that climate change mitigation policy must be designed to also address the [disproportionate amount of pollution found in communities of color](#) and low-income communities.

In July 2020, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a historic multi-state truck and bus [memorandum of understanding](#) (MOU) that commits our state to phase out dirty trucks and buses while prioritizing emissions reductions in environmental justice communities. The MOU identifies policies that states can take to attain 100% zero-emission trucks and buses, which includes adopting a version of California's [Advanced Clean Trucks rule \(ACT\)](#).

As the state considers California's ACT rule, we should improve on it. Public health should be at the forefront of everything, which is why the NJ Department of Environmental Protection should toughen reporting standards to cover more heavy-duty trucks and

buses and ensure our most vulnerable communities are protected.

We must also make the reporting requirements annual. The California model requires only one-time reporting. We need to be collecting data regularly to monitor our progress. The [trucking industry may change](#) over the years, which means that the information reported now may not hold true for long.

ACT is a highly ambitious policy.

“The studies and health impacts and our lived experiences make it clear: We need to act.”

Other policies have been under consideration, including the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI), [but these wouldn't go far enough](#) or prioritize environmental

justice communities. We need to make sure the ACT rule stands on its own and is completely separate from TCI, which is a false solution that distracts from real policies our communities urgently need. Electrifying our transportation sector could [help avoid 6,300 premature deaths](#), 93,000 asthma attacks, and 416,000 lost workdays, saving \$72 billion in health care costs. The state needs to adopt a strengthened form of the ACT rule quickly so that we can begin to address this major source of air pollution.

For the full, original op-ed, visit bit.ly/StarLedgerTrucks

There's an electronic biweekly Chapter Alert Service. Sign up via: <https://tinyurl.com/scnj-Esubscribe>.

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Bring Runaway Plastic Pollution Under Control

By Sylvia Kay and Raghav Akula

This column was adapted from a Star-Ledger op-ed. Sylvia Kay is a member of the New Jersey Chapter's Executive Committee. Raghav Akula is the Chapter's Zero-Waste Coordinator and Student Liaison.

The NJ Senate, Assembly, and Gov. Phil Murphy should be applauded for enacting the strongest single-use plastics bill (S864/A1978) in the country in the fall of 2020. While 10 other states have passed some form of a single-use plastic ban, New Jersey's law is a trifecta. It bans single-use carryout plastic bags and paper bags, plastic straws, and many polystyrene food containers.

The ban on single-use plastic straws began Nov. 4. The ban will extend to single-use plastic and paper carryout bags and specific foam (polystyrene) food containers in the spring of 2022. The law bans only the thin carryout plastic bags, not the reusable bags.

It does not affect thin bags used to package in-store loose food items, produce, newspapers, laundry or garment bags, or bags used for transport of medicine or live animals. There are certain exemptions for small stores and specific waivers and exemptions related to polystyrene.

Almost Immediately Tossed

Single-use plastics are a particularly troublesome group of plastics because they are used briefly and then discarded—amplifying the massive waste problem we have created. The United States and China are the largest producers of plastic waste. It has been suggested that each year 330 million tons of plastic waste are produced world-

wide. The use of plastic bags in New Jersey has been calculated at [4.4 billion annually](#).

New Jersey's single-use plastic ban is a big, bold, and essential step to begin cleaning up our mess. It is true, though, that plastics are very useful. Should you have a plastic medical device or a more fuel-efficient car assembled with light-weight plastic side panels, you can be thankful for the convenience and efficacy of these mass-produced items. However, it is essential to understand that plastic waste doesn't neatly decompose or dissolve.

Many sources project a skyrocketing growth of virgin, or nonrecycled, plastic use in the coming decades. Plastic trash can get a lot worse, so we need to start the cleanup. We need to curb new plastic production. We need to regulate and reduce plastic usage and learn to recycle and repurpose materials.

Prior to the passage of the state ban in November 2020, over [60 New Jersey municipalities](#) had passed local ordinances to ban or regulate single-use straws, carry-out bags, or foam food containers. These local governments are to be applauded for helping establish the groundswell of opposition to plastic pollution. The advantage of the statewide ban is that it provides a uniform set of phased-in regulations with room for exceptions and waivers.

It is smart economics for society to curb and ban plastics. A [study by an international accounting firm](#) concluded that North America was estimated to have had an economic loss of approximately \$254 million in 2018 due to plastic pollution and a cleanup cost of approximately \$93 million because of this pollution.

Following China's 2018 policy to stop importing our plastic waste for recy-



A plastic component was incorporated into the construction of this Bordentown, NJ, bird's nest.

cling, waste management costs increased fourfold in some areas of the United States—a huge burden to any local municipality. Further, the reality is that only about [9% of plastics have ever been recycled](#). It is essential to rename and reclassify the “recyclable” plastics because large portions of these are sitting in landfills, slipping into oceans, or being used as fuel.

It has become essential to our collective good health and that of oth-

“Many sources project a skyrocketing growth of virgin, or nonrecycled, plastic use in the coming decades.”

er species to regulate plastic usage. Sources estimate that each year 1 million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals die from consuming plastics or becoming entangled with them.

It is well publicized that microplastics (plastic particles from degraded plastic waste) have entered aquatic food chains globally and in New Jersey. Microplastics are found in over 100 aquatic species, including fish, shrimp, and mussels. A [2016 study by New York-New Jersey Bay Keeper](#) found microplastics in estuary shellfish and finfish and estimated that some 165 million pieces of plastic are floating in New Jersey and New York harbors and estuaries at any given time. Clearly, we need strong and thoughtful regulation of plastics.

Cheap Gas and Plastic

Fossil fuels are essential to plastic production, linking plastic to the profusion of greenhouse gases and the climate crisis. A 2019 report <https://www.ciel.org/plasticand-climate/> estimated that in that year plastic production and incineration globally produced more than 850 million metric tons of greenhouse gases, an amount equal to the emissions from 189 large coal-fired power plants. The report said that cheap natural gas from fracking operations was fueling rapid global growth of the plastics industry.

Although details can be debated, we clearly need to change industrial production and consumer habits. The mess won't get better without new, smart regulations. Bill S864/A1978 is a big, bold, and beautiful step in the right direction. Let's start cleaning up.

The original op-ed can be accessed here: bit.ly/StarLedgerPlastics

CONSERVATION CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Heating Your House Without Fossil Fuel

By Greg Gorman • ggorman@embargmail.com

One of the greatest challenges of the NJ Energy Master Plan (EMP) is to maximize the electrification of the building sector by converting to “zero-energy buildings.” The US Department of Energy describes a zero-energy building as one that combines energy efficiency and renewable energy generation to consume only as much energy as can be produced onsite through renewable resources.

My home, overshadowed by a neighbor's trees, may never reach that standard. Still, by maximizing electrification I can minimize my carbon footprint so that by 2050 my home could conceivably be a zero-carbon building. For example, although my home is not suitable for rooftop solar, I achieved 100% renewable electricity by picking up the phone and switching to a clean energy provider.

Carbon-Free Goals

EMP [clean energy goals](#) include ensuring that at least 75% of electricity demand is met by carbon-free renewable generation by 2050, and scenarios and pathways are routinely modeled with consideration for least-cost options to achieve 100% clean energy generation by 2050.¹ The “least-cost scenario” described in the [Integrated Energy Plan](#) prepared for New Jersey by the Rocky Mountain Institute provides a roadmap for how the state can reliably and affordably meet its climate and energy objectives through 2050.²

As I did, electric customers can switch to renewable energy suppliers, and the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) has a [website](#) to help find alternatives.³ In October, the BPU was tasked to make its Community Solar Energy Pilot Program permanent by February 2022. This opportunity for low- and moderate-income residents to draw power from locally-based solar installations may be available in your community in the future.

The EMP calls for the building sector to be decarbonized and largely electrified by 2050 with a focus on zero-carbon new construction and conversion to electric heat pumps from electric baseboard heating and oil- and propane-heated buildings. The strategy for new construction emphasizes “net-zero carbon” construction. The

World Green Building Council defines a [net-zero carbon building](#) as one that is highly energy efficient and fully powered from on- and off-site renewable energy sources or has a reduced carbon footprint via offsets.⁴

According to the EMP, “To support the electrification of private new construction projects, the state will consider: (1) drafting new NJ [Department of Community Affairs] codes, if appropriate; (2) developing new construction and metric guidelines; (3) establishing requirements for private facilities utilizing state funds to use predefined metrics and standards outlined by [the state BPU and Economic Development Authority]; or (4) supporting local municipal requirements.” At this stage of the transition, stakeholder coordination will focus on developing and implementing demonstration programs and small scale projects. Electric baseboard heating and oil- and propane fueled buildings are the most expensive methods of home heating and thus targeted for conversion to heat pumps that over their life cycle are cost competitive with natural gas systems.

Still, heat pump performance diminishes as temperatures drop below freezing. I recently installed a heat pump for heating and cooling. The air circulation system is shared with my old furnace which serves as a backup. I'll easily save money and achieve a 50% carbon reduction by 2030. I anticipate that with a 20-year life expectancy, my heat pump will enable retirement of my backup burner in 2040, when electric heat pumps can perform at lower temperatures.

Links

- https://nj.gov/emp/docs/pdf/2020_NJBPU_EMP.pdf
- <https://nj.gov/emp/pdf/NJ%20IEP%20Public%20Webinar%20Nov1%20Final.pdf>
- <https://www.nj.gov/bpu/residential/>
- <https://www.worldgbc.org/the-commitment>



Appreciation for US Rep. Kim



Left to right, Gina Carola, West Group Chair; Matthew Knowlton, Constituent Advocate, and Antoinette Miles, Outreach Director, of Kim's office; and Linda Rubiano, West Group Political Chair.

In September, members of the West Jersey Group of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club delivered a big thank-you card to Congressman Andy Kim (NJ-03) for his support of the Build Back Better Act, President Biden's ambitious plan to broaden the social safety net, address climate change, and provide green energy jobs.

Introducing the New Editor of *The Jersey Sierran*

By Tony Hagen • editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

It's an honor to take on the role of editor of *The Jersey Sierran*. In this job I am replacing Dick Colby, who stepped down last issue after more than 20 years of admirable commitment and hard work. I publicly thank Dick for all he has done and for recommending me as his replacement. His are big shoes to fill.

For those who don't know me, I'm a lifelong resident of New Jersey and a great lover of the outdoors. On any given weekend you might find me walking in Washington Crossing State Park or canoeing on the Delaware and Raritan Canal.

My hometown is Florence Township, which has had its share of environmental achievements and flops. It's home to many acres of warehouses, including a sprawling Amazon fulfillment center, but also the former Roebling and Sons Co. Superfund site, which is now a fantastic riverfront park. Warehouse construction and truck traffic, in fact, were major issues in this year's local election.

By trade, I'm a journalist; my current job has me writing about biosimilars, drugs that improve competition and lower costs for health care consumers. Some people will recognize my byline from when I worked at *The Times of Trenton*, where I covered city and suburban news.

My history with the Sierra Club goes back a few years to 2019. I joined the West Jersey Group as communications coordinator and put up many Facebook posts about local and statewide issues. It's not easy to guess what people will click on and read, but regardless of "metrics," I've been faithful about posting on issues of importance.

I've been writing for the *Sierran* almost since I joined the Chapter. Dick noticed I had an editorial background

and invited me to make myself useful. I was made an assistant editor and handled a regular stream of press releases to edit. When I had time, I added columns and articles of my own authorship, which were welcomed.

As editor of the *Sierran*, I do want to continue the tradition of group participation and editorial freedom; so, send in your columns, articles, and news items. I will keep the *Sierran* functioning as an information crossroads for the Chapter membership.

One other Club involvement is my participation on the newly formed Offshore Wind Committee. This is another exciting role and opportunity to do some good. When it comes to offshore wind, we want the best of both worlds: unharmed wildlife and a robust supply of renewable energy. The plan for East Coast offshore wind capacity involves thousands of turbines with an equivalent generating capacity of 32 large nuclear plants, according to an [analysis](#) from the University of Delaware's College of Earth, Ocean and Environment. With such an enormous scale, it's clear that we do need to proceed with our eyes and ears open.

I look forward to serving as editor of the *Sierran* and learning from and working closely with the Club's many esteemed and courageous champions of the environment. And I hope that as we step forward into these very pivotal times, our Chapter becomes stronger, more active, and more successful in its mission.

To contact me, please write to editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org



A Heartfelt Thank You and a Warm Welcome

By Richard Isaac • Richard.Isaac@Sierraclub.org

I give my heartfelt thanks to Dick Colby for his longtime service as our NJ Chapter's Newsletter Editor. After literally two decades he has decided to step down.

In addition to his scores of editorials and judicious editing all these years, Dick has contributed greatly to the Club and to the environment in numerous ways. Dick has served as Chapter Chair, Chapter Political Chair, and represented the South Jersey Group on the Chapter's Executive Committee.

Tocks Island Champion

In his time with our Club, Dick has fought in major environmental battles, perhaps most notably in helping stop the controversial Tocks Island Dam hydropower and flood-control project, which would have turned a 40-mile stretch of the Delaware River into a reservoir. It is because of this successful campaign by Dick and others that there is now a Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, which may someday become the "Delaware Water Gap National Park and Preserve." Another major campaign Dick was involved in was helping obtain federal Wild and Scenic protection for the watershed of the Great Egg Harbor River, which includes parts of Camden, Gloucester, Atlantic, and Cape May counties.

While Dick is extremely modest, it should be noted that he is Professor Emeritus of Cell Biology at Stockton University and received his PhD from the University of California, Berkeley in biophysics.

Even when he was a full-time professor, Dick somehow managed to find the time to volunteer with not only Sierra Club, but also the following organizations: the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, the Egg Harbor City Planning Board, the Atlantic County Parks and Environment Advisory Commission, and the Eyren Hafen Land Preserve.

Sierra Club is honored that, on Dick's webpage, he lists our organization first

among all his community activities.

I also want to wish a warm welcome to Tony Hagen, the West Jersey Group's Media and Communications Chair and a member of our Chapter newsletter's editorial board, who has taken over for Dick and is now our Newsletter Editor at *The Jersey Sierran*.


In addition to his editing skills, Tony has a keen interest in a number of environmental issues and has written some excellent articles for the *Sierran* over the past few years. One was about the highly toxic per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) used in firefighting foam and nonstick surfaces for cooking pots, and another concerned the allure and the danger of solar geoengineering as a way of coping with global warming. As Tony is also interested in offshore wind power as a way of transitioning away from fossil fuel power, I would not be surprised if he sometime down the road writes about that issue as well for our newsletter.

A Super Lawyer

Finally, I wish another warm welcome to Christopher Hitchcock, Esq. Chris has 30 years of experience trying cases before federal, state, and appellate courts and has repeatedly been honored as a Super Lawyer in a compendium of outstanding lawyers published each year by Thomson Reuters. The award honors attorneys meeting stringent requirements for professional achievement and who have attained a high degree of peer recognition. We're glad to have Chris aboard, and he is indeed a welcome addition to our Chapter's Legislative Committee.

One last (but very important) note: Our new Chapter Director as of November 29 is Anjuli Ramos. I look forward to providing a much fuller introduction to Anjuli in our April-June issue!





Saving the Planet With Visuals?

Do you have graphic design skills? Would you like to work on video production? Do you want to help further the Sierra Club's goals?

The NJ Chapter is looking for volunteers. We need **graphic designers** to help us with infographics, fact sheets, and presentations to illustrate and clarify our messages. You would work on a project-by-project basis in collaboration with team leaders from the Chapter.

Video volunteers will work under an experienced video producer to create shareable videos on subjects from outings to events to news to issue "explainers." Good ideas, self-motivation and willingness to learn are more important than experience here!

Social media help is also welcome. Volunteers would produce content in the form of visuals, graphics, and writeups based on ideas and information provided by our Chapter leadership.

Your work can increase awareness of climate, environmental, and environmental justice issues, promote the natural beauty of our state, and encourage others to join us!

For more about graphics, contact Tony Hagen, *Jersey Sierran* Editor, at editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org.

To get involved in video production, reach out to Judy Minot, Chapter Secretary/Communications Co-Chair, at secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org. To help with social media, write to Megan Steele at megan.steele@sierraclub.org.

A variety of Club books, notecards, badges and clothing is available from www.sierraclub.org/store

Chapter Executive Committee Meeting Highlights

Sept. - Oct. - Nov.

September: Dick Colby stepped down as editor of the *Jersey Sierran*. Tony Hagen was appointed the new editor. The Political Committee voted to endorse Gov. Phil Murphy's re-election campaign and to make an early endorsement for Andrew Kim (NJ-3), Bill Pascrell (NJ-9) and Mikie Sherrill (NJ-11). These decisions were ratified by a vote of the Executive Committee. Christopher Hitchcock was appointed to the Legislative Committee.

October: A list of resolutions from the Council of Club Leaders will be presented to the Sierra Club's Board of Directors for review, final amendments, and voting. Two of the 13 resolutions were proposed by our Chapter. Our Student Liaison is working with the Zero Waste group to raise awareness of New Jersey's single-use plastics ban, which is already being phased in.

November: Rich Isaac, Chapter Chair, reported that our new Chapter Director will be Anjuli Ramos-Busot. She will start on November 29. We are extremely excited to begin working with Anjuli. The Wild and Endangered Species Committee was formed with Jamie Zaccaria, Chair, and regular members Stan Greberis and Leila Marcovici. Elthea Duffy was appointed to the Legislative Committee and made Brownfields and Superfund Sites Issues Coordinator under the Conservation Committee. Denise Brush was appointed Offshore Wind Committee Co-Chair and Jamie Zaccaria was made a member of that committee.

A Battery-Operated Alternative to the “Dinky”

By Kathleen (Kip) P. Cherry, PP. AICP • kcherry10@gmail.com

Railroad Development Corp. (RDC), whose chairman is Henry Posner (Princeton, '77), has gone live with a new concept in rail service. The Pittsburgh, Pa., headquartered firm, which owns and operates railroads around the world, sees a profitable market in redeveloping light density railroad lines in the United States, starting with the Princeton Branch and its powerful connection to the Northeast Corridor.

By ship, Posner has imported stunning orange-and-black remanufactured former London subway cars that are running in a demonstration project in Central Pennsylvania. These exciting new battery-operated railcars remanufactured by Vivarail, a British company in which RDC is a shareholder, will work on the existing rails. These railcars offer benefits that cannot be matched by so-called Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or any other bus alternative. Posner's hope is that the Princeton Branch will be just the first of many shortlines around the United States to use this technology.

Posner is calling his demonstration project Pop-Up Metro. It is set up at Rockhill Furnace, Pa., about three hours from Princeton. Designed to operate at typical speeds of 60 m.p.h., the Pop-Up Metro conforms with federal safety regulations and New Jersey Transit (NJT) purchasing practices. The concept is to show how well the equipment will operate on the existing Dinky rails, while achieving cost savings and critical greenhouse and pollution reductions.

Last year, as all mass transit struggled with the pandemic, NJT initiated a “transitway study” to determine the future of service on the Dinky line. The study parameters seem calculated to support a claim that upgrading the rail line is impractical and the only alternative is some form of bus transportation. Because of this, the New Jersey Association of Railroad Passengers has argued that the real goal of the study is to make the case for replacing rail service with some form of BRT service. Rather than let that happen, Posner has made a major investment to beat NJT to the punch.

The sustainability of the new train is critical. The train batteries will allow for the removal of the Dinky catenary (overhead power lines), which some people think is dangerous and unsightly. This will also eliminate ongoing costly and difficult maintenance of the catenary. RDC would initially rely on commercially generated power, but options include renewable power through existing solar fields or, potentially, a community solar installation on a new warehouse rooftop. Renewable power will then be sent to PSEG

which, in turn, will be in a position to charge the batteries.

The Vivarail interiors are comfortable, outfitted with Wi-Fi, and easily maintained. Routine repairs can be accomplished on-site. Any heavy repairs can be done by contractors off-site. The cars can be moved easily by truck. There are no immediate plans for autonomous train operation, but this option will be evaluated as the technology moves forward. Such an option would further enhance safety and reduce onboard personnel and cost. And there is also the simple value of using existing trackage. The Pop-Up Metro can be placed into service with no new infrastructure investment and strengthens the Princeton Branch's

position as part of the national railroad network.

Critical to the long-term success of any revitalized Princeton line is reliable, fast service to trains on the NE Corridor. The current service has been far from reliable. At the beginning of the 2021 fall semester, just as students and vacationers were returning to Princeton University and the greater Princeton community, Dinky service was curtailed for almost a week because of mechanical problems.

Reliable service will allow travelers to shape their needs around the service and will also allow residents to establish long-term employment and business operation plans with the assurance that there is easy transportation to the NE Corridor. Those presently using other modes of transportation will be encouraged to return to using the Dinky, which will benefit Princeton businesses in turn. Another new source of ridership could come from the

University's own growth, including its new innovation hub on Chambers Street intended to spur growth in innovative new enterprises in coordination with area colleges and universities, and be an important factor in the growth in Princeton's commercial district with the 20 Nassau St. hotel construction and other initiatives.

The door configuration of the new train cars will allow for quick exit and entry, and the fast on-and-off time will make an additional Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) stop feasible without a significant increase in train travel time. This will allow for TOD investment at a site to be chosen to include residential/office and commercial uses with easy access to Rt. 1. More important, a new TOD stop near Rt. 1, could be designed as a hub for area employers, allowing for easy van pickup by new area warehousing employers, as well as employers at the Carne-

gie Center, points along Alexander Street, employers along Rt. 1, and the Penn Medicine Princeton Medical Center hospital. A TOD stop will reduce regional congestion with its attendant environmental costs, just as area warehouses start taking on thousands of new employees.

Posner's Pop-Up Metro on the Dinky line also preserves the option of providing rail freight to carry waste, recyclables, and oversized cargo. Freight could be moved at night so that it doesn't interrupt regular passenger service. Negotiations will also be undertaken on parking fees, and efforts will be made to effectuate a popular campus location at the Transit Plaza, in

association with the Wawa, that will benefit passengers and students and community members alike. This creates possibilities such as a van service with Princeton merchants.

Much more could be said about the potential of Posner's Vivarail cars if placed into operation through a public-private partnership with rail knowhow and a commitment to local reliable and efficient service. And it is consistent with Princeton University's own targets of reducing campus greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2046. Let us hope that NJT's transitway study process will give the Princeton Branch a real chance to continue as a dedicated rail line. Posner's new train is that chance.



Princeton alumnus Henry Posner wants to bring his battery-powered rail concept to the Dinky line. Photos courtesy of Vivarail.



CONSERVATION VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT

Shut Down the Last Two NJ Coal-Fired Plants Early

By Gina Carola • ginaceee@verizon.net

Republished with permission from The Press of Atlantic City.

In August, the *New York Times Magazine* published an [in-depth look](#) at the increasing flooding problems faced by New Jersey's coastal cities and towns, and said the sea level here has risen 18 inches in the past century, which is twice as fast as the global average, with incidences of nuisance flooding (which is associated with high tides) more than doubling in the past 20 years.

This followed closely on the heels of the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which found that global warming is accelerating, and “unless there are immediate, rapid, and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to close to 1.5°C or even 2°C will be beyond reach.” The window of opportunity for decisive action is closing, as the long life of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere means that a certain amount of further warming is already baked into the system. Upon publication of a special report in 2018, IPCC Co-Chair Debra Roberts said ominously, “The next few years are probably the most important in our history.”

Here in New Jersey, the Murphy administration has taken many important steps to reduce the emissions disrupting the climate, including adopting an Energy Master Plan that charts a path to 100% clean energy by 2050. Unfortunately, many of the solutions it aims to put in place, such as offshore wind and electrification of buildings and vehicles, will take years or even decades to fully implement. We also need to be pursuing short-term emissions reductions in order to heed the warnings of climate scientists.

One such short-term solution is to immediately stop burning coal for electricity in New Jersey. Yes, New Jersey still has two coal-fired power plants, known as Logan and Chambers. They were built in 1994 and have 30-year power purchase agreements (PPAs) in place with Atlantic City Electric (ACE) that run through 2024. When the plants were built, the PPAs looked like a good deal for ratepayers. But decades of growth in clean energy and efficiency measures, as well as lower-than-expected gas prices due to the rise of fracking, have caused power prices to stagnate. The power from Lo-

gan and Chambers is being sold to ACE customers at well-above-market rates.

Fortunately, ACE has an opportunity to recoup some of these losses for ratepayers—and help the climate. The company that owns the plants has made an offer to ACE, in which it would:

- Retire and decommission the last two coal-fired power plants in New Jersey.
- Replace the power owed to ACE under contract with a mix of generation sources available from the regional PJM grid.
- Pay ACE \$25 million, which would be returned to ratepayers, to account for the lower cost of the replacement power.
- Redevelop the sites to clean energy activities, such as offshore wind manufacturing or solar with storage.

Because coal is the most carbon-intensive fuel, and the electricity from the PJM grid is getting cleaner, the power switch alone would reduce carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 4 million tons by 2024, equivalent to the yearly emissions from over three-quarters of a million vehicles. That is without considering the climate benefits of repurposing the sites to support clean energy.

Given the climate, consumer, and economic benefits of the deal, it is unclear why ACE has not jumped at the opportunity. The utility's parent company is Exelon, which loves to tout its climate leadership and fleet of low- and zero-emission power plants. In fact, ACE's own website includes this statement under the heading of “Climate Leadership”: “Climate change represents one of the greatest challenges of our time and demands that we actively pursue every opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

We couldn't agree more with that statement. This proposal to shut down the dirtiest remaining power plants in the state is an opportunity for Atlantic City Electric and Exelon to make good on their promises. They should agree to this win-win proposal so that we can move on to some of the more challenging fronts of the climate fight.

The *New York Times Magazine* article referenced here is available at the following link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/12/magazine/new-jersey-shore.html>

In Memoriam: Nancy Carringer (1938-2021)

By Jonathan Wall, Chair of the Hunterdon Warren Group

Nancy Carringer, a longtime member of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club who served as Conservation Chair for our Hunterdon Warren Group, died at 82 on October 25, 2021.

Nancy originally volunteered with the Central Jersey Group and later moved to Massachusetts. I had the pleasure of meeting Nancy about four years ago when she returned to New Jersey to live in Annandale, closer to her daughter. She joined one of our general meetings and quickly shared her thoughts and ideas. With a passion for environmental and social causes, Nancy jumped right into a leadership role in our group. An educator and counselor by profession, she spent her retirement years traveling the world, volunteering for a domestic violence response team and following her passions for horseback riding and gardening.

Just last month, Nancy spent mornings helping out in a local political campaign passing out flyers. One voter complained to her about his property taxes going to education. She set him straight. I asked her whether she thought school districts should be consolidated and school administrator positions reduced. With her typical humor, she smiled and said, "What do you think? I'm an educator! Of course, we need more teachers and fewer high-paid administrators!" When I conflated unaffiliated (independent) with undecided voters on the political spectrum and complained how one cannot take sides when issues tower over politics, she smiled, said, "I'm unaffiliated!" and spoke of her admiration for certain



politicians who were on both sides of the aisle.

A couple of years ago, in the cold of winter, she trekked with us from the Port Authority Bus Terminal through Central Park to attend a lecture by the great-grandson of Teddy Roosevelt at the Explorers Club on the Upper East Side. She spent many a Saturday morning attending our Chapter's Conservation Committee meetings. Her latest cause involved arguing against beach replenishment along much of the NJ shoreline.

Our Group will truly miss Nancy with her wry sense of humor and can-do spirit. She was not afraid to say "yes" and did what she said she would do. We sincerely thank her and her family for asking that donations be given in her memory to the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club Chapter and know that her spirit will remain in our hearts.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

PennEast Aborts Fracked-Gas Pipeline

Proposed construction of the highly controversial 116-mile PennEast Pipeline Project, from Luzerne County, Pa., under the Delaware River at Riegelsville, Pa., and south to Mercer County, NJ, has been canceled. PennEast Pipeline Co. failed to obtain the necessary water quality permits from New Jersey and decided the project is not worth pursuing. "This is a big win for communities in New Jersey and Pennsylvania that value clean air, clean water, and a stable climate," said Patrick Greuter, Associate Director of the Sierra Club's Beyond Dirty Fuels campaign to stop the expansion of fossil fuel consumption.

The pipeline would have transported fracked Marcellus Shale gas to a transfer station on Blackwell Road in Hopewell Township for customers in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and surrounding states.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection declined to issue water quality certification and wetlands permits under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, citing potential water quality impacts.

The Sierra Club and other organizations had long battled the pipeline, contending it threatened forests, 88 waterways, 44 wetlands areas, 30 parks, and 33 conservation easements with possible leaks, explosions, and pollution. The project to further the use of fossil fuel across a multi-state footprint also threatened to exacerbate climate warming.

PennEast planned to use eminent domain to seize state-controlled land in New Jersey for the pipeline path. Just three months prior to abandoning the project, it narrowly won (5-4) US Supreme Court support for land condemnation. Also, the project cancellation came despite receipt of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in 2015.

New Life for Boonton Rail Line

The disused former Boonton Line in Essex and Hudson counties will become a "linear greenway" thanks to an agreement by the State of New Jersey to purchase the rights to roughly nine miles of railbed through eight municipalities. The greenway would begin in Montclair and continue toward Hoboken over the Passaic and Hackensack rivers through urban landscapes and marshland. For more details and news updates, visit <https://www.essexhudsongreenway.org/>

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT

Leading the Charge for Electric School Buses

By Bill Beren • Beren1@verizon.net

In the previous issue of *The Jersey Sierran*, I discussed three major initiatives that the Transportation Committee was working on: Electric School Buses (ESB), the Advanced Clean Truck rule, and the Newark NewBus initiative.

Our booth and panel discussion on electric vehicles at the New Jersey School Boards Association virtual conference in October was a resounding success. Over 50 individuals visited our booth, and we had just under 100 viewers of our panel discussion. We posted eight documents for attendees to download, including three reprints, a flyer from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) describing how to apply for grant funds, and four original documents prepared by Transportation Committee volunteers, including Kip Cherry, and Gary Frederick. These included a buyer's guide to electric school buses, the infographic developed by students at Seton Hall University, and PowerPoint presentations on "Why Electric School Buses" and pending legislation to fund up to \$45 million in demonstration projects across the state.

We also posted a six-minute video titled "Electric School Buses Are Now." The video was produced by Sierra Club volunteers, including videographer and editor Michael Competielle, Judy Minot, and myself. You can watch the video and view the documents from the link on the NJ Chapter's website

(click on "About Us," "Our Work," and "Transportation").

During the taping of the video, Sen. Patrick J. Diegnan Jr. (NJ-18) praised the New Jersey Chapter for the work we have done to strengthen and improve the demonstration ESB bill. The new bill S4077, and we are hopeful that it will be passed and signed into law by the time you read this article.

Our Communications Coordinator, Megan Steele, worked with Environmental Justice Chair Renée Pollard and myself to sponsor a very successful webinar on Nov. 10 on why New Jersey needs to adopt the Advanced Clean Truck rule. As with the ESB legislation, we are hopeful that the DEP will have fully adopted this rule by the time this issue of the *Sierran* is distributed.

In August, members of the Transportation Committee offered comments on the NewBus Newark plans. While the consultants working for NJ Transit (NJT) recommended many improvements in service, they also recommended reductions in service and consolidation of some bus routes, in line with their mandate to keep the cost neutral. In our comments, we strongly criticized these cuts and urged NJT to fully adopt our recommendations for creating and promoting frequent public transportation service corridors, which have proved successful across the country in attracting new ridership.

PROTECTING PARKLANDS

Recreation Issues Subteam Seeks Members

By Vicky Hoover, Recreation Issues Subteam, Sierra Club Alaska Chapter

Do one, two, three, or even more of the issues below bother you? Interest you? Concern you? Upset you? Make you feel some action is needed toward better management?

- Off-road vehicles and personal watercraft
- Planes flying over parks
- Mountain bikes
- Inappropriate trail usage
- Lack of accessible recreation opportunities
- Fees charged for public lands recreation
- Commercialized recreation on public lands



Let the Sierra Club's Recreation Issues Subteam hear from you!

Sierra Club's national Wildlands and Wilderness Team recently created a Recreation Issues Subteam and now seeks interested individuals to join. The team currently has 12 members. There used to be a Recreation Issues team without the "subteam" suffix, but now we work within the Wildlands Team.

The Recreation Issues Subteam's mission is to assist volunteers, build networks, and help coordinate the Club's conservation efforts on recreation issues, primarily on public lands.

While all recreation activities certainly have some impact on the land and ecosystems, a major concern of the Subteam is the way that land managers, pushed by advocates of mechanized recreation, are steadily converting walking trails into mechanized-motorized trails. This type of use conflicts with potential future wilderness designations, among other problems.

If you would like to help our campaign to get better public lands management, please contact Subteam Chair Karl Forsgaard at karlforsgaard@com-cast.net

We are mindful that wild public lands exist not only for human recreation but also for wildlife habitat, so we must bring our recreational pursuits into balance with nature, including wildlife.

Greener Warehouses

New warehouse operations in NJ with at least 100,000 square feet of space will soon be required to reserve 40 percent of roof area for solar arrays, under a law (A3352) Gov. Phil Murphy signed in November. This law applies to warehouses built on or after July 1, 2022. Also, warehouse hot water plumbing must be solar-generated. <https://bit.ly/3HWIMPg>



Social Media Coordinator Matthew Avallone* mattavallone@ymail.com
Treasurer, Secretary John Kashwick John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Warren County Issues Pat Banes* patrick_banes@comcast.net
Webmaster/Listmaster John Kashwick John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Fundraising Chair Open Position!—please contact Jonathan if interested
 (* Group Executive Committee Member)

GENERAL MEETINGS: Meetings are virtual for the time being. Please check <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren> for updates or to register for events. Registered participants will receive Zoom meeting information. There is no meeting in August.

Jan 5 (Wed): 7:30 p.m. Electric Vehicles. Bill Beren, Transportation Chair for the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club, will present on the state's efforts to convert internal combustion to electric vehicles for both state and personal use. Buckle your seat belts! The state is hitting the peddle when it comes to cutting back on gasoline and diesel consumption! Bill will answer questions about the state's plans and the incentives offered to speed up this transition to electric cars, trucks, and buses.

Feb 2 (Wed): 7:30 p.m. To be announced

March 2 (Wed): 7:30 p.m. To be announced

OTHER EVENTS

Jan. 19 (Tues): 7:30 p.m. Virtual Online Executive Committee/Planning Meeting. 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.

CURRENT ISSUES

Oppose Mega-Warehouses: There are several massive warehouse projects that are proposed for Hunterdon and Warren counties. We are working with other groups to oppose these projects that threaten to spread industrial sprawl to our farms and natural areas. For more information, please contact Cinny MacGonagle at cmacgonagle@yahoo.com

Dark Skies: Voorhees State Park in Hunterdon County is home to the NJ Astronomical Association Observatory, which relies on dark skies. The Hunterdon Warren Group is initiating a campaign to have our county and local municipalities adopt stricter ordinances to reduce excessive light pollution which not only conflicts our view of the night sky but also wastes energy and harms wildlife and human health. Please contact John at jkashwick@gmail.com if you are interested in this issue.

Logging on Public Lands: There are several ill-conceived bills in the New Jersey legislature that would impact the health of forests throughout the state. These regulations would require additional expense for municipalities to create management plans for their open space and effectively log their forests under the guise of "forest stewardship."

NORTH JERSEY GROUP

(Bergen and Passaic counties)

Webpage: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey>
Meetup: <https://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/northjerseysierraclub>
Twitter: @sierraclub_nj
Instagram: sierraclubnorth_nj

The duly elected nine-member Executive Committee benefits from the assistance of volunteers. If you are interested in participating at a planning level and/or as a member or leader of one of our committees (see the Committee Descriptions below), please contact the Group Co-Chairs or the Committee Chair.

OFFICERS

Co-Chair	Diane Scarangella*	diascat@hotmail.com
Co-Chair	Buddy Jenssen*	buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
Treasurer	Buddy Jenssen*	buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
Secretary	Laura Troy*	ltroy1019@gmail.com
Political Chair	Open Position!	
Outings Chair	Mary Walsh*	north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Conservation Chair	Mary Walsh*	north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Member	Judy Greene*	jugreen547@gmail.com
Climate Change Chair	Jeff Rapaport*	jefrap@optonline.net
Marketing/		
Social Media Co-Chair	Marie Mannino	mmannino@yahoo.com
Co-Chair	Open Position!	
Inner City Outings Chair	Sophia Neuendorff	sophianeue@gmail.com
Co-Chair	Erica Cowper*	ecowper@drew.edu
Youth Outreach Chair	Erica Cowper*	ecowper@drew.edu
Co-Chair	Sophia Neuendorff	Sophia.N.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com
Diversity/Environmental		
Justice Chair/Co-Chair	Daniel Shirley	shirleydaniel712@gmail.com
Special Events/Membership		
Committee Co-Chair	Hanna Atlas*	h.atlas425@gmail.com
Co-Chair	Open position!	
ExCom Member	Bob Weiss*	bobweiss1967@gmail.com

*Elected North Jersey Group Executive Committee Members.

INTIATIVES: The North Jersey Group is committed to coalition building through outreach and planning with other Sierran Groups and with local and state non-profit organizations. Our collaborative initiatives focus upon (1) encouraging municipal resolutions that support town-level adoption of renewable energy strategies and the environmentally friendly development of affordable housing; (2) opposing gas-fueled plants and the construction of pipelines, transport terminals and the use of tankers and trains to transport Bakken oil, liquid natural gas and other dirty fuels; (3) advocating for renewable energy sources; (4) opposing commercialization and development of county, state and local parkland and open spaces; (5) advocating for removal not capping of contaminated soil on undeveloped public land and the restoration of that

How to Identify Your Group (by county)

Skylands Group: Sussex & northern Warren
Hunterdon Warren 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 listed in rough geographical sequence: North to South)

SKYLANDS GROUP

(Sussex and Northern Warren counties)

Webpage: <https://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/skyland>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC>
Email: ggorman07419@embarqmail.com; Phone: 973-886-7950

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

Chair (12/31/22)	Greg Gorman	ggorman07419@embarqmail.com
Vice Chair (12/31/21)	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Secretary (12/31/22)	Norene Haberski	norenehaberski2@gmail.com
Treasurer (12/31/21)	Jeri Doherty	bjd8974@gmail.com
ExCom at large (12/31/21)	Dave Alcock	dwhoob@hotmail.com
(12/31/22)	Nicole Guerrieri	SierraClubNicole@gmail.com
(12/31/21)	Scott Dieman	
(12/31/21)	Chris Dunbar	chrisdunbar458@gmail.com
(12/31/21)	Joanne Morgan	jojommorgan@yahoo.com
Conservation Chair	Greg Gorman	ggorman07419@embarqmail.com
Outings Chair	Dave Alcock	dwhoob@hotmail.com
Outreach Chair	Joanne Morgan	jojommorgan@yahoo.com
Environmental Justice	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Political Co-Chairs	Nicole Guerrieri	SierraClubNicole@gmail.com
	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Co-Publicity Chairs	Jeri Doherty	bjd8974@gmail.com
	Joanne Morgan	jojommorgan@yahoo.com
Webmaster	Nicole Guerrieri	SierraClubNicole@gmail.com
Membership Chair	Open Position – please contact Greg!	

GENERAL MEETINGS Conducted via Zoom meetings
 The Skylands Group of the NJ Sierra Club serves the environmentally sensitive region of Sussex and Northern Warren Counties in Northwestern New Jersey.

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 address other local, national and global environmental issues as they arise.

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" and opposes the proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline Compressor station in Wantage.

The Skylands Group supports the Green New Deal, Sunrise Movement, Sierra Club's Ready for 100 Campaign, and projects to move toward a clean energy economy.

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

HUNTERDON WARREN GROUP

(Hunterdon and Southern Warren counties)

Webpage: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren>
Meetup: <https://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sierraclub.hunterdonwarren/>

OFFICERS

Chair	Jonathan Wall *	jonwall@jonwall.com
Vice Chair	Celeste Martin *	onecentral@mac.com
Conservation Chair	Chris Runion*	runionc3@gmail.com
Political Co-Chairs	Karen Becker *	karbecker@gmail.com
	Amy Weeder *	aweeder@comcast.net
Highlands Issues Coordinator	Cinny MacGonagle *	cmacgonagle@yahoo.com
Outings	Jonathan Wall *	jonwall@jonwall.com

land to its natural state; (6) advocating for the clean-up of polluted waterways and for the transition to non-polluting sources of transport on the Hudson and other NJ/NYC waterways; (7) supporting access to affordable health care to address the harm done to the health of residents in environmental justice communities; (8) increasing group diversity, and (9) supporting the efforts of organizations who are “on the ground” in environmental justice communities.

We continue to focus our existing efforts upon fighting climate change; creating more opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy and appreciate nature; and collaborating with coalitions, such as Empower NJ and Don't Gas the Meadowlands, and with other New Jersey Groups to advocate for renewable energy and a moratorium on fossil fuel usage, preserve our waterways and protect our parklands.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Unless otherwise noted, meetings and outings are free, open to the general public. Events are announced via email and on our social media. Due to the virus, we have been forced to cancel our in-person events. We are in process of planning and/or co-sponsoring virtual events including:

A Panel on Diversity, Environmental Justice and Community Building

A Collaborative event with Northern NJ NOW focused upon the contributions of Asian-American women. Part 2 of our successful series on Foraging for Fungai an in-person foraging outing this spring.

Please check our Meetup page, Facebook page, or webpage for newly posted meetings and events. Please email our co-chairs or contact one of the committee chairs listed above, if you have suggestions for events or if you would like to be added to our email list.

North Jersey Group committees are seeking volunteers to help us expand our offerings and develop new collaborative relationships with other groups and with corporations/businesses who are seeking to develop corporate responsibility programs in our area. We are seeking volunteers. Please contact the Committee Contacts listed below if you are interested in joining dedicated people taking meaningful action in Bergen and Passaic Counties and throughout the state.

VOUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Webmaster Wanted: We are seeking a dedicated webmaster to work with our Marketing/Social Media Committee. We need someone to develop, monitor and update our webpage and to reach out to Group members to obtain/prepare copy for the website. If interested, please contact Marie at mmannino@yahoo.com

Political Action Committee Chair Wanted: We recommend candidates for political office in Bergen, Passaic and Hudson Counties (where there is overlap). Learn where our elected officials and candidates for office stand on environmental issues by examining their voting records and interviewing them. You can phone bank or otherwise work from your home, or visit candidates and their representatives in their offices. Canvass door-to-door for endorsed candidates. The way you contribute is up to you. But know there is work to do. If interested, contact Diane at diascat@hotmail.com

Conservation Committee: We assist people in the community with grassroots efforts to prevent destruction of natural habitat in Bergen and Passaic Counties and surrounding areas. Help us by finding and reviewing public records, circulating petitions, going door-to-door with lawn signs, speaking in public meetings, and attending and organizing press conferences. The choice of activity is up to you. No activity or time commitment is too small. Make your voice heard. If interested contact Mary at north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org or Judy at jugreen547@gmail.com.

Climate Change Committee: The objectives of the Climate Change Committee are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, discourage new fossil fuel facilities (like the Meadowlands and NJ Transit gas-powered plants) and encourage the use of renewable energy. Slowing down climate change may give scientists time to find permanent solutions to this crisis. Our committee works in conjunction with other environmental groups to support a transition to renewable energy. Your help could bring us a little closer to a cleaner, safer, and healthier world for our children and grandchildren – be a part of it! For more information or to sign up, contact Jeff at jefrap@optonline.net.

Event Planning and Membership Committee Co-Chair Wanted: Interested in conducting an event on a particular topic? Like speaking with other people about environmental issues and concerns? This committee is for you! We seek someone who is dedicated to the environment, believes in the Sierra Club, is enthused about the actions our North Jersey Group is taking and wants to help us move forward through program planning and the recruitment of new members. If interested contact Hanna Atlas at h.atlas425@gmail.com

Marketing/Social Media Committee: Are you creative? Do you love graphic design, writing press releases and short stories, contacting newspapers and radio. and using social media? We need you! If interested, contact Marie at mmannino@yahoo.com

Outings Committee: Organize and lead hikes, snowshoeing, kayaking and other of your favorite outdoor activities on trails and locations of your choice. Trips can vary in length, level of difficulty and location. If interested, contact Mary at north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org or Buddy at buddy.jenssen@gmail.com.

Youth Outreach/Inner City Outings: These Committees work together to outreach to youth, high school and college students and to plan nature walks in local parks for elementary and middle school youth. It outreaches to high schools and youth organizations to encourage local teenagers to become organizers of these events, so that all can appreciate the value of the outdoors. The committee creates liaisons with local schools, parents, other youth groups, and Sierra Club certified hike leaders to help young people learn to appreciate and protect the planet as they explore the natural world. The Committee uses social media to expand participation, as the group conforms to the goals of the national Sierra Club. If you are interested Erica at ecowper@drew.edu or Sophia at Sophia.N.njico.sierra-club@gmail.com

Diversity, Inclusion, and Environmental Justice Committee: Do you want to act to support social, racial, economic and environmental justice? Do you believe that the Sierra Club must become more diverse and that our effectiveness is tied to increased inclusivity? If yes, then our new Diversity, Inclusion and Environmental Justice Committee is the place for you! The North Jersey Chapter promotes awareness of state, national, and international-level efforts addressing environmental justice and inequal-

ity at large. If you are interested in participating in the activities of this committee contact Diane at diascat@hotmail.com or Daniel at shirleydaniel712@gmail.com

GATEWAY GROUP

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

Please contact any of the leaders below if you are interested in joining our campaigns to protect the environment. There are several Group officer positions open.

Webpage: <https://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/gateway>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782>

OFFICERS

Chair	Bill Beren*	973-746-9661	Beren1@verizon.net
Vice-Chair	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Conservation Chair	Caroline Kane*	646-961-9003	ckane678@verizon.net
Secretary	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Treasurer	Rachel Tarzia*	908-531-2168	Rtarzia6@outlook.com
Program Co-Chairs	Suzanne Trimel*	973-509-8335	suzanne.trimel@gmail.com
	Steven Yafet	908-354-2537	syafet@gmail.com
Publicity Chair	Amanda Zhong		zhong.amanda@yahoo.com
Political Chair	Claire Ciliotta	973-746-0438	ccili279@gmail.com
Fundraising Chair	Rachel Tarzia	908-531-2168	Rtarzia6@outlook.com
Membership Chair	Steven Yafet*	908-354-2537	syafet@gmail.com
Newark Issues Chair	Jamie Bruno	973-393-2154	jjjjebruno@gmail.com
Elizabeth Issues	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Recycling	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Passaic River Issues	Steven Yafet (see above)		
Outings Chair	Steven Yafet (see above)		
Webmaster	Christy Morganstein	732-718-4343	christy@medartsweb.com

*Group Executive Committee

Please contact our Program Co-Chairs if you have ideas or suggestions for a meeting topic, program, or conservation project.

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

CONSERVATION NEWS: As of this writing (pre-election day) Governor Murphy still has not committed the necessary funds to purchase the rail right-of-way for the Essex-Hudson Greenway. The Don't Gas the Meadowlands Coalition, of which the Gateway Group is a member, has successfully convinced the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission to put a hold on their fracked gas power plant for their Newark facility while they evaluate renewable energy solutions. It is not clear that they will ultimately adopt a renewable energy solution, but this was an encouraging first step. In early November, we learned that the County was proceeding with the development of a new Asian exhibit within the Turtle Back Zoo. The Gateway Group along with West Orange community groups is continuing to monitor the environmental impact of this expansion on South Mountain Reservation. Essex County has been very opaque about the details of the Asian exhibit. The two issues that concern the coalition are whether the Asian exhibit will stay within the current boundaries of the zoo, and what impact the additional impervious paving will have on flooding, given the major flood that impacted Millburn during Ida.

HUDSON COUNTY GROUP

Webpage: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hudson-county>

Email: hudsonsierraclub@gmail.com

Facebook: @HCSierraClub

Instagram: @HCSierraClub

Twitter: @HCSierraClub

OFFICERS

Chair	Pramod Raju*	modisone@gmail.com
Secretary, Treasurer, Conservation Chair	Patricia Hilliard*	hilliard_patricia@hotmail.com
Political Chair	Ricardo Pereira*	rh.pereira.1995@gmail.com
Delegate to Chapter	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Membership	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Publicity	Alec Hilton*	alechilton1@gmail.com
Outings / Events	Steve Krinsky*	stevekrinsky@comcast.net
At-Large	Nancy Booth*	boothnancy2011@hotmail.com

*ExCom

Schedule: Hudson Group will continue to meet remotely for now. General meetings are held five times a year, usually on Sundays from 12:30-2 p.m. Members are still welcome and encouraged to join the meetings. Contact any of the officers for details about how to join a meeting.

Outings: We are planning a number of activities this fall and beyond: nature walks, shoreline clean-ups, and public forums. Check the calendar for details.

Hudson County Group Goals/Projects for 2021

Sustainability/Youth/Education: Sustainability includes recycling, composting, green infrastructure, mass transportation, and renewable energy. We want to create a task force to teach and promote these issues in our schools and municipalities. Let us know if you would like to help build this task force.

Environmental Justice: Because pollution and environmental degradation tend to harm low-income communities and people of color, we include social justice issues in all of our work. We want to create an Environmental Justice committee to connect with social justice groups in Hudson County to plan actions on this issue. Let us know if you would like to be part of this planning.

>continued on page 8

Political Action: In addition to preparing for upcoming elections in NJ, we hope to meet with sympathetic public officials to discuss strategies to show support for a number of environmental bills now in Trenton. These include the Liberty State Park Protection Act, the Essex Hudson Greenway, the Clean Energy Equity Act, and more. We will also continue to push Governor Murphy—and the state legislature—to oppose fossil fuel infrastructure. We also support the efforts of the Don't Gas the Meadowlands coalition in support of renewable energy for NJ Transit. Let us know if you would like to join our campaigns.

Communications/Social Media: We have created a team of social media activists who can utilize a number of formats to promote environmental issues and campaigns as well as email and the Sierra Club website. More traditional press will be included as well. Join us if you'd like to help.

Current Campaigns

Please join in. We can use help with any of these.

Liberty State Park: The Liberty State Park Protection Act would end efforts to privatize the park once and for all! Join us to show your support for protecting the park. We also support the work that will begin soon on the interior of the park, creating 180 acres of wildlife habitat and 50 acres of active recreation for the community.

Climate Change: New studies show that Hudson County will be harder hit by sea-level rise and catastrophic flooding than any other NJ county. The NJ Sierra Club has joined with other leading environmental groups to form the Hudson Climate Coalition. We are working to build awareness and grass roots support as we transition to 100% renewable energy locally by the year 2050, or sooner. Please get involved and be part of the solution.

Environmental Justice: Low-income communities and communities of color suffer the most from environmental destruction. Elevated levels of cancer, respiratory disease, lead poisoning, and a host of other problems plague these areas. Hudson County has had more than its share of environmental poisoning for generations. We must stand up for social justice in these communities! Join us to take action.

Parks and Greenways: The Hudson County Group of the NJ Sierra Club is working to support and expand green spaces in Hudson County. We want to connect existing parks and trails, as part of the Crossroads Campaign. This includes **Skyway Park** on the Hackensack River, the newly proposed **Essex-Hudson Greenway**, the **Bergen Arches**, the **Sixth Street Embankment** and more. We want to see the shoreline along the Hackensack River become Hudson County's "Green Coast." Learn how you can help.

LOANTAKA GROUP

(Morris and Union counties (except for Elizabeth and Hillside), plus Livingston, Milburn and Roseland, approximately)

Webpage: <https://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC>

OFFICERS

Group Chair	Paul Sanderson	908-233-2414	loantakachair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Treasurer	Paul Sanderson	908-233-2414	paulmsanderson@aol.com
Secretary	Jonathan Connor	201-463-7636	Jon78921@outlook.com
Conser. Chair	Allen Swanson	201-715-7780	afswanson@hotmail.com
Political Chair	Priti Thakker	973-752-1100	thakkerp@icloud.com
Programs	Bob Zega	973-349-8001	rjzega@yahoo.com
Fundraising Chair	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Outings Chair	Kevin O'Brien	908-403-0900	kbkob@aol.com
Publicity Chair	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Membership	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Webmaster	<i>Open Position!</i>		

If you might be interested in getting involved, please attend one of our Executive Committee Meetings, the first Tuesday of each month (except July and August), and get to know us. Or, participate in one of our General Meetings on the second Wednesday of the month (except July and August). There are no obligations and there will be no pressure. Currently, all meetings are held by Zoom.

For more of our activities, please visit: <https://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>

To join our email list, go to: <https://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/nj-loantaka-news.html>

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS are held on the **FIRST TUESDAY** of the month: 7 p.m., by Zoom. All members are welcome. There are currently some open positions! 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 p.m. by Zoom. Learn something new and make some new friends. We would welcome the chance to meet you and introduce ourselves, even by Zoom. Please see the schedule below and join us! Instructions for access are posted on our webpage.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Currently, all Executive Committee and General Meetings are held safely by Zoom; however, in-person meetings at the Chatham Library may resume in January or shortly thereafter.

Jan 12: Please check the Loantaka webpage.

Feb 9: Please check the Loantaka webpage.

Mar 9: Please check the Loantaka webpage.

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 statewide initiatives involving air quality, transportation, and environmental legislation. Volunteers are always welcome. Call Paul at 908-233-2414. Consult our webpage for more information.

CENTRAL JERSEY GROUP

(Mercer County and neighboring towns in adjoining counties)

Webpage: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey>

In normal times we would offer a variety of outings! Not now — until the pandemic is over!

OFFICERS

Group Chair	Joanne Pannone	jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
Group Vice Chair	Xiaoping Duxiaping	du@yahoo.com
Secretary	Leona Fluck	leona@pineypaddlers.com
Outings Coordinators	George and Leona Fluck	leona@pineypaddlers.com
Treasurer:	Arlene Ceterskiva	Va2c2015@gmail.com
Programs	Joanne Pannone	jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
Conservation Chair	Kip Cherry	KipAtTheSierraClub@gmail.com
Recycling/Zero Waste	Sylvia Kay	Sylviakay222@gmail.com
Trails	Dave Mattek	MattekDC@aol.com

We look forward to in-person get-togethers, but until then our monthly lecture series will remain virtual. The Central Jersey Group will post any future activities on the Chapter webpage, Facebook page, and Pineypaddlers.com. Stay home, be patient, stay safe! And don't stop lobbying for our environment!

Here are the issues we are working on currently:

1. Opposing the Gibbstown liquid natural gas terminal
2. Opposing the Hughes Warehouse development on Route 1 and Quakerbridge Road
3. Opposing the Synnergy solar farm proposed for Sweetbriar Ave. in Hamilton, which threatens the community in the already flood-prone Lower Assunpink Creek area
4. Monitoring the new QuickCheck in the Miry Run watershed for flooding potential
5. Opposing Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company's proposed compressor station for the Highlands Preservation Area
6. Supporting NJ's proposed Endangered and Threatened Plant Protection Act (A985)
7. Opposing the Mercer Corporate Park Warehouses development
8. Opposing gas pipelines and compressor stations generally
9. Supporting the park at Miry Run, dam site 21
10. Opposing logging public lands because we don't have 80 years to grow a new tree canopy
11. Promoting electric school buses
12. Opposing NJ Transit's gas-powered electric plants

We are always ready to lobby at the State House for laws to fight polluters and climate change. We need a moratorium on pipelines and fossil fuel projects.

To save the planet, support Empower New Jersey!

Get our news by joining the Sierra Club and signing up to receive our email: <https://sforce.co/3qqkCFG>

RARITAN VALLEY GROUP

(Middlesex and Somerset counties and surrounding areas)

OFFICERS

Group Chair	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
Conservation Chair	Gary Frederick	609-203-3382
	garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org	
Membership Chair	John Miraglia	johnworks3@aol.com
Political Co-Chairs	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Publicity Chair	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Treasurer	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
Webmaster	Paul Ehrlich	p.w.ehrlich-nj@outlook.com
Outings/Events Co-Chairs	S. Pasricha, Brianna Cerione and Bernadette Maher	
Student Liaison	Varin Dharia	
Bee affairs	Brenda Bradley	

Group Executive

Committee Members Gary Frederick, S. Pasricha, Teresa Callahan, Kevin Corcoran, and Paul Ehrlich

Our **monthly membership meetings** are typically held on the **FOURTH WEDNESDAY** of each month in New Brunswick. We discuss environmental news (impacting Middlesex and Somerset counties), upcoming events, speakers, volunteer efforts, etc. To confirm interest/attendance please contact the RVG Chair.

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

1. Opposition to gas and oil pipelines and new fossil fuel infrastructure that threaten the air, water, and our health
2. Conservation and protection of the Raritan River Basin area
3. Passage of and responsible enforcement of environmentally friendly ordinances
4. Land conservation, preservation of open space, and protection of Green Acres

News From the Raritan Valley Area

• **Northeast Supply Enhancement Project (NESE):** The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) granted a 2-year extension, until May 2023, to Williams Transco for NESE, their fracked gas project to supply New York. A proposed gas burning compressor station is to be located in Franklin Township, Somerset County (CS 206) near Route 27 in Princeton and South Brunswick. A pipeline storage loop of 3 miles will be built in Sayreville and Old Bridge near an existing compressor station (CS 207). Pipelines will cross under the Garden State Parkway at Routes 9 and 35. Raritan Bay will be trenched, destroying the marine ecosystem in order to lay 23 miles of pipelines under the bay to transport the gas to the Rockaways in Queens, New York. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2021/05/ferc-grants-2-year-extension-for-nese-shameful>

• In June 2019, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) rejected the wetland permits required to disturb freshwater wetlands for the NESE project. Williams Transco may file new permit applications. Thank you to our friends from the Eastern Environmental Law Center, Clean Ocean Action, Princeton Manor, Central Jersey Safe Energy Coalition, and the Franklin Township Task Force, among others, for your continued efforts to stop this dangerous project!

• **Regional Energy Access Expansion Project (REAE):** The NJ Chapter of the Sierra

Club, along with other environmental groups, submitted comments to FERC demanding that Williams Transco provide a full environmental impact statement (EIS) instead of an environmental assessment (EA). FERC is requiring Williams to submit a full EIS for the newly proposed compressors in Old Bridge (CS 207) and Neshanic Station, Branchburg (CS 505). An explosion in 2013 injured 2 workers at CS 505, and parts of Neshanic Station were under water during tropical storm Ida. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2021/05/sierra-club-fights-new-wil-liams-transco-pipeline>

- **Keasbey, Woodbridge Township:** Various towns have passed ordinances in opposition of a fracked gas power plant proposed by Competitive Power Ventures. New Jersey no longer requires that power suppliers prove that energy projects are needed.
- **Thank you to the Somerset County Board of Commissioners** for leading the state in passing a resolution opposing Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company's dangerous proposal to build compressor stations that threaten our health and environment. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2021/02/somerset-county-opposes-tennessee-gas-compressor-station>

- **Hidden Oak Woods development, East Brunswick:** In July 2021, the Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division, ruled that the township should have required an updated letter of interpretation (LOI). The NJDEP freshwater wetlands LOI used by Alfieri was over 20 years old. Adjacent to Tices Lane Park, a significant number of trees have been cut down in the northernmost Pine Barrens outlier, an area once known as Hickory Swamp.

- **Spotted lantern flies** have been spotted in Somerset County and don't need to be reported. However, please continue to destroy them and remove their egg sacs from tree bark. Middlesex County invasions can be reported to the NJ Department of Agriculture.

- **The Bedminster Trump National Golf Course**, situated in the Highlands Preservation Area, needs new water permits from the NJ Water Supply Authority. www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2020/10/trump-s-bedminster-golf-course-water-hearing-delayed-again

- **The NJDEP upgraded regulations for Category 1 (C1) waterways to protect water supplies for NJ residents.** Unfortunately, Flemington and Raritan Township municipal utilities authorities have sued the NJDEP to downgrade C1 protections for the South Branch Raritan River in Somerset County, which would allow the continued dumping of chemically treated sewage into the river.

- South Plainfield, Clark, Edison, Metuchen, Woodbridge, and Carteret: The Middlesex Water Company has issued a **perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)** exceedance alert to **all** of its customers who receive water from their South Plainfield treatment facility.

- **A storage facility** is proposed at 850 Main Street in Sayreville. The owner previously had been fined for illegally removing trees on the property.

- Branchburg passed an ordinance to prohibit standalone warehouses.
- A mega-warehouse on a 10-acre site along the Raritan River is proposed at 41 Glendale Road in Edison. The town is in negotiation with the developer to purchase the property and convert it to open space.

- **Warehouse Solar-Ready Bill:** S3504/A3352 sponsored by Senator Bob Smith and Assemblyman James Kennedy, has been passed and is awaiting Governor Murphy's signature. The bill requires all newly constructed warehouses to be solar-ready buildings. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2021/05/warehouse-solar-ready-bill-released-cmt>

- **The Clean Ocean and Safe Tourism (COAST) Anti-Drilling Act** has been reintroduced by Congressman Frank Pallone. If enacted, this legislation will protect our coasts from oil/gas exploration, development and production. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2021/05/rep-pallone-reintroduces-coast-anti-drilling-act>

- **Electric School Bus Bill:** A1971 sponsored by Assemblyman Sterley Stanley would establish a 5-year pilot program to demonstrate the advantages of electric school buses. It has been passed in the Assembly and is now in the Senate (S1819), sponsored by Sen. Patrick Diegman. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2021/05/electric-school-bus-bill-released-cmt>

- **Kearny and Edison:** Polluters are going to be held accountable in Environmental Justice communities. Attorney General Grewal and NJDEP Acting Commissioner Shawn LaTourette announced the filing of new environmental enforcement actions. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2021/05/ag-dep-holds-polluters-accountable-ej-communities>

We encourage you to get involved by attending your town's planning and zoning board meetings. If you are aware of development proposals in your town that may have a negative environmental impact, please contact us and join our meetings. We are also interested in any environmental news or events affecting Middlesex and Somerset counties and invite you to submit those items as well.

Like us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC

Tweet with us: <https://twitter.com/RaritanSierra>

JERSEY SHORE GROUP

(Monmouth County, approximately)

Webpage: <https://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/>
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/sierraclub_jerseyshore/?hl=en

OFFICERS

Group Chair	Dennis Anderson	732-970-4327	dennisaza@aol.com
	6 Maple Ave, Matawan NJ 07747		
Vice Chair	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com
Secretary	John Luard	732-708-9221	John.Luard@gmail.com
Conservation Co-Chairs	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com
	Bob Sandberg	732-241-7757	Sandberg00@gmail.com
	Stan Greberis	732-431-0882	grapefruit@msn.com
Treasurer	Jim Baye		jimbaye@optonline.net
Political Co-Chairs	Robin and Harold Zullo		drzullo@optonline.net
Outings Chair	John Luard	732-708-9221	John.Luard@gmail.com
Outings Leaders	Open Position!		
Membership Chair	Wael Kanj		
Program Chair	Mary Reilly	908-731-2466	Mary@reillygreen.com
Climate Chair	Steve Miller	732-671-5917	SteveMiller@Comcast.net
Fundraising Co-Chair	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com

Communications Chair	Wael Kanj		waelkanj@gmail.com
Education Chair	George Moffatt	732-544-1726	gmoffattgt@aol.com
High School Coord.	Open Position!		
Letter-writing Committee	Steve Miller and Stan Greberis		

MEMBER MEETINGS: We present Zoom webinars, usually on the fourth Monday of every month at 7 p.m.

Speakers Contact: Mary Reilly, 908-731-2466 or Mary@reillygreen.com

If you are not getting emails announcing our webinars, please send one to Wael at waelkanj@gmail.com, or sign up at our webpage.

OCEAN COUNTY GROUP

Webpage: [Meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Ocean-Group](https://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Ocean-Group/)

OFFICERS

Acting Chair and Conservation Chair	Margit Meissner-Jackson	sylvia1910@yahoo.com
Vice-Chair and Treasurer	Laura Stone	LauraS36@yahoo.com
Outings and Environmental Education	Terrance Brown	terrybrown@comcast.net
Recording Secretary	Nancy Brown	nancybrown624@comcast.net
Political Chair	Margaret Mary Piccolo	gogreenp1@yahoo.com
Membership Chairs	Ray and Cathy Kozakerich	raykozak@comcast.net
Group ExCom Members	William Rodgers	
	Peter Leighton	JPLighton1@verizon.net
	Joyce Isaza	realtymstr@aol.com

Hospitality, Fundraising, Publicity, Webmaster all open positions!

ACTIVITIES & ISSUES: Our group is focused on many critical issues. Locally and state-wide we are fighting a myriad of overdevelopment problems. 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)

Webpage: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC>

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

Log on and Like Us!

OFFICERS

Group Chair	Gina Carola	856-848-8831	ginaceee@verizon.net
Vice-Chair	Frank Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Secretary	Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Treasurer	Trish Clements		patri3210@gmail.com
Publicity Chair	Anne Caridi		annecaridi@yahoo.com
Political Chair	Linda Rubiano		Linda_Maritza@yahoo.com
Pinelands Rep	Jaime Philpot		jp0t345@gmail.com
Greenways Coord's	Frank and Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Conservation Chair	Stacey Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
Delegate at Large	Aida Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
Membership Chair	Mike Brown	856-547-9221	eyebrown@verizon.net
Media & Communications	Tony Hagen		editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Outings Chair	Samantha Vanaman		samvanwanders@gmail.com
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		
Social Media Coords.	Open position! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831		

GENERAL MEETINGS are held at 7:30 p.m. on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of ALTERNATE MONTHS, September thru May, via Zoom. You do not need Zoom software on your PC or Smartphone, just send an email to ginaceee@verizon.net to get an invitation and link to participate.

Jan 12: Community Solar From Neighborhood Sun. Learn how you can use solar power in your home if you can't put panels on your roof by participating in a Community Solar Energy Pilot Program project. Great for apartment or condo dwellers, too. Randi Orlow presents. Zoom meeting.

Mar 9: Pachamama Alliance - Creating a Sustainable Future for All. Marty Levin will present the mission of the alliance to empower indigenous people of the Amazon rainforest to preserve their lands and culture and, using insights gained from that work, to educate and inspire individuals everywhere to bring forth a thriving, just, and sustainable world. Zoom meeting.

Please check the West Group's Facebook page for updates.

In the meantime, please wear your mask, continue to physically distance and stay safe and well.

Contact Gina to get involved in any of our many initiatives on climate change.

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**Sign up for alerts on helpful actions you can take as an NJ Chapter member to address urgent environmental needs and support Chapter initiatives:
 Visit <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/action-alert-signup-form>**

SOUTH JERSEY GROUP

(Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem counties, approximately)

OFFICERS

Group, Outings Chair	Tom Boghosian	267-930-8583	boghosian1@verizon.net
Vice-Chair	Open Position!		
Conservation Chair	Open Position!		
Political Chair, Calendars	Dick Colby	609-965-4453	dick.colby@stockton.edu
Membership Chair	Open Position!		
Secretary/Treasurer	Julie Akers	609-432-3280	julieakers56@gmail.com

The officers listed above are wearing out (at least with respect to the Club), and would more than welcome new blood, with ideas and energy for local projects. One alternative is to fold back into the West Jersey Group (from which we originated in the mid-1970s). Please contact Dick Colby for a discussion. Otherwise, our consuming conservation issue, adopted just after the Group was founded, continues to be protection of the Great Egg Harbor River, part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and continues to demand the energies of those few officers who spun off from the South Jersey Group and remain active both within the Sierra Club and the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association (GEHWA). 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. 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 email dick.colby@stockton.edu. Dick is also a Commissioner of the Atlantic County Department of Parks and Recreation; contact him if you might be interested in attending monthly Commission meetings, which are open to the public.

Tom Boghosian is an avid kayaker (certified as a Maine Guide!), both oceangoing and in fresh waters, possibly willing to lead trips. Julie Akers also works with Atlantic County Friends of the Parks, and is President 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, called the **New Jersey State Long Trail**. Many others (and other groups) are contributing. Detailed maps and descriptions are now on the Chapter website. Dick has also produced a brochure describing 15 historic walks in Egg Harbor City. Copies (electronic or paper) are available on request. Every municipality ought to have its own such brochure: This is a hint for you to try your hand at it! (2) We continue to hope for opportunities for each municipality in South Jersey to participate in the Community Solar Energy Pilot Program, operated by the Atlantic County Utilities Authority or other public agencies and promoted by the Board of Public Utilities, with cooperative acceptance by Atlantic City Electric. (3) With the passage of statewide plastic-bag-prohibiting legislation effective May 4, 2022, there's preparation needed by each Club member and every other resident of New Jersey! (4, etc.) Many other South Jersey issues are described in previous issues of this Newsletter, available on the Chapter website.

Some Allied Organizations, likely meeting by Zoom:

Jan. 26 and March 22: (alternating fourth Tuesdays) 6:30 p.m.: **Great Egg Harbor Watershed Assn.** Activities centered on protecting the National Wild and Scenic River. All are welcome. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280.

Dec. 2, Jan. 5, Feb. 2 and March 2: (first Wednesdays) 6:30 p.m.: **Atlantic County Friends of the Parks:** Monthly meetings of a group that works to improve and promote the Atlantic County Park System. All are welcome. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280. Website: <https://www.facebook.com/Atlantic-County-Friends-of-the-Parks>

Dec. 9 and Feb. 9: (alternate second Wednesdays) 7 p.m.: Bimonthly meeting of **Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries** (another "partnership river" under federal protection). Cumberland County development issues are commonly discussed, including artistic, historical, and recreational attributes of the area. Contact Karla Rossini (CU) at 609-774-5853 or karla.rossini@cumauriceriver.org. Website: www.cumauriceriver.org

Dec. 16 and Feb. 16: (alternate third Wednesdays) 6:30 p.m.: **Great Egg Harbor Scenic and Recreational River Council:** Representatives of the 12 municipalities discuss and implement river management strategies. Meetings are open to the public. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280.

Jan. 26, Feb. 23 and March 23: (fourth Wednesdays), 7 p.m.: **Atlantic Audubon Society** is a lively member organization with strong environmental programs and an excellent monthly online newsletter. Membership is free. Meetings (if physical) are in the Gallo-way Township Library, 306 E. Jimmie Leeds Rd. www.AtlanticAudubon.org

SINGLES SECTION

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

Webpage: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles>

OFFICERS

Interim Co-Chairs	Ron Pate and Jimi Oleksiak
Outings Chair	Position Open!
Conservation Chair	Position Open!
Treasurer	Position Open!
Social Chair	Position Open!
Vice Social Chair	Position Open!
Programs	Position Open!
Publicity	Position Open!
Membership	Position Open!
Nominations	Position Open!

Executive committee members Rozanna Fanelli, Ron Pate, and Jeff Sovelove.

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.

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: <https://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 listed on the online calendar on the Chapter's web site: 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 the Outings section of 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 (LGBTQ+) SECTION

Our mission is to support Sierra Club goals, and to promote environmental activism and social equity. We are an inclusive group and all are welcome to join our events.

Webpage: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/>

Meetup: <https://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt>

OFFICERS

Chair	William Parish *	whparishiv@gmail.com
Secretary	John Kashwick *	John.Kashwich@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Treasurer	Jonathan Wall *	docjdwall@gmail.com
Outings Chair	Robert Zitzman *	robertmzi@yahoo.com
Fundraising	Matthew Lang *	matthewjlang58@gmail.com
Webmaster/Listmaster	John Kashwick *	John.Kashwich@newjersey.sierraclub.org

(* Section Executive Committee Member)

Please check web site for further meetings and events.

SENIOR SECTION / FIFTY-PLUS SECTION

The Senior Section is a chapter-wide special interest section for members over fifty years of age. The mission of this section is to support the Sierra Club's goals through letter writing, phone calls, and other activities. We work through a list-serve, by which members learn about current environmental issues, how these issues can be supported, and places and events of interest to visit in New Jersey and surrounding states. In the future we hope to appoint members who will be responsible for leading and carrying out efforts related to those issues.

Arline Zatz is the Editor and Chair of the Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section. She can be reached at azatz@funtravels.com and invites members to check her web site at www.funtravels.com for trips, tips, a source of travel information for New Jersey and other states.

Paul Ehrlich is the Vice-Chair (phehrlich-NJ@outlook.com). He vice-edits the Essays Section of the Senior Section web site. 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 Paul for editing and approval and it will be posted on our website.

The Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section is also accessible online at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/senior-section>

Visit our webpage regularly to find out about activities and events, including hikes, cleanups, social gatherings, dinner get-togethers, and other functions for members over 50.

SIERRA STUDENT COALITION

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

National Website: <https://www.ssc.org/>

ICO: INSPIRING CONNECTIONS OUTDOORS

(A special interest activity with the motto: "No child left inside!")

Co-Chairs Zachary Rose & Oscar Nazar chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com
Other Officers Amanda Gaglio, Mike Depardieu

New Jersey Inspiring Connections Outdoors: (NJ ICO) provides safe and fun wilderness trips for children and teenagers with limited access to the outdoors. Volunteer leaders collaborate with community partners to facilitate, lead and promote events that will educate and foster a love of nature and the outdoors for youth in New Jersey who may not otherwise have the opportunity or the means. The program works to reduce barriers by providing gear, transportation, trip fees and leaders to create opportunities to explore, enjoy and advocate for nature. The Chair welcomes inquiries from leaders of schools and other community organizations.

There's an interactive CALENDAR for outings and group events on our website (www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/). Click "Events and Outings"

Covid-19 Guidance for Sierra Club Activities

Issued to all Club entities by Club President Ramon Cruz on August 2, 2021:

The Sierra Club has reinstated our mask mandate at all indoor activities and events regardless of vaccination status. The Activities and Events guidance has been updated to reflect this change: <https://bit.ly/3F4hCm9>

As a reminder, our guidance strongly recommends masking at outdoor events, especially when social distancing cannot be maintained. Unvaccinated persons are required to wear a mask at both indoor and outdoor activities. The Sierra Club strongly recommends all eligible staff and volunteers get vaccinated as quickly as possible as the best defense against Covid-19.

In accordance with the updated Sierra Club policy, NJ Chapter Outings have resumed. Registration is required for all outings, and participation on outings is limited to 10. Face masks are required for all children. Please keep appropriate space (6 ft.) between you and other participants on all hikes, listed below. If you are sick and experiencing any possible Covid or cold/flu symptoms, do not attend the outing.



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

GROUP OUTINGS COORDINATORS

Chapter Outings Chair: Ellen Blumenkrantz
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terrybrown@comcast.net

West Jersey: Vacant

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and Robert Zitzman, robertmz@att.net

ICO: chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com

River Touring: Fred Tocce, 908-453-2205 (H)
RD-1, Box 277, Washington 07882

Outing Leaders: Please send write-ups for April-June 2022 to your Group Outings Coordinator (or, if you don't associate yourself with a single Group, directly to the new Chapter Outings Chair) before Feb. 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 to Group Outings Coordinators: Please submit your April-June 2022 trip write-ups by February 3.

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, welfare 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.

Registration is required for all outings, and all outings are limited to 10-12 people at the discretion of the trip leader. Face masks are not required for adults, but are suggested. Face masks are required for all children. Please keep appropriate space (6 ft) between you and other participants on all outings. If you are sick and experiencing any possible Covid-19 or cold/flu symptoms, do not attend the outing.

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 an email 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 • (G) Gateway • (JS) Jersey Shore
(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

JANUARY

Jan 1 (Sat): Monmouth Battlefield State Park Special Tour (Monmouth Co.) Meet at 11 a.m. at the Visitors Center. The Friends of Monmouth Battlefield will be participating in America's State Parks First Day Hikes programs sponsored by the state's Division of Parks and Forestry. A special tour to Perrine Hill will be offered by David Martin and John Resto to view the main American position there and visit sites associated with Molly Pitcher and "the well." Guided tours to this area are conducted only two or three times a year. The tour will be over between 12:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. Social distancing and other Covid-19 precautions will be followed. Please register to receive further information in case of cancellation due to inclement weather. George & Leona F., 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Jan 5 (Wed): National Bird Day Hike at Veterans Park (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. Leashed dogs are welcome! Meet by the tank and helicopter in the parking lot off Yardville-Hamilton Square Road. Paved trail meanders through woods along Pond Run. Bring snack and drink. Tables and rest rooms are available. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. Leader: Joanne Pannone, (609) 443-6992 jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com (C)

Jan 9 (Sun): Hike Shark River Park, Wall (Monmouth Co.) 1 p.m. We will enjoy the babbling brook that's Shark River in this area and then walk through the outer reaches of the park. About 5 miles at an easy pace, some short climbs, mostly flat. Beginners welcome. Supportive footwear recommended and bring plenty of water. Leader: John Luard. Register online at: Jersey Shore Group | Sierra Club Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Jan 17 (Mon): Martin Luther King Day Hike on the D&R Canal (Mercer/Burlington Cos.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. We'll hike over the Lock 1 "swinging bridge" as we walk along the towpath; perhaps see the resident Bald Eagles. Meet at the Riverline parking lot in Bordentown City. Option for late lunch at Heart of Bordentown (HOB) Tavern. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. Joanne Pannone, (609) 443-6992 jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com or Leona F., 609-259-3734 or Leona@pineypaddlers.com (C)

Jan 23 (Sun): NJ State Museum (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m. Let's enjoy an "indoor outing" to the NJ State Museum on National Pie Day. We'll view the Current Exhibition, Preserving the Pinelands: Albert Horner's Portraits of a National Treasure. Interested in dinosaurs? The Museum has added two NJ life-size fossil casts to Written in the Rocks: Fossil Tales of New Jersey! Check the website for details: www.state.nj.us/state/museum/ The Museum requires masks for all visitors over 2 years old. Co-Leaders: Leona F. leona@pineypaddlers.com or Joanne P jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com (C)

Jan 30 (Sun): Hike the Franklin Parker Preserve (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace on the Yellow Trail. "Hot Chocolate Day"—good idea to bring a thermos on the hike! The 9,400-acre preserve is a keystone piece of land, linking the expanses of Brendan Byrne, Wharton, and Penn State Forests and creating a more contiguous Pinelands National Reserve. Meeting at Speedwell entrance off RT 563, Woodland Township. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bring lunch and water. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. George & Leona F., 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

FEBRUARY

Feb 2 (Wed): Groundhog Day Hike at Jakes Branch County Park (Ocean Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. Jakes Branch has a nature center with interesting hands-on exhibits and an observation deck that offers a 360° view of the Pinelands. Meet at Jakes Branch Park, 1100 Double Trouble Rd., Beechwood, NJ. Bring water and snacks. Option for late lunch at Shady Rest Restaurant. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather/ice conditions cancel. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. George & Leona F., 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Feb 11 (Fri): Hike Hartshorne Woods, Middletown and Highlands (Monmouth Co.) 1:30 p.m. Enjoy river and ocean views, as well as mature woods. About 4 miles, easy pace, some ups and downs, bring plenty of water, supportive footwear recommended. Optional tour of Battery Lewis after the hike. Leader: John Luard. Register online at Jersey Shore Group | Sierra Club Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Feb 12 (Sat): High Point State Park Cross Country Ski (Sussex Co.) 10 a.m. There is a [full-service cross-country ski center](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey) at the park with rentals and a ski lodge. We expect to spend 4-5 hours for fun in the snow. Features: incredible views all around. Facilities: No pets. XC skis and boots and a day pack with water are required. Bring a lunch. Register online at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey> Directions for the meeting place will be sent via email to members who register. Leader: Jimi Oleksiak <The_Hikist@mac.com>

Feb 13 (Sun): "Galentine's" and Valentine's Day Hike at Smithville Park (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace at Historic Smithville Park in Vincentown, NJ. The Park features a diverse collection of habitats and terrain and offers Rancocas Creek vistas. Meet at the Smith's Woods access parking lot, East Railroad Ave. Option for late lunch at Vincentown Diner after the hike. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. George & Leona F., 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Feb 19 (Sat): Whitesbog Village Winter Hike (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles. Easy pace. Whitesbog is a NJ historic site and was a village built to house workers in the local cranberry bogs. Perhaps we'll see wintering tundra swans as we hike around the bogs. Directions www.whitesbog.org Bring beverage and lunch. It's National Love Your Pet Day! Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. George & Leona F., 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com (C)

MARCH

Mar 1 (Tues): Mardi Gras Hike at Thompson Park Conservation Area (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. It's also Paczki Day (Polish doughnut). A highlight of our hike is the Natural Spring located in the Park; one of 12 in NJ. www.findaspring.com/ Thompson Park is dominated by heavily wooded forests and lowland swamps along the Manalapan Brook. We will meet at the Thompson Park Trailhead near the Off-Leash Dog Area on Fir Drive, off Perrineville Rd., Monroe Township. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Hiking poles recommended. Leashed dogs are welcome. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. Co-Leaders: Sindhu P: spjersey@gmail.com, and Leona F., 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (RV)

Mar 12 (Sat): Pyramid Mountain NHA Hike, Boonton (Morris Co.) 10 a.m. The hike will cover 6 miles, moderate pace with some elevation gain. No pets. Hiking boots required, bring lunch. Rain cancels. Facilities: Portable toilet in parking lot and an indoor restroom in the visitors center. Registration required via Web: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey> Directions for the meeting place will be sent via email to members who register. Leader: Jimi Oleksiak <The_Hikist@mac.com>

Mar 12 (Sat): Explore the Unique History, Ecology, and Culture of the Pinelands (Atlantic Co.) Join me, Joanne, at Stockton University for the 33rd Annual Pinelands Short Course. This is a day-long event featuring educational presentations that explore the unique history, ecology, and culture of the Pinelands! For further information and registration please contact Joanne P. and note "Sierra" in the email subject: jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com or (609) 443-6992 (C)

>continued on page 12

Mar 13 (Sun): DST Hike at the Davidson's Mill Pond Park (Middlesex Co.) Note later meeting time at 11 a.m. 3-4 miles, easy pace. This Park is passive and primarily undeveloped. The pond and the waterfall, where the mill was once located, is one of the most picturesque areas of the County. www.njhiking.com/davidsons-mill-pond-park/ Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Hiking poles recommended. Leashed dogs are welcome. Rain cancels. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. Meeting location will be sent with confirming email. Co-Leaders: Sindhu P.: spjersey@gmail.com, and Leona F.: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (RV)

March 13 (Sun): Hike Cheesequake State Park, Old Bridge (Middlesex Co.) 1:30 p.m. We'll use a couple of trails to create about 5 miles of walking in uplands near salt marsh. The pace will be easy, but there are some ups and downs, bring plenty of water, supportive footwear recommended. Leader: John Luard. Register online at Jersey Shore Group | Sierra Club Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Mar 20 (Sun): Spring Equinox Hike at Estell Manor (Atlantic Co) 10 a.m., 5-6 miles, easy pace. Meet at the Warren E. Fox Nature Center on 109 Boulevard Rte. 50, Mays Landing and see the displays before we hike. Bring lunch, water, snacks for our lunch break during the hike. Leashed dogs are welcome! Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. Leona and George F., 609-259-3734 or Leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Mar 27 (Sun): Hike at Maurice River Bluffs Preserve (Cumberland Co) 10 a.m., 5 miles, easy pace. The Nature Conservancy prides itself on protecting great places like the Maurice River Bluffs, a majestic preserve overlooking the river. www.njhiking.com/maurice-river-bluffs/ Bring binoculars, water and snacks. Address: 1200 Silver Run RD. Millville, NJ 08332. Leashed dogs are welcome. Option for late lunch at the Maurice River Diner. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. George & Leona F., 609-259-3734 or Leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Apr 1 (Fri): A Lighthearted Day Hike at Mercer County Park (Mercer Co) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. We'll meet at the East Picnic Area parking lot 1346 Edinburg Rd., Princeton Junction, NJ 08550. We'll walk the East Trails and see the new Campground available for overnight camping on the trail to the Casperson Rowing Center. Bring lunch, water, and snacks. Leashed pets are welcome. Preregistration is Required; Group size is limited to 10 participants. Rain cancels. Leader, Joanne P., jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com (C)

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

Upcoming Meetings
 All members are welcome to attend these monthly policy deliberations, held by Zoom video conferencing on second Saturdays. Zoom can be accessed from a computer, smartphone or telephone. The Conservation Committee meeting starts at 10 a.m.; and the Executive Committee, 1 p.m. Access information is available by writing to: secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org.
Upcoming Meetings: Jan. 8, Feb. 12, March 12, April 9



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Communications Coordinator: Megan Steele
Megan.Steele@SierraClub.org

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.

Please share this newsletter with a nonmember friend and invite them to join (see membership coupon this page).



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The Jersey Sierran appears in January, April, July and October. The deadline for copy for the 2022 April to June issue is February 3. Members are welcome to propose articles, essays, letters, poetry, and art for publication.
 (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. Advertisements and services carry no Club endorsement.

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

Members please send address changes to: address.changes@sierraclub.org, or Sierra Club Membership 2101 Webster St., Suite 1300 Oakland, CA 94612 or 415-977-5653, and NJ Sierra Club, 145 West Hanover St. Trenton, NJ 08618

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Enclose check and mail to:
Sierra Club Member Services
 2101 Webster St., Suite 1300
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SIERRA CLUB

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Dismal Swamp Is Renamed in Honor of Its Protector

In August, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a bill renaming the Dismal Swamp of Middlesex County and the Dismal Swamp Preservation Commission as the Peter J. Barnes III Wildlife Preserve and Peter J. Barnes III Wildlife Preservation Commission, respectively.

The marshes cover nearly 660 acres and straddle the borders of Edison, South Plainfield, and Metuchen. They are home to an estimated 175 species of birds, including the endangered loggerhead shrike, 25 types of reptiles and amphibians, and dozens of mammals.

The renaming was in memory of the late Peter Barnes III (1956-2021), a former 18th Legislative District representative. Barnes served in the General Assembly from 2007 to 2014 and in the Senate until 2016, when he was appointed an NJ Superior Court judge.

Barnes was passionate about the preservation of Dismal Swamp and fought hard for its protection, often going door to door. Dismal Swamp is the largest natural area remaining in Northern Middlesex.

Barnes was a champion for the environment. The Dismal Swamp is one of the jewels of New Jersey and preserving this habitat was also crucial for open space and flooding protections. As you drive around Middlesex County and enjoy open space and clean air and water, you will appreciate this part of Barnes' legacy. He dedicated his life to making New Jersey a better place. Renaming this space after him is a fitting tribute.

Link to the bill's text: <https://www.billtrack50.com/BillDetail/1378559>

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Lead Mitigation in Homes and Businesses

In July, Gov. Phil Murphy signed three bills into law to address the ongoing lead crisis in New Jersey. One of these requires lead paint inspection prior to home purchases and tenant turnover. It also establishes an educational program on lead hazards. Another requires public community water systems to inventory and replace lead service lines within 10 years, and a third provides for funding residential lead service line replacement.

These laws will help protect children and adults from exposure to lead; they will also help find out where lead lines are and provide a mechanism to pay to replace those lines. But home lead inspections are critical and we also need a long-term solution that will help remove lead from older homes and, especially, our schools. This is the beginning of dealing with a systemic problem that's going to take years of work and a lot of funding to do properly.

Disproportionately Affects Children

Lead is one of the most hazardous substances known to man and it disproportionately affects children, especially small children, in our urban areas. It can cause illness and even in small amounts can cause learning disabilities. The Covid-19 pandemic was especially deleterious because children spent significantly more time at home. The incidence of elevated blood lead levels rose by 29% and lead testing decreased by 20%.

According to sponsors of the legislation, in certain areas of the state, as many as 7.6 percent of children have elevated blood-lead levels. About 80 percent of lead poisoning cases are caused by lead-based paint in homes built before 1978, which means lower-income families are most likely to suffer exposure. Under the newly signed legislation, lead inspections will be required in all pre-1978 rental units at tenant turnover or every three years.

About 350,000 homes and businesses in New Jersey are served by lead service lines, according to the American Water Works Association. We need to pass more legislation and establish programs to protect our drinking water from lead. We need to protect our most precious resources—our children.

Heavy Rainfall Is on the Rise

Extreme precipitation amounts in New Jersey are 2.5 percent higher than 1999 data suggest, and precipitation is likely to increase more than 20 percent from the 1999 baseline, according to New Jersey-specific peer-reviewed studies by the Northeast Regional Climate Center. Some parts of the state have seen a 10 percent increase in extreme precipitation events. State Climatologist David A. Robinson said the findings argue for an update of the Atlas 14 precipitation data, which is used in flood potential analysis and stormwater infrastructure design. Two 100-year storms, Henri and Ida, hit the same areas of New Jersey less than two weeks apart in the summer of 2021.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Ida Makes the Case for Climate Change Preparation

The deadly Tropical Storm Ida brought tornadoes, 30 deaths, flooding, and more in New Jersey. A tornado that touched down in Mullica Hill, Gloucester County, was rated EF-3 by the National Weather Service, with winds up to 150 m.p.h., lasting for over 20 minutes, and traveling 12.6 miles. In Mullica Hill it tore off roofs, demolished walls, and tossed cars about. It was one of seven Ida-related tornadoes recorded in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Such events are yet another reminder that our shore and inland areas are not prepared for climate change and sea-level rise. In the aftermath of Ida, Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Gloucester, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Union, and Warren counties received disaster declarations for Federal Emergency Management Agency funding.

The sea level is rising and warming temperatures are a one-two punch, making hurricanes and storm surges more damaging and even more deadly. Unfortunately, we are still building in vulnerable areas and granting permits under Christie-era regulations that don't protect against climate change or storm impacts. Instead, we need to adapt and mitigate. This means limiting development, pulling back from building in flood-prone areas, and investing in restoring the state's natural systems.

Gov. Phil Murphy and his administration need to take bold action quickly. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection needs to fix former governor Chris Christie's rollbacks and put climate change into rules and regulations like the Coastal Areas Facilities Act (CAFRA), flood hazard rules, land use regulations, and air permits. The state has wasted hundreds of millions of dollars on projects that pump sand onto our beaches that only washes out in the next storm. Instead, New Jersey must invest in long-term and effective mitigation solutions for our shore and inland communities.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

PVSC Seeks Reduced Emissions Permit for Ironbound Backup Plant

During Hurricane Sandy in 2021, a 12-foot storm surge inundated Newark's Ironbound neighborhood and the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) plant, causing the plant to lose power and release 840 million gallons of raw sewage into the Passaic River and Newark Bay. The proposed solution to the threat of similar problems, a 34MW standby power generation facility (SPGF), is unacceptable because it would be a gas-fired plant capable of discharging hundreds of tons of CO₂, NO_x, SO₂, suspended particulate matter, and volatile organic compounds during emergency and maintenance operations. This would not only contribute to the greenhouse gas problem but also burden the Ironbound section, mostly populated by lower-income minority residents, making this an Environmental Justice issue.

In the previous *Jersey Sierran*, we reported that, based on stakeholder opposition, the PVSC had announced plans to reevaluate its proposal for the plant and deepen exploration of the use of renewable energy alternatives, such as solar, tidal, hydro, and wind power. At the time, we also reported that Hoboken City Council had passed a resolution in opposition to the gas-fired plant. In a September update, the PVSC said it has submitted a revised request to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for license approval to operate the facility, but with a reduction of 720 hours or requested operation time per year, the equivalent of a 40% reduction in emissions. The DEP has deemed the resubmitted permit application to be administratively complete.

Additionally, the PVSC has repeatedly postponed the opening of bid proposals for construction of the SPGF building, from an original date in June to October, and then again to the authority's November public meeting. The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club opposes this project on grounds of the emissions danger to residents of the Newark area and because of its potential contribution to climate change. We have urged the PVSC to consider renewable energy alternatives for backup power generation.

NJ Supports EV Transition

According to a new poll, 58% of NJ voters support requiring all cars sold to be electric by 2030. This is ahead of the timetable called for by state officials. When he signed S2252 into law in January 2020, Gov. Phil Murphy set a goal for 90% of all new vehicles sold to be electric by 2040. The NJ Department of Environmental protection has called for a phasing out of gas-powered car sales by 2035. Coltura, which did the poll for Environment New Jersey, said 67 percent of voters have at least a somewhat positive opinion of electric vehicles, and 51 percent are likely to buy one in the next five years. <https://prn.to/3CUqQ31>

Have you tried a portion (or more) of New Jersey's new Long Trail? High Point to Cape May Point! Its description (with maps) is now the most visited "post" on the Chapter website: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/long-trail>.

Monarch Butterflies Deserve “Endangered” Protection

By George Moffatt • gmoffattgt@aol.com

Habitat protections and recovery plans may be implemented for species that receive endangered status. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service determine which species are endangered.

Although the plight of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) has been well documented, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) thinks otherwise. “We conducted an intensive, thorough review using a rigorous, transparent science-based process and found that the monarch meets listing criteria under the Endangered Species Act,” USFWS former director Aurelia Skipworth (2019–2021), explained (sort of) last December, then uttered that dreaded word, “however.”

“However, before we can propose listing, we must focus resources on our higher-priority listing actions,” she said.

USFWS believes that prioritizing monarch survival is adequate, but for the thousands of people battling to reverse the monarch’s dwindling population, it’s heresy.

Monarchs, weigh less than a gram and will fly 2,000 miles or more from New Jersey to winter grounds in Mexico. The eastern monarchs migrate to Mexico’s east coast for the winter, while the western monarchs, which summer inland in California, have just a short hop to the Pacific Coast. But monarch migrations that once involved millions of butterflies today are substantially reduced. It is estimated that the eastern monarch population has declined by 80% over the past two decades. Yet these amazing

butterflies don’t qualify for Fish and Wildlife’s endangered designation.

The fuel that propels their migrations comes primarily from milkweed (*Asclepias*), their preferred food. And for good reason. If they don’t eat milkweed, they’ll be easy prey for all sorts of predators. The food chain is thus: First, the milkweeds taste bitter to most leaf-eating mammals because the plants’ defense includes two heart poisons, calactin and calotropin. Second, monarch caterpillars, being immune to the poisons, not only dine on them but maintain the unconverted poisons in their tissues as they evolve into butterflies. Third, predators avoid the monarchs because now, like the milkweed, they taste awful. The exception is immune mice that enjoy both monarchs and milkweed.

In addition to milkweed, their food of choice, monarch butterflies’ will also eat tall flowers such as red clover; Asteraceae, including eupatoriums (boneset) and tubular florets; thistles; and Echinacea (coneflowers).

There are over a hundred types of milkweed, but some are considered threatened. USFWS considers Mead’s milkweed endangered, and Massachusetts considers whorled milkweed threatened. Milkweed range has been substantially diminished by habitat destruction: land development, pesticides, and agricultural encroachment. These have had a significant impact on monarch mortality.

Despite our role in monarchs’ declining numbers, we show a certain emotional attachment to them. In Pacific Grove, Calif., a small sculpture of a



Pacific Grove, Calif., honors its annual migration of monarch butterflies.

Source: Captain Albert E. Theberge, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Corps (ret.)

monarch has been erected as testimony to the multitudes that once visited during migration.

Now, what can we Sierrans do about their endangerment? Why not go on a milkweed planting spree?

- Plant milkweed acclimated to the Northeast.
- Plant bare root milkweed: about \$5 each, or \$15-plus for potted plants (bulk purchases may be cheaper).
- Get advice and assistance from local garden clubs, county agricultural officials, and local monarch organizations.
- Sierra Club members can plant milkweed in their yards as part of their “rain gardens.”
- Urge municipal and county officials

to plant milkweed in parks, on public lands, and school properties.

• Local scouting groups and other school and youth groups might be interested in plantings for ecology projects.

Protecting the monarchs doesn’t have to cost a fortune; it can be scaled to your pocketbook. Hopefully, the monarchs will make a comeback.

It would be a shame if the Pacific Grove monument becomes their memorial.

For more information on monarchs and milkweed, here are just a fraction of the Web resources:

National Geographic, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/2020/12/monarch-butterflies-near-extinction/>

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation: <https://xerces.org/monarchs>

Impacts of climate change and forest fires: https://www.fs.fed.us/wild-flowers/pollinators/Monarch_Butterfly/conservation/index.shtml

Being the “canary in the coal mine:” <https://monarchjoint-venture.org/resources/faq/why-is-the-monarch-population-decline-important>

Beyond just growing milkweed: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/2020/12/monarch-butterflies-near-extinction/> <https://www.monarch-butterfly.com/what-do-monarchs-eat.html> <https://monarchwatch.org> (and a million other sites).

REPORT FROM TRENTON

DWQI Recommends 1,4-Dioxane Standard—Strongest in Nation

In early August, the NJ Drinking Water Quality Institute (DWQI), a division of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) voted unanimously to recommend that the DEP adopt a maximum contaminant limit (MCL) of 0.33 mg/L for 1,4-dioxane, a synthetic chemical used as a solvent in adhesives, resins, oils, and waxes; in wood pulping; and in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals, plastics, rubber, personal care products, and detergents. Released into the environment via leaks, spills, wastewater discharge, and disposal, this contaminant is considered a carcinogen, based on animal studies, and is toxic to the liver, kidneys, and respiratory system.

The US Environmental Protection Agency has set an MCL of 0.35 µg/L for 1,4-dioxane in drinking water, higher than the DWQI has recommended. If adopted, the DWQI guidance would give New Jersey the strongest drinking water standard for 1,4-dioxane in the nation. This will go a long way toward ensuring that public health and safety are protected when it comes to this dangerous substance. Now, the DEP needs to move ahead with rulemaking to remove this extremely toxic compound from our drinking water.

General information about 1,4-dioxane is available here: <https://www.state.nj.us/dep/14-dioxane/docs/14-dioxane-faq.pdf>

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Holistic Shoreline Management Is Needed

In October, the Sierra Club NJ Chapter joined Surfrider Foundation at a press conference in Deal, NJ, to highlight the environmental and economic failures of beach replenishment. Over 20 groups, including the NJ Chapter, have signed a statement opposing S1071 (Kean)/ A639 (Mazzeo) legislation that would double the amount of money going into the Shore Protection Program. This bill does not take a holistic and regional approach toward climate warming and storm surge mitigation. Instead, it perpetuates the very costly and marine-harmful cycle of beach sand replenishment and erosion.

Beach replenishment is not the ultimate solution for storm surges and sea level rise. It is at best a temporary solution that provides false hope. We have watched countless failed beach replenishment projects pump millions of dollars of sand on our beaches that just washes away in the next storm. That is why it’s critical that our legislators look at an overall comprehensive and long-term solution.

The Sierra Club NJ chapter supports an amendment to A639 (Mazzeo) enabling a comprehensive approach to beach erosion and shoreline damage from storms, shoreline migration, and sea-level rise. A more sensible program would involve removal of structures from the water’s edge; restoration of natural features such as dunes, wetlands, coastal marshes, natural habitats, and stream buffers; and other shoreline restoration projects. In addition, shoreline municipalities receiving funding from this act must adopt ordinances that will preclude development in flood-prone areas.

CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT

Join the 50 x 30 Team to Meet New Jersey's 2030 Climate Goals

By Steve Miller, Climate Chair of our Jersey Shore Group • SteveMiller@comcast.net

From the start of 2021 through October, 18 weather-related disasters in the United States had caused 538 deaths and \$105 billion in damages. This has been among the most active and costly years for such events, which are becoming more frequent.

Do you remember the climate disasters during the first half of 2021? Here are some of the things that happened:

- Severe heat waves in the US Pacific Northwest, British Columbia, and Siberia
- Searing wildfires in Oregon, California, Montana, and other parts of the West
- New York City, Philadelphia, the nation's capital and other parts of the Eastern Seaboard shrouded in Western wildfire smoke
- Historic flooding in Germany and other parts of Western Europe
- Rising concerns of a "mega-drought" across several Western states

(The above examples are from Yale Climate Connections, 8/4/2021.)

The evidence is clear: Our current extreme weather is the tip of the iceberg. President Biden has often stated—and the Paris Agreement, the August report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and thousands of scientists all agree—we must achieve a 50 percent greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction by 2030, on the way to net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. (<https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/09/world/global-climate-change-report-un-ipcc>)

"On a business-as-usual course... our [NJ] 2050 GHG [emissions] would be higher than they are today," states an October 15, 2020, report by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. The report recommends strategies for policymakers to achieve GHG goals. See the executive summary at the beginning of <https://www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/mitigation.html>

Take actionable steps now to influence future policies. Join the 50 x 30 Team (not the Sierra Club 30 by 30 Task Force) to help reduce GHG emissions 50 percent by 2030. Our focus is on GHG from New Jersey's three biggest sources: transportation, buildings (residential/commercial use of natural gas), and electricity generation from fossil fuels, while supporting environmental justice for low- and moderate-income NJ residents.

New Jersey's 50 x 30 team educates and advocates that households, municipalities, and the state and federal governments set aggressive goals and track progress to reduce the three primary sources of GHG. Ask NJ towns to start GHG reductions by instructing their Green Teams to achieve "Gold Star in Energy" sustainability and GHG reduction under www.SustainableJersey.com programs.

An action example: On September 30, the 50 x 30 Team released a letter to solicit comments from Gov. Murphy. This letter reinforced and added detail to a July 21 petition from Empower NJ to the NJ DEP requesting rulemaking on a 50% GHG reduction target by 2030. The NJ Sierra Club is one of seven key leaders of Empower NJ.

<https://www.nj.gov/dep/rules/petition/pet20210721> On November 11, 2021, Murphy responded to our letters by signing Executive Order 274, which created an NJ goal to achieve 50 percent GHG reduction by 2030. Intensive work now begins to reach that goal!

Sign up now for the 50 x 30 Team at <https://eepurl.com/dpWC1n>. You will receive reports, agendas, and calls to action. Typical Zoom meetings are at 7 p.m., on the third Thursday of each month and as needed for those members working on high-intensity projects. For more information, please contact me at the address in the byline above.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Follow CDC Guidance

By George Moffatt, Programs Support Facilitator • gmoftattgt@aol.com

Due to the continuing threat from Covid-19, the Sierra Club is currently requiring all Staff and Volunteers wishing to return to in-office work between now and February 28, 2022 to be vaccinated.

The Club's guidance can provide for your safety and assist with the global effort to bring the pandemic under control.

By mid-November, more than 5 million people worldwide had died of Covid-19, including 769,000 US residents. According to the Centers for Disease Control, by mid-November, 100 percent of Covid-19 samples collected in a region including New Jersey and New York were of the variant Delta variety, which can result in increased disease severity and increased spread from person to person.

As of mid-November, roughly 59 percent or about 194 million Americans were fully vaccinated against Covid-19, about 11 percent were partially vaccinated, and the remaining 30 percent were not vaccinated at all.

Because the available vaccines for Covid-19 lose effectiveness over

time, it is essential to obtain a booster shot. In November it was reported that the vaccines from Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson are significantly less effective against the Delta variant, so it is important to maintain masking, hand-washing, and social distancing precautions.

For example, the Moderna vaccine went from being 89% effective in March 2021 to 58% effective in September 2021; and the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine dropped from 87% effectiveness to 45% effectiveness over the same interval.

The CDC recommends vaccinations, masking in indoor public places and close-contact outdoor settings, 6-foot distancing, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces (bars, restaurants, fitness centers, theaters), frequent handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces.

Updated CDC recommendations can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

STUDENT LIAISON REPORT

Vision: Fully Electrified School Bus Fleets

By Raghav Akula

The Sierra Club, both statewide and nationally, is hard at work and in need of volunteer help.

The Transportation Committee of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club has set a goal of reaching 100% electric school buses within the next decade. We're looking for high school students to lobby their boards of education and school administrators to replace diesel school buses with battery powered ones. Already, three NJ districts have an electric school bus pilot program, and we're hoping more join the movement for these less-costly modes of transportation and a healthier environment. Removing diesel buses will improve air quality and mitigate climate change; these benefits are enormous and hard to understate.

On the national level, the Sierra Club's Ready For 100 campaign is in full swing. The goal is to encourage municipalities to commit to 100% clean energy, and 180 cities and eight states have taken this pledge. At the time of this writing, President Joe Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework spending package was under consideration in Congress, and this had major implications for not just climate action but also environmental justice. The bill included provisions for cleaner drinking water, public transportation improvements, environmental remediation, energy transmission for the renewable era, zero-emission school buses, and much more. Biden's social safety net package (Build Back

Better) would address climate issues also, through emissions curbs, and clean-energy and electric vehicle tax credits. The Sierra Club urged citizens everywhere to press their elected representatives to support the provisions in this plan.

For my own part, I participated in two local cleanups in recent weeks. I was deeply inspired by a quote from climate activist Edgar McGregor, who won national media attention for spending 589 consecutive days picking up litter in Eaton Canyon, one of Los Angeles County's most popular hiking spots: "In my view, keeping your local parks free of trash is one of the most concrete, individually beneficial, and immediately rewarding actions one can take to get involved in environmentalism." Taking this doctrine to heart, I joined a trail cleanup organized by Cherry Hill's Environmental Board for National Public Lands Day and trimmed tree branches and cut down trees devastated by the invasive spotted lanternfly. The second cleanup, organized through the community service nonprofit Sewa International, simply entailed picking up trash and litter around my community.

There's no shortage of ways to get involved in the environmental movement, and it's exciting to be able to make a difference when it's so desperately needed. Join the fight! <https://www.sierraclub.org/ready-for-100-toolkit/what-ready-for-100>.