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Zuni Salt Lake Saved

■ BY TOM VALTIN

In July, 500 people attended a "People's Hearing" at New Mexico's Zuni Pueblo. They gathered in opposition to a proposed coal mine on Zuni sacred lands by the Salt River Project (SRP), the nation's third-largest electrical utility. At the conclusion of the hearing, the sky opened up and let loose a torrential downpour, which the Zuni took as a blessing from heaven. A month later, SRP cancelled plans for its massive strip mine near Zuni Salt Lake.

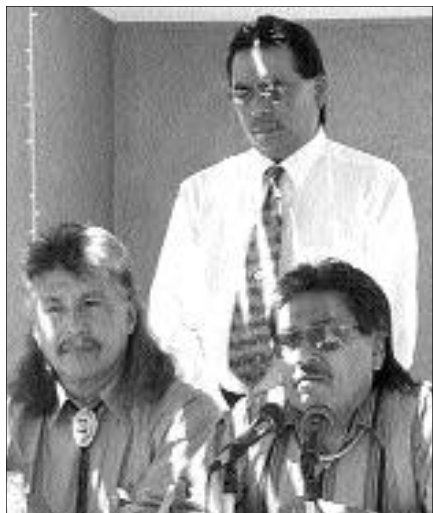
The Zuni didn't rely on the blessing from heaven to gain their victory, however. Along with members of a coalition the Sierra Club helped create, tribe members ran a relay team from Zuni Pueblo to Phoenix—a distance of 350 miles—and back again, to deliver their message. Zunis and other coalition members ran for 24 continuous hours around SRP headquarters in Phoenix, and they rented a mobile billboard truck which they drove around Phoenix and elsewhere when other local billboard companies refused to display their sign. In the end, Zuni Salt Lake was saved.

"It has been a long 20-year struggle with lots of mental anguish and frustration for our people, but we have had our voices heard," said Zuni Pueblo head councilman Carlton Albert, Sr. "There is no word to express our appreciation to those who have given us help."

Zuni Salt Lake is a spring-fed body of water nestled amid purple mesas in western New Mexico, about 50 miles south of Zuni Pueblo. The lake is a gathering place for the Zuni and other southwestern tribes, who for centuries have made pilgrimages to the lake to collect salt for use in religious ceremonies. Salt harvested here is considered to be the flesh of Salt Woman, a central deity to the Zuni people.

In the 19th century the U.S. government put the territorial land commissioner in

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Prayers Answered: Zuni Tribal Councilmen (from left to right) Edward Wemytewa, Arden Kucate (standing) and Head Councilman Carlton Albert, Sr., meet the press three days after the Salt River Project cancelled its plans for a strip mine near Zuni Salt Lake.



Canada to Cancun: A caravan of bike-riding Canadian Sierra Clubbers on their way from Vancouver to the WTO conference in Cancun. More about their journey in Clubbeat, page 7, and the WTO, on page 2.

Bush Vulnerable on Environment

Sierra Club goes on offense to discredit president

■ BY JOHN BYRNE BARRY

President Bush took a break from his vacation in August to visit the Northwest and shore up his badly tarnished environmental credentials. He came away with a black eye.

He flew into Portland to promote his so-called Healthy Forests initiative, but the Sierra Club scooped him, holding a press conference the day before, denouncing the president's plan for failing to protect communities at risk from fire while giving away money that should be spent on fire prevention to the timber industry.

He visited Washington to plug the administration's efforts to protect salmon, but was met by protesters assailing him for *threatening* salmon (and democracy, among other things). There were so many protesters, in fact, that he cancelled his only public appearance in the Seattle-Tacoma area and flew instead to present himself as the friend of the salmon at the remote Ice Harbor Dam, one of the major salmon killers in the Pacific Northwest.

The president's public support has dropped dramatically, according to recent public opinion research. Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope links the decline to the quagmire in Iraq, the stalled economy, and the beating the Bush administration has taken of late for its anti-environmental actions.

Republican pollster Frank Luntz acknowledges that "the environment is the

single issue on which Republicans in general—and President Bush in particular—are most vulnerable." Nevertheless, Bush is devoting attention to the environment because he knows it matters a lot to many sought-after swing voters, like suburban women.

Of course, it would be easier for the president to *look* pro-environment if he weren't simultaneously unleashing some of the most anti-environmental policies in decades. As Sierra Club Legislative Director Debbie Sease puts it: "The Bush pattern is to do something harmful to the environment and call it something helpful."

(Or as one satirical bumper-sticker making its way around the Internet says, "Bush/Cheney '04: Putting the "con" in conservatism.")

For example, in August, the Bush administration released its final ruling weakening the Clean Air Act by allowing older factories to expand without installing modern pollution control technologies. The administration tried to put a good spin on it, saying that "pollution will not increase as a result of this rule."

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Mainers Embrace 100-Mile Wilderness

■ BY TOM VALTIN

One of the most spectacular parts of the Maine Woods is the "100-Mile Wilderness" segment of the Appalachian Trail, renowned as the longest stretch of the trail uninterrupted by paved roads. But despite its name, the 100-Mile Wilderness is by no means a preserved wilderness. In fact, it is "protected" only by a very narrow corridor, in some places a mere 250-foot buffer between the trail and the industrial forest.

"The 100-Miles Wilderness is at risk," says Karen Woodsum, a native of the Pine Tree State who for the past three years has served as director of the Sierra Club's Maine Woods Campaign.

Unlike the western U.S., where much of the land is already publicly owned, nearly all the forest land in Maine is private, held by paper companies. "Historically, these have been Maine-owned companies," Woodsum explains "But lately land has been turning over to out-of-state businesses and landowners." Clearcuts and heavy roadbuilding have recently occurred at dangerous proximity to the area.

"The Maine-based companies, on the whole, wanted to be good stewards of the land," says Bob LeRoy, an outfitter and Sierra Club member who runs a historic wilderness sporting camp in the heart of the 100-Mile region. "But over the last five years, that's all changed."

The absentee corporations, say wilderness advocates, are operating on a timetable suitable to their investors' interests—that is, quick profits in a short period. In the last 15 years, an area larger than the state of Delaware has been clearcut, including 100-acre swaths right up to the edge of Gulf Hags, Maine's "Grand Canyon," located in the 100-Mile area.

The Sierra Club has been working closely with the Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust (MATLT), an independent, locally-based land trust that works on land protection issues along the trail in Maine. Much of the land along the 100-Mile Wilderness corridor has been held for years in large undeveloped tracts by forest products companies.

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The **P**lanet
Sierra Club Activist Resource

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National Purpose, Local Action

The strongest social movements, says Harvard Professor Marshall Ganz, now working with the Sierra Club on an ambitious research project, are those that combine a national focus with a grassroots base. Ganz says most national advocacy groups founded in the past 40 years are not based on local organizing.

They are funded by members who have never met one another or attended a meeting together.

These organizations no longer generate social capital or develop local leaders in the way that similar groups did for the first 150 years of our nation's history. Membership has grown, but local capacity of their volunteers and activists has not. Yet no shared understanding exists on how to evaluate the effectiveness of local groups, or why some groups may be more effective than others.

The Sierra Club, by virtue of its 100-year-plus history, has both the activist grassroots base and the national focus. But the challenges we face are such that we need to grow and mobilize our base more than we ever have and increase the synergy between the local and national.

Although founded in 1892, the modern Sierra Club took off when its membership shot from 16,000 in 1960 to 181,000 in 1980 and 700,000 today. This dramatic growth generated more local chapters and groups, but still only a fraction of Club members participate in local groups. The effectiveness of these groups varies widely, and their full potential has not been realized.

The Sierra Club is launching the "National Purpose, Local Action" project with the goal of asking *all* Sierra Club groups to evaluate what they do best and how they can do better. Professor Ganz, from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and a former organizing director with the United Farm Workers; Professor Kenneth Andrews from the University of North Carolina's Department of Sociology; and graduate students Matt Baggetta, Hahrie Han, and Chaeyoon Lim are working with the Club's Bowling Together Task Force to involve every single chapter and group excom in a self-assessment and interview process.

"We are doing this," says Bowling Together Co-Chair Lisa Renstrom, "so we

can identify what we are doing well and how we can do better."

One hundred and forty chapter activists were trained by Ganz and associates during the Sierra Club annual meeting weekend in mid-September. In the self-assessment to follow, excom members will be asked to reflect on why they became active, how they engage their membership, how they set goals, strategize and take action to achieve them, and how their own leadership skills have developed.

Ganz says the study will provide Club leadership at all levels with a first-ever comprehensive overview of the organization as a whole, its areas of greatest strength, where its challenges lie, and how to fulfill its unrealized potential. From the perspective of the research team, it will provide them with a comprehensive look-under-the-hood at the Club's wide variety of grassroots groups and leaders. This will help them identify some of the universal challenges and opportunities that all grassroots groups and grassroots volunteers face in today's world.

"We can learn from failures as well as successes," says Ganz. "It's like learning to ride a bike—falling off is how you learn to keep your balance." He suggests looking at successes and failures side by side. Why did one project succeed, another fail? "Oh, this success had a written plan and committed volunteers. The failure had neither. Oh, that tells us something."

This study focuses on the Sierra Club, but Ganz and Andrews believe that its findings can also help other national advocacy groups to build and manage their social capital more successfully.

We at *The Planet* are excited about this joint project because it aims to do in a systematic way what we do in an anecdotal way. Our job at *The Planet* is to tell stories about the Sierra Club at its best. For example, on page 4, we chronicle the efforts of Club members who've run for political office.

We'll be reporting on the "National Purpose, Local Action" project as it moves forward and sharing some of the findings in the coming months.

—JOHN BYRNE BARRY
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Marhsall Ganz and Lisa Renstrom



Love It or Leavitt

Sierra Club opposes Bush pick to head EPA

BY BRIAN VANNEMAN

Two years ago, Vi and Bill Corkle officially adopted Nine Mile Canyon, a Utah wilderness area known for its striking red walls and one of the greatest concentrations of Native American rock art in the country.

But on a trip to the canyon this spring, Vi saw something she had been dreading. "A stake for a proposed gas drilling site was no further from our picnic table than the length of my house," says the Ogden Group volunteer. "If they go in there and use seismic vibrations to explore deep underground, it can't help but crack the rock."

In fact, five sites within Nine Mile Canyon have been approved for gas and oil exploration by the administration of Utah Governor Mike Leavitt, who in September was nominated by President Bush to head the Environmental Protection Agency.

Due to his poor track record on wilderness preservation, clean air and water protection, and other issues, and his dangerous stance on states' rights, the Sierra Club strongly opposes Leavitt's appointment.

Senator Hillary Clinton has made the unusual move of placing a hold on Leavitt's nomination, which will prevent the Senate from voting, but not stop committee hearings. Clinton cited the Bush EPA's attempts to obscure the threat of dangerous air contamination in post-9/11 Manhattan as the reason for the hold, not Leavitt's politics. Regardless of her intentions, the Club hopes that the hold will

allow the Senate more time to review Leavitt's poor environmental record.

Despite being called a moderate by some newspapers, Leavitt has been a state-level champion for the Bush administration's nationwide assault on environmental regulations. Earlier this year, Leavitt abandoned negotiations with the Sierra Club and other groups in favor of closed-door talks with Interior Secretary Gayle Norton. The two settled on a plan to open up Utah wilderness areas like Nine Mile Canyon to roadbuilding and development. If energy companies take advantage of this handout, oil drills could be easily visible from Delicate Arch—one of the most photographed national park icons—as well as from many other protected Utah lands.

Leavitt has also been instrumental in advancing RS2477, which resuscitates an archaic 1866 law allowing local governments to develop vast stretches of wilderness. RS2477 would allow counties in Utah—and other states—to identify old wagon roads and cattle trails on archival maps, then build modern roads to be used by power companies, developers, or other industries.

Leavitt often publicizes his principle of "enlibra," which he defines as "in balance," though our Latin scholars translate it as "in scales." In any case, many Utah-based Club members question his commitment to balancing the interests of business with the environment. From their point of view, the scales have been tipped decidedly towards the former.

"He believes in a collaborative process," says Nina Dougherty, the Club's Air Quality Chair. "But it's not about taking a broader view—it's about seeing how far industry can be allowed to go."

Dougherty worked with the Leavitt administration on the Western Regional Air Partnership and on keeping Salt Lake

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frontburner

Sprawl Found Harmful to Labor

In September, Good Jobs First released "Labor Leaders As Smart Growth Advocates," a 50-state study which finds that not a single state coordinates its economic development spending with public transportation. Based on interviews with labor federation leaders, the report documents serious problems caused by suburban sprawl and advocates urban reinvestment ("smart-growth") policies. Many of the labor leaders interviewed for the report have worked in coalitions with environmental groups and see sprawl as causing cumulative harm to union members. To read the report, go to www.goodjobsfirst.org.



Clean Air Takes a Hit

In August, the Bush administration rolled back clean air enforcement rules for the nation's oldest and dirtiest power plants, relaxing the New Source Review provision of the Clean Air Act. For the first time, thousands of aging coal-fired power plants, oil refineries, and factories will be allowed to upgrade their facilities and extend their operational lives without having to install new anti-pollution equipment as previously required. The new rule was hailed by industry leaders, but environmentalists and many lawmakers said the move undermines one of the few effective tools available to government officials to crack down on industrial polluters. To read more, go to www.sierraclub.org/cleanairwre

WTO Talks Break Down

Talks in Cancun, Mexico, on a new world trade agreement collapsed in September when delegates from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean walked out, accusing wealthy nations of bullying tactics and failing to compromise on agriculture and investment policies. The breakdown of the World Trade Organization talks makes it nearly impossible for the agency to reach its goal of crafting a new global trade treaty by next year, and came as an embarrassment for the Bush administration, which has promoted the WTO as an engine of global growth. The Sierra Club has argued that the WTO puts the interests of corporations above the interests of working families and environmental protections. To learn more about the Club's position, go to www.sierraclub.org/trade

Zuni Salt Lake Saved

[FROM P. 1]

charge of Zuni Salt Lake, and it wasn't until 1977 that Congress instructed the Interior Department to arrange for the lands to be returned to tribal control. The lake and its shoreline were not officially transferred back to the Zuni Tribe until 1986.

But in 1981 SRP proposed an 18,000-acre strip mine ten miles from Zuni Salt Lake, along with a 44-mile rail line to the nearest generating station that would have cut across Zuni burial grounds in the surrounding Sanctuary Zone. And to settle the coal dust the mining operation would have produced, the utility sought to pump 85 gallons of groundwater per minute for the 40 years of the mine's planned operation.

Zunis feared that the draw on desert aquifers would dry up the spring-fed lake. "If they vent a lot of pressure that's forcing the water up, we will no longer have the salt," former Zuni Pueblo Governor Malcolm Bowekaty told reporters last year.

In an effort to protect the lake and sanctuary, the Zuni Tribe spent millions of dollars over the last 20 years on legal help and on scientific data demonstrating the potential damage SRP's mine would inflict. In 2001, the tribe's efforts were bolstered by the formation of the Zuni Salt Lake Coalition, consisting of the Sierra Club, the Citizens Coal Council (a national organization that helps citizens living in communities impacted by coal mines), the Center for Biological Diversity, the Water Information Network, Friends of the Earth, Tonatierra (an indigenous community development organization), and the Seventh Generation Fund for Indian Development.

Andy Bessler, a Sierra Club environmental justice organizer based in Flagstaff, Arizona, was instrumental in putting the coalition together. "One of the tenets of the Club's environmental justice program is that we don't work on issues unless we've been invited by the community to do so," he says. "We consulted with the tribal council and developed a campaign strategy with tribal leaders and members."

Bessler says the Sierra Club's relationship with the Zunis got jump-started a couple of years ago when the Club helped stop a pumice mine on the San Francisco Peaks, Arizona's highest mountains and a place held sacred by several southwestern Indian tribes. "The Zunis were involved in that campaign and they asked for our help with Zuni Salt Lake," he recalls.

"Tribal members have a different approach," says Bessler, "which made us think 'outside the box.' Where the Sierra Club might air a radio spot to convey our message, the Zuni suggested sending runners. And when we did run radio ads, we had scripts in English, Spanish, Zuni, Navajo, Hopi, and Apache so the spots could run on tribal radio stations as well as on mainstream stations in Phoenix and Albuquerque."

Earlier this summer, the coalition secured funds to put up a billboard near SRP headquarters. "It was a photo of Zuni Salt Lake seen through rifle crosshairs," Bessler describes, "with the words 'SRP is targeting our Sacred Lands' next to the photo. Two billboard companies agreed to rent a billboard to us and then reneged. So we ended up using a mobile billboard company called VOX Communications that put our billboard on the back of a truck. We drove the truck around SRP headquarters and all over Arizona and New Mexico to tribal pueblos, and we got a lot of people to sign petitions."

On July 19, the coalition organized the People's Hearing at the Zuni Pueblo. "Zunis, Navajos, representatives from other tribes, and coalition members attended," says Bessler, "including several folks from the Club's Rio Grande Chapter. The hearing had no sooner concluded than the skies opened up. It rained like you wouldn't believe, which the Zuni took to be a sign of reward from the heavens. They were pumped!"

Finally, on August 4, SRP announced that it was canceling plans for its proposed mine and would instead



Truckin' to Victory: Members of the Zuni Salt Lake Coalition pose in front of the mobile billboard truck rented by the coalition to publicize the plight of Zuni Salt Lake. Sierra Club environmental justice organizer Andy Bessler is pictured kneeling at lower left.

purchase coal from Wyoming's Powder River Basin. "It seemed like a burden was lifted from my heart and shoulders," said Carmelita Sanchez, the Zuni Tribe's lieutenant governor, after the decision was announced.

"This victory is a testament to the spirit of the Zuni people, other Native American tribes, and non-native supporters who would not relinquish Salt Woman in the name of cheap coal," Bessler says.

Three days after the SRP's announcement, Zuni tribal councilman Arden Kucate stood at the edge of Zuni Salt Lake and made an offering of turquoise and bread to the Salt Mother and said his prayers. That night, back at Zuni Pueblo, when tribal members hoisted a banner that read "Zuni defeats SRP," Kucate told the sign painter to add the word "Elahkwa," meaning "thank you."

100-Mile Wilderness

[FROM P. 1]

"These lands represent some of the most diverse natural communities in the state, and they provide an important recreational resource," says Tom Lewis, president of MATLT. "But many of these tracts, held for so long by stable corporations, have recently been changing hands at an alarming rate. The conditions that have up to now conserved the wild character of the trail in Maine cannot be counted on in the future."



Karen Woodsum

Conservation biologists generally agree that to protect native biodiversity, large blocks of strategically linked wildlands must be preserved. Connecting the celebrated Allagash Wilderness Waterway to Baxter State Park and enhancing protection along the 100-Mile corridor would result in a large-scale wilderness that could support the full range of native species and function as a keystone for restoration of Eastern wilderness as a whole.

"We have a huge chunk of wild country up here," says Bob LeRoy, "but we need to protect this area before it's chopped up and sold off to lakefront development and kingdom buyers." One such magnate recently purchased an entire northern Maine township near the 100-Mile region, and accelerated logging and roadbuilding have allowed motorized vehicles to reach formerly remote areas. "Even the old-time woodsmen are shaking their heads," LeRoy says.

When Woodsum was hired by the Sierra Club, she was aware that earlier efforts to push for wilderness

protection in Maine hadn't built sufficient grassroots support from Maine residents. One of her first actions was to set up an advisory group that included a resource economist from the University of Maine, a hunter who was also president of a local wildlife refuge, a forestry expert, a sporting camp owner, a Maine wilderness historian, several ecologist/biologists, and a number of longtime local Sierra Club volunteer leaders.

"It was while meeting with this group that the idea for a 100-Mile Wilderness Area hit us," Woodsum says. "So many of the natural treasures we were most concerned with protecting were all lined up along this section of the Appalachian Trail."

Woodsum knew that grassroots support from Maine residents had to be the bedrock for the 100-Mile Wilderness campaign, so from the get-go she and others on the campaign solicited the input of northern Maine residents. "We found that most folks believe there can and should be a balance between wilderness and timber interests," she says. "People often ask how much acreage we're advocating for the 100-Mile Wilderness Area. We say, 'We don't know—what do *you* think would be good?' Often as not, they'll suggest a bigger figure than we'd come up with ourselves."

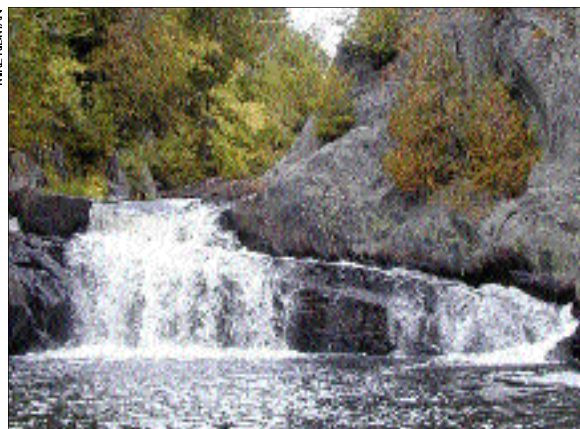
"People up there are worried that Maine's forests are being ruined, and they want to protect some of the state's special places," says longtime Maine Chapter leader Carole Haas. "Establishing a 100-Mile Wilderness Area would help diversify northern Maine's struggling economy and reduce reliance on the timber industry."

Since the Sierra Club does not make land purchases, the Maine Woods Campaign has focused on political and advocacy work. "We generate letters-to-the-editor, we host speakers who give wilderness seminars, and we have a group called Women's Voices for the Environment that hosts forums to gather support for the project," Haas explains. "Our campaign organizer meets with wilderness supporters around the state on a regular basis, urging them to form their own groups independent of the Sierra Club."

Karen Woodsum says chapter volunteers have been organizing, doing public events, attending hearings, and pulling together different people and organizations. "And now we have a governor, John Baldacci, who has expressed his commitment to protecting Maine's wilderness heritage and is interested in the notion of a nature-based economy," she says. "Governor Baldacci has identified the 100-Mile Wilderness region as a top priority for protection during his administration, and he recently established the 100-Mile Wilderness Working Group to move the concept forward."

"This thing is really taking off," Woodsum exults.

Contact the author at tom.valtin@sierraclub.org



Heart'o'the 100-Mile: The Gulf Hagas region, with its many waterfalls, is among the pristine areas that would gain protection if the 100-Mile Wilderness Area becomes a reality.

Correction

In the September Planet, we neglected to credit the photographers whose images appeared in "Explore and Protect," about Sierra Club outings:

- California's Donner Lake from the Pacific Crest Trail: Paul McKown/Sierra Club Outings (We also regret that the photo was reversed.)
- Red Rocks Archaeology Service Trip, Arizona: Lynn Devore/Sierra Club Outings
- Vicky Hoover demonstrating to budding activists on a Nevada outing: Johan Rindegard/Sierra Club Outings.

Growing Our Own

BY TOM VALTIN AND BRIAN VANNEMAN

Unhappy with the politicians
who represent you?

Why not become one?

Deborah Dawkins, a self-described “cowgirl from Fort Worth,” got involved with the Sierra Club when she moved to Mississippi and fell in love with the Gulf Coast. As a Club activist, she traveled frequently to the capitol in Jackson to lobby her state senator on issues she cared about. When the senator told her, “There’s nothing I can do,” she ran for his seat—and won.

From the White House on down to county commissioner, too many of our elected officials are paying more attention to their developer and industry friends and not enough to protecting the environment. The Sierra Club is always pressuring politicians to do the right thing, but all too often these attempts fall on deaf ears. So what do we do? Throw the bums out and get someone better, right?

Right, except sometimes a good man or woman is hard to find. That’s where “growing our own” makes sense. Sometimes the best-qualified candidate for the city council might be sitting in our midst, chairing our clean air or sprawl committee.

Nationwide, the Sierra Club endorses and works for thousands of candidates, from city council members to county supervisors to U.S. senators to presidential hopefuls. Chapter and group political committees make most of the Club’s endorsements; for federal-level candidates, they make the endorsement in conjunction with the national political committee.

“One of the basic tenets of the Sierra Club’s Political Program is working with politicians to turn them into good votes for the environment,” says Scott Taylor, the program’s chair. “Obviously, that job is much easier when they start with a love for the outdoors, but it is rare for a ‘friendly politician’ to become a true leader. Environmental leadership comes from a commitment to an ideal. That true believer, the politician who makes the environment the most important thing on their agenda, almost always comes from growing our own. It can be a daunting prospect—giving up hikes to sit in city council meetings, taking ‘urban hikes’ ringing doorbells—but it is vitally important.”

‘While the political process is sometimes frustratingly slow, good things can and do happen.’

Many who have made the jump from activism to political office experienced a crucial point of discovery through the Sierra Club. Others had been active environmentalists even before joining, but gained new confidence in their ability to participate in politics through the Club.

“If it hadn’t been for my involvement with the Sierra Club, I would never have considered running for office,” says Melissa Gardner of Omaha, Nebraska, a Club activist and staffer who now serves on the board of the Pappio-Missouri Natural Resources District. “The Club showed me how to turn my environmental dreams and wishes into an effective grassroots public outreach campaign. There’s no better way to learn than by doing, and that is where the Sierra Club shines—by empowering people.”

In the late 1960s, an Akron lawyer named John Seiberling became active in the Ohio Sierra Club. He decided to run for Congress, primarily to protect the Cuyahoga Valley between Akron and Cleveland. He won, got the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area established a few years later, and went on to chair the House Interior Committee subcommittee responsible for Alaska lands legislation, one of the most important pieces of conservation legislation ever.

Seiberling’s rise was an environmental best-case scenario, but there is near-unanimity among environmentalists in office that getting green candidates elected to local and state-level positions is the key to real and lasting environmental change. “Local politics is the place to be,” says veteran environmentalist Richard Worthen, who spent nearly two decades as a county board member in Madison County, Illinois. “Start where you feel comfort-



able. Run for school board, library board, precinct committeeman. You’ll meet all the local politicians, some state politicians, and the federal ones will show up eventually. One person does make a difference.”

Mississippian Dawkins, a former operating room technician, is now vice chair of the state Environment Protection, Conservation and Water Committee. During her first term she introduced several strong environmental measures that were ultimately killed by the committee chair, who Dawkins describes as cozy with industry. “But I’ll keep on introducing

them,” she declares. “There are some good candidates running for state office here. There’s an opportunity for a real sea change in this state.”

For Phillip Bimstein, a musician and former Chicagoan, a personal sea change occurred when he vacationed in southern Utah and was blown away by the red rock canyons, wild geological formations, and open vistas reaching to the horizons. He returned home a changed person and freshly-inspired composer. Shortly thereafter, he received a letter from the Sierra Club. “My first act of political advocacy was because of that mailing I received from the Club,” says Bimstein. “The BLM was considering turning over an area of pristine land to development, so I wrote a letter to an elected official in protest.”

In the late ‘80s, Bimstein moved to Springdale, Utah, the gateway town to Zion National Park. He joined the

‘In a state rep’s race, you have to shake hands with more people than your opponent.’

Sierra Club, and five years later he became the town’s mayor. In office, he partnered with Zion’s director to create a shuttle system that brought visitors into the park from the town center, decreasing auto congestion, pollution, and noise within the park. He was one of the few elected officials to celebrate the opening of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument with President Clinton in 1996, and he has made several trips to Washington to testify before House and Senate subcommittees in support of America’s Red Rock Wilderness Act.

Similar epiphanies can take place right in one’s own backyard. Oregon state Representative Charlie Ringo was a lawyer who had never considered running for office until he attended a presentation about the Columbia River Gorge with some friends who were

Sierra Club members. “I was shocked at how critical one state senator was of environmentalists and the very idea of protecting the gorge,” he recalls. “I thought, there’s no reason I couldn’t be up there countering him with a more convincing point of view.” It took several years and countless hours of walking door-to-door before he was elected to the state legislature, but that event was a turning point for Ringo.

The Sierra Club also served as a catalyst for former Fayetteville, Arkansas, city councilman Randy Zurcher. “The Club played a huge role in my political development,” says Zurcher, now a Green Party organizer in Savannah, Georgia. “It gave me an association and an affiliation, and it taught me about leadership and working together.”

Zurcher had been troubled by overdevelopment in Fayetteville. “There was rampant sprawl,” he says, “lots of new gas stations, traffic lights, rezoning from agricultural to commercial, and there was a growing sense that Fayetteville was losing its charm.”

He started showing up at city council meetings and speaking out. “The city council candidate in my district was a developer who wanted to put a strip mall in the middle of an historic district. So I ran for his seat on neighborhood integrity, the need for planning, and the need to fight sprawl.”

While Zurcher was in office, a department store chain announced that it wanted to cut down more than 90 old-growth oak trees to make way for a new store. “There was a city ordinance against doing this,” he says, “but the city council caved and gave them permission.”

Zurcher was outraged. “I took photos, mobilized people, and the next thing you know a 53-year-old grandmother climbed up in one of the trees to protest and wouldn’t come down.” The local Sierra Club excom pitched in to buy her food and drink, and when Zurcher brought her provisions he was arrested—as, ultimately, were 31 other people. “The Sierra Club and the press were all over it,” he recalls. Sadly, the developer plowed ahead and cut down all the trees.

“The silver lining,” Zurcher says, “is that people in Fayetteville immediately realized what had been lost. It ushered in a change in attitude about development, similar I think to the way New Yorkers started to value historic buildings in their city only after Penn Station got torn down.”

Kay McGinn was a New Yorker and a nurse who says she was always aware of environmental effects on health, but she didn’t join the Sierra Club until she moved to Florida and cut back to part-time work. She started attending local Sierra Club meetings, and shortly thereafter ran for city commissioner as an environmentalist concerned about overdevelopment. She is now the mayor of Pompano Beach.

McGinn has fought back several large-scale development proposals—including an Enron diesel-burning power plant and an airport expansion that would have wiped out habitat for endangered species. “It’s so important for environmentalists to run for office,” she opines. “There’s a lack of people in office who are dedicated to the common good. The environment is such a worthy cause, and it benefits everybody.”

Spencer Black became a Club member in the 1970s, mostly due to his interest in Alaska public lands. He met local activists while working at a Wisconsin state park, started leading Club outings and getting involved with the local chapter, and eventually became chapter chair. In time he was hired as a staffer in the Club’s Midwest office. “But as I tried to influence voters and policymakers,” he says, “it became increasingly obvious to me that

the fate of the outdoors is very much influenced by decisions made indoors.”

Black ran for the state assembly, where he is now serving his tenth term. As chair of the Environmental Resources Committee, he introduced and got passed some of the nation’s strongest legislation on acid rain and recycling, and he is widely considered the leading environmentalist in the Wisconsin legislature. “Even as minority leader I’ve been able to make a difference,” he says. “Legislators look to their colleagues for information, and if you’re in office you can speak to them directly. You can prioritize and introduce legislation. Your influence is greater than just one vote.”

Virginia House member Albert Pollard, a former chapter director, says the Sierra Club taught him how to write

From the Sierra Club to public office*

Deborah Dawkins	state senator, Mississippi	Club lobbyist frustrated with her legislator ran against him and won.
Spencer Black	state assembly member, Wisconsin	Ten term rep considered leading environmentalist in Wisconsin legislature.
Randy Zurcher	former city council member, Fayetteville, Ark.	Now a Green Party organizer in Savannah, Georgia.
Brett Hulsey	supervisor, Dane County, Wis.	Club field staffer is the #1 vote-getter on county board.
Brian Schatz	state representative, Hawaii	"You have to shake more hands than your opponent. It's not complicated, but it's difficult."
Kay McGinn	mayor, Pompano Beach, Fla.	"There's a lack of people in office who are dedicated to the common good."
Melissa Gardner	board member, Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District, Neb.	"There's no better way to learn than by doing, and that's where the Sierra Club shines—by empowering people!"
Phillip Bimstein	former mayor, Springdale, Utah	Helped create shuttle system into Zion National Park.
Charlie Ringo	state representative, Oregon	"Politics can appear to be an exclusive club, [but] anyone can run for office."
Albert Pollard	state delegate, Virginia	Only member of Virginia General Assembly to receive a 100 percent rating from the Virginia League of Conservation Voters for four years running.
Alex Forman	water board member, Marin County, Calif.	"If you come across as honest and concerned, that goes a long way."
Barbara Green	supervisor, Nevada County, Calif.	"Go where the people are. We handed out campaign material outside the post office."
Aldo Vagnozzi	state representative, Michigan	Serving first term in legislature at age 78.
Jack Minore	state representative, Michigan	"Even running in a 'can't win' situation gives voice to policies that are important and would otherwise be ignored."
Richard Worthen	former board member, Madison County, Ill.	"One person does make a difference."
Kevin Foy	mayor, Chapel Hill, N.C.	Former group excom member.
Jim Ramstad	U.S. representative, Minnesota	A Republican, and Club member since 1996.
Rob Hogg	state representative, Cedar Rapids, Iowa	Former group chair.
Michael Merrifield	state representative, Colorado	In 2002 became the lone Democrat at officeholder from El Paso County.
Janet Cowell	city council member, Raleigh, N.C.	Former group and chapter activist.

*Just a sample. For a more complete list, or to add someone to the list, go to www.sierraclub.org/planet/200307/gwingourown/asp



Spencer Black



Randy Zurcher



Michael Merrifield



Deborah Dawkins

a plan for transforming his environmental values into results. "The political process can be frustratingly slow," he says, "but good things can and do happen. I'm a Democrat representing the most Republican-leaning district in

'The board work is part-time—like working at a convenience store, but without the glamour.'

the state, which demonstrates to me that politics is about the issues and helping people. It shouldn't be about a party agenda." Pollard is the only member of the General Assembly to receive a 100 percent rating from the Virginia League of Conservation Voters for four years running.

Sierra Club ExCom member Alex Forman saw himself as a protest candidate when he ran for the Municipal Water Board in Marin County, California. The local newspaper and a bevy of legislators endorsed his opponent, but her position on the county's water policy, which would have encouraged sprawl, was exactly what he was running against. Forman won a lopsided victory. "My opponent was anointed by the establishment," he says, "but I learned

from walking the neighborhoods that if you come across as honest and concerned, that goes a long way, even if you're running against people with big-name endorsements."

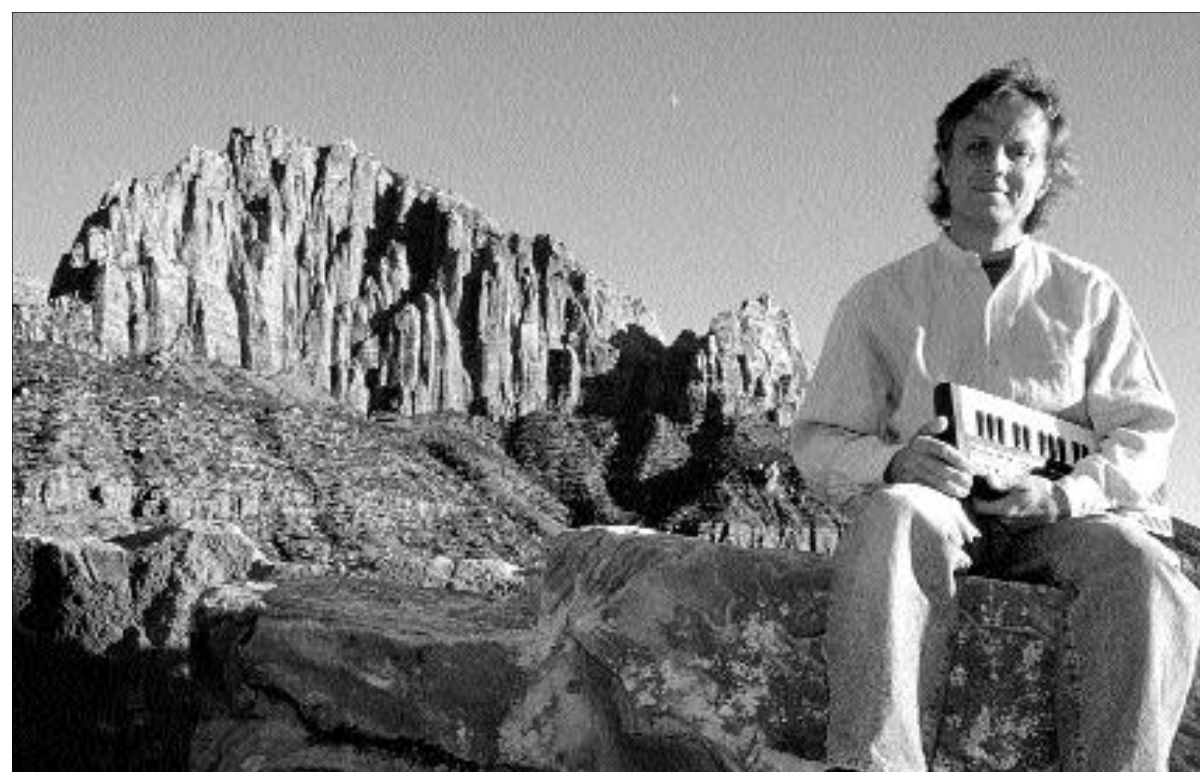
"In a state rep's race, you have to shake hands with more people than your opponent," says Brian Schatz, a two-term representative in Hawaii's House. "It's not complicated, but it's difficult!"

"Start early," suggests Michael Merrifield, state representative in Colorado. "Get out to every chicken dinner and BBQ—anywhere where there are 5 or 6 people meeting together. And start raising money early."

"Go where the people are," concurs Barbara Green,

'Politicians compromise; advocates don't. I have been both, and sometimes at the same time.'

a longtime Club activist and now a supervisor in Nevada County, California. "In my race, in a rural county, we found most people visited the post office, so we handed out campaign material outside the P.O."



Composer and campaigner. Former mayor of Springdale, Utah, Phillip Bimstein found fresh inspiration for his classical and avant-garde compositions in the red rock canyons of Southern Utah. Protecting the region's wilderness also inspired him to run for office.

Many green candidates are given a boost by their local Sierra Club group. Brett Hulsey, an activist and Club staffer, is also a county supervisor in Dane County, Wisconsin. (The part-time county board job, he quips, is "like working at a convenience store, but without the glamour.") Hulsey says the local Sierra Club group endorsed him, provided volunteers, and rented its phones for phonebanks. As a supervisor, he has written, co-sponsored, and promoted numerous bills to protect water quality, preserve habitat, and combat sprawl. He wrote and passed a stormwater ordinance that was the first in the nation to protect trout streams from thermal pollution.

Michigan state Representative Aldo Vagnozzi, another strong voice for the environment, says Club fundraisers and volunteer support were crucial to putting him in office. "I strongly believe I could not have been elected without the support of the Sierra Club and other environmental groups," he says.

"Even running in what looks like a 'can't win' situation gives voice to policies that are important and would otherwise be ignored," says Vagnozzi's colleague Jack Minore.

"The world of politics can appear to be an exclusive club," says Oregon Representative Charlie Ringo, "but it doesn't require any extraordinary talents. Anyone can run for office. If you are committed, don't be deterred or discouraged."

Not getting discouraged can sometimes take resilience. Kansas activist Steve Baru, a Republican and president of a financial services firm, has held numerous leadership positions in the Kansas Chapter. "Because of my Club background," he says, "community leaders asked me to participate in local task forces on transportation, sprawl, and economic development, and eventually a group of moderate Republicans asked me to run for the Kansas House of Representatives. Most of the money I raised came from Sierra Club activists around the country. I circulated a letter signed by four chapter chairs and I got a great internet response."

Baru says Sierra Club affiliation is a positive in his district. "There's a level of trust on issues like clean water and transit," he says. "I knocked on every registered Republican's door in my district, and I got no argument on my environmental views. But a lot of folks said they couldn't vote for me because I was pro-choice. The right-to-life issue killed me." Undaunted, Baru is considering a run for the state Senate next year.

For green candidates in conservative districts, Mississippi legislator Dawkins offers this advice: "Several strong environmental candidates in Mississippi have been defeated because they looked too 'crunchy gra-

nola.' Try to look like a PTA member. I'll always be an environmentalist, but when I'm campaigning I dress like a businesswoman."

Virginia representative Pollard stresses that, "whether you win or lose, running for office is a rewarding experience that creates the debate about protecting our natural resources." He cautions that green candidates should realize that voters respect the passion of environmental advocates, but care about many other issues. "People love candidates who are passionate," he says. "They do not, by and large, like zealots."

Richard Worthen, the former county board member from Illinois, says political success is a matter of working toward goals incrementally. "It's an extremely slow process," he warns. "In some ways politics and advocacy are very different. Advocacy requires standing up with a backbone for what you believe is right. Politicians compromise; advocates don't. I've been both, sometimes at the same time. I was a pariah at the start of my political career, and an insider at the end."

"Growing our own is even more important than lobbying," he asserts. "Our lobbyists don't have money to 'buy' legislators the way corporations do; they only have the goodness of our issues to convince legislators to go with us. But we can utilize the power of the people if we get involved in local politics. If state and federal politicians see that people are taking strong environmental positions locally, they'll figure they had better do it too."

"Don't be shy about becoming a candidate," exhorts Spencer Black. "Environmentalists make great elected officials!"

Contact the authors at tom.valtin@sierraclub.org and brian.vanneman@sierraclub.org

a alerts

Burning Rubber

Toxic waste and tires join traditional dirty fuels at contested cement factories

BY BRIAN VANNEMAN

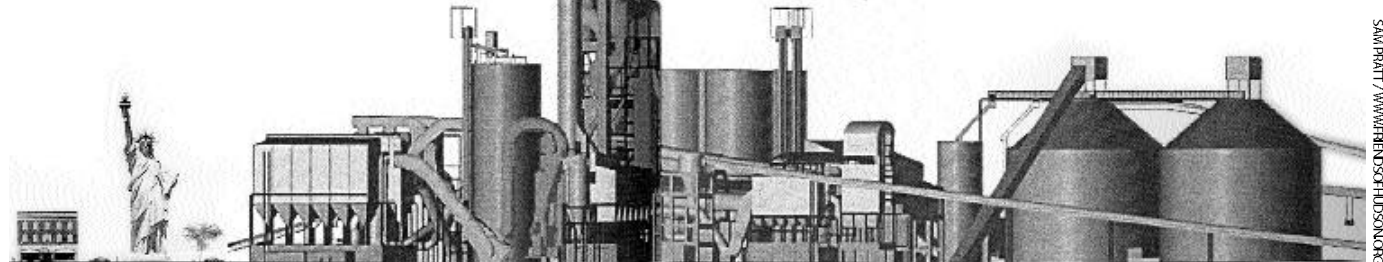
In the early '90s, Paul Frazier, a leader of a Texas air quality task force, drove to a meeting in the town of Midlothian. He parked his sedan outside his motel, and awoke the next morning to find that much of the paint had been stripped from the car.

The paint had been eaten away by fine cement dust blown in from Midlothian's three cement factories. Frazier had his car repainted, but the state has never implemented the recommendations of the task force.

"Given what cement dust can do to a paint job, you can imagine the effect that those fine particles have on human lungs," says Dr. Neil Carman, the Sierra Club's Clean Air Program director for the Lone Star Chapter (Texas). Carman has been fighting the environmental and human health hazards posed by cement plants in Midlothian and other parts of the country for decades. Increasingly, Sierra Club chapters and groups across the country are mobilizing to fight the planned construction and expansion of nearby cement plants. Groups in Texas, New York, Missouri, Montana, and Colorado are in the midst of legal and political battles.

Though their main business is in creating bags of cement dust, or "clinker," for construction projects, the cement industry exploits a factory-sized loophole in federal pollution legislation, and in the process has become one of the dirtiest businesses around. Cement kilns have become de-facto hazardous waste incinerators, burning as fuel everything from oil refinery waste to printing dyes to tires and diapers.

Cement kilns must be maintained near 2,700°F all day, every day, in order to turn out cement; they consume fuel ravenously. Allowing a kiln's temperature to drop greatly reduces efficiency. Factories that generate toxic waste pay around \$1,000 per ton to regulated incinerators that burn the waste. They pay about \$50 at the local cement kiln. "It's like get-



In perspective. The Statue of Liberty (at left), a local hotel, and trees, are dwarfed when shown at scale next to the proposed Holcim-St. Lawrence Cement plant, which would be the tallest structure between New York City and Montreal. Emissions from its 400-foot stack would be dispersed through the Hudson River valley and New England.

ting paid to put gas in your tank," says Carman. The cement industry earns an estimated \$500 million a year for burning hazardous materials.

Of the approximately 120 cement factories currently operating in the United States, 14 burn hazardous waste. The TXI plant in Midlothian is one. Along with its two neighboring plants, it discharges some of the worst airborne emissions in the country.



Dr. Neil Carman

Sierra Club volunteer Sue Pope, a town resident for 32 years, has watched the kilns take their toll. She suffers from asthma—though there is no history of the disease in her family—as do an unusually high number of other Midlothian residents. According to Dr. Carman, the dioxins emitted by factories are likely to be the cause of the abnormally high percentage of children born with Down's syndrome and the multiple-calf pregnancies of many in the Popes' cattle herd. Local children who routinely play outdoor sports have developed very rare types of cancer.

But despite the fact that many cement plants are leading double lives as hazardous waste incinerators, they do not receive the same scrutiny in the eyes of the EPA. In the late '90s, federal regulators established two widely differing sets of rules for certified waste incinerators and cement kilns—despite the fact that

they're burning equally dangerous materials. What's more, operators of cement kilns do not own, and have refused to buy, the kinds of expensive air pollution controls used by incinerators.

Among the emissions produced by cement kilns are lead, mercury, fine particulate matter, nitrogen oxide, and dioxin, as well as fine cement dust. Heavy metals like lead and mercury accumulate in the living cells of plants and animals, break down slowly if at all, and have devastating effects on the nervous system, reproduction, and lungs. Particulate matter also causes severe respiratory problems.

While Sierra Club members in Texas fight the ongoing rule-breaking and pollution from their cement plants, organizers in Missouri and New York are attempting to fend off what would become, if built, the two largest cement factories on the continent.

The company behind both of the proposed plants is Holcim, a sprawling Swiss conglomerate that operates cement factories in 70 countries. (The plant operated by Holcim in Midlothian was fined \$225,000 in 2002 for producing three times the amount of pollutants allowed in its permit.)

In New York, the Atlantic Chapter and other groups have stalled Holcim subsidiary Saint Lawrence Cement's attempts to obtain the necessary permits. The proposed factory near the city of Hudson would include a vast complex of roads and docks, a 1,200-acre limestone mine, and a smokestack that would rise 40 stories above the 300-foot hill at its base; in all, about 70 stories above its neighbors: the town's schools, hospitals, and water supply. As the chapter's Moisha Blechman says, "A stack 70 stories above sea level is built for only one reason—to disperse toxic emissions over great distances."

Holcim has an even larger cement-making operation in the works just south of St. Louis, where the Isle du Bois Creek joins the Mississippi River. The Ozark Chapter, which runs an annual canoe trip through this stretch of the Mississippi, has not been as successful at blocking the permitting process. The Army Corps of Engineers has refused to complete an environmental impact statement for the project, despite recommendations from the EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Missouri Governor Bob Holden, and many other public officials and citizens.

Holcim must wrangle three separate permits before breaking ground, and it's well on its way to getting the first two, land reclamation and water. It's saving what is likely to be the most bitterly opposed permit—air quality—for last. "They know that's their hardest case to fight," says Diane Jean Albright, Ozark Chapter volunteer. "But they've figured that once they've built the harbor, once they've built the quarry, it'll be much harder to stop them. We asked for an EIS

from the beginning, saying that this process should not be piecemealed."

Several hundred miles upriver, at the headwaters of the Missouri river, the Montana Chapter is fighting another Holcim plant, stationed just around the bend from Headwaters State Park, an important landmark on Lewis and Clark's journey.

Though the factory has been churning out cement there for decades, in late 2001 it made public plans to begin burning a million tires per year along with its traditional fuel. This did not sit well with Montana Chapter excom member Jeff van den Noort or his fellow volunteers.

Though tire burning, which releases heavy metals, has been pitched to the public in Bozeman as "recycling," there are far safer ways to make use of old tires, as a component of roofing shakes, tennis courts, and roads. The chapter has succeeded in getting the state to require an environmental impact statement for the tire burning.

Temporary victory in Montana is tempered by the ongoing struggles in New York, Texas, Colorado, and elsewhere.

The solution is clear, says the Lone Star Chapter's Carman. "We've got to demand that cement be brought within the same regulatory framework as other industries."

Take Action Tell New York Governor George Pataki that you oppose construction of the Holcim-SLC plant near the city of Hudson. Write him at State Capitol, Albany, New York, NY 12224. Urge U.S. Representative Joe Barton of Texas—who represents Midlothian and serves on the House Air Quality Subcommittee—to stop Holcim's Midlothian plant from exceeding its permitted emissions. Write him at U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. Call for an EIS to be completed before the Holcim plant near St. Louis is allowed to move forward; contact Representative Richard Gephardt at 1236 Longworth Building, Washington DC, 20515.

Contact the author at brian.vanneman@sierraclub.org

Roadless Area Threatened By Proposed Ski Area Expansion

BY TOM VALTIN

The Forest Service has proposed to expand the Mt. Ashland Ski Area, located seven miles south of the City of Ashland on Forest Service lands in southern Oregon. The expansion would be into a roadless area in the Middle Branch of the East Fork Ashland Creek watershed, and would:

- Clearcut the equivalent of 80 football fields of virgin, old-growth forest in the McDonald Peak Roadless Area and City of Ashland's municipal watershed.
- Fragment habitat for old-growth-dependent species such as the northern spotted owl. A rare American fisher was recently found in the area slated to be cut.
- Clearcut riparian zones, wetland areas, meadows, streams, springs, seeps, and the rare Engelmann spruce, and ruin habitat for at least a dozen rare plants.

The Sierra Club's Rogue Group

(Oregon Chapter) recommends that the Forest Service choose Alternative 1 (no action) or Alternative 5 with modifications. Alternative 5 would allow a modest expansion within the current ski use area, but would protect the Middle Branch of the East Fork and the McDonald Peak Roadless Area from the proposed clearcuts, protect riparian zones, wetlands, and meadows, and preserve habitat for rare flora and fauna. The Sierra Club recommends that Alternative 5 be modified to exclude the proposed Moraine Lodge, expanded parking, and an 800-foot-long retaining wall.

Take Action Send comments before October 23 to John Schuyler, Acting District Ranger, Ashland Ranger District, 645 Washington St., Ashland, OR 97520; fax (541)858-2402; or e-mail comments-pacificnorthwest-rogueriver-ashland@fs.fed.us.

For more information, contact: Tom Dimitre at dimitre@mind.net.

to take action

WRITE: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20500
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515

CALL: The White House, (202) 456-1111
Capitol Switchboard, (202) 224-3121

LEARN: For updates on the Club's legislative priorities, call the Legislative Hotline at (202) 675-2394.

JOIN: To join the Sierra Club's Take Action network and receive e-mail alerts when action is needed, go to www.sierraclub.org/takeaction.

SURF: Visit our Web site at www.sierraclub.org

Bush Vulnerable

[FROM P. 1]

But increasingly, the administration is not getting away with it. The *San Francisco Chronicle* called the weakening of the Clean Air Act, "the most damaging rollback in its 30-year history." Even the *Billings Gazette* was stinging in its criticism: "The Bush administration eased a series of important environmental regulations in a quiet flurry of late-summer activity, delivering almost every rule change on corporate America's wish list."

Meanwhile, *Mother Jones* and *Vanity Fair* have published exposés of the Bush administration's environmental record. In *Mother Jones*, Osha Gray Davidson wrote: "No president has gone after the nation's environmental laws with the same fury as George W. Bush—and none has been so adept at staying under the radar." Davidson said that the Bush administration is filled with "anti-regulatory zealots deep into its rank and file" who come from the industries they are charged with regulating.

In "Sale of the Wild," *Vanity Fair's* Michael Shnayerson zeroed in on one of those zealots—J. Steven Griles, the deputy interior secretary, a former lobbyist for the coal, oil, and gas industries. Shnayerson wrote: "Every administration rewards its friends, but never has there been such a wholesale giveaway of government agencies to the very industries they're meant to oversee."

Shnayerson's story was accompanied by a photo spread of Griles and Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton in the great outdoors. *Vanity Fair* Editor Graydon Carter wrote, "They both look like Sierra Club veterans: Norton in trekking gear and a Patagonia-cum-Smokey the Bear outfit, and Griles on horseback, resembling some latter-day Theodore Roosevelt."

President Bush, too, has been careful to schedule plenty of photo-ops in front of national parks and forests. During his August forays from his Crawford ranch, Bush took a well-choreographed hike in California's Santa Monica Mountains and talked up plans to upgrade national parks. These attempts to look pro-environment reflect the advice of pollster Luntz, who outlined a strategy last fall advising Republicans to counter the perception that Republicans are anti-environmental by showing their love of the outdoors.

For the Sierra Club, the key is going after Bush as in Portland and Seattle, getting there ahead of him to frame the story, and going on the offense wherever possible. "Bush is playing on people's fears and lowering expectations," says Pope. "We have to counter this strategy, raise people's hopes, and remind them that we have a proven track record of solving our environmental problems."

For a thorough look at Bush's anti-environmental actions, go to www.sierraclub.org/wwatch.

Club Opposes Leavitt for EPA

[FROM P. 2]

City's air clean. But Leavitt opposed national legislation to limit soot levels, calling for "sound science" and further investigation, though soot has repeatedly been linked to chronic respiratory problems, asthma, and lung cancer. And while soot is one of the main pollutants released by coal power plants, Leavitt advocates increased coal power production, including two major plant expansions, and the construction of another. From her Salt Lake City home, Dougherty can watch the arms of the Wasatch Mountains trap the haze created by industry and automobiles.

Perhaps even more threatening to citizens nationwide is Leavitt's advocacy for states' rights on environmental issues. States' rights have been used as a tactic to avoid publicly-supported federal environmental legislation. When states compete for industry and one of the bargaining chips is pollution control, more lenient controls are a temptation. And while many environmental problems, like global warming, air and water pollution, have no trouble crossing state lines, state laws do. "The EPA has got to have a strong enforcement role," says Dougherty.

Unfortunately, there are more dark spots on Leavitt's environmental record. One of his first acts as governor was to fire a Division of Wildlife Resources enforcement official who had fined Leavitt's family's fish farm for environmental violations. He later laid off fifty environmental scientists when their protection of vulnerable plant and animal species conflicted with developers' ambitions. He has been a staunch advocate of building the Legacy Highway, which would threaten the state's world-renowned wetlands. Emerging from the Leavitt era, Utah was ranked last in the nation in Clean Water Act enforcement.

"Leavitt's track record suggests that he will be a good fit for the Bush administration," says Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope, "but a disappointing choice for Americans concerned with environmental protection."

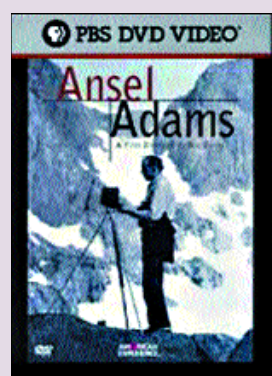
For more, see: www.sierraclub.org/scoop/leavitt.



Sierra Club Wins An Emmy

On August 3, the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences honored Sierra Club Productions' first public television program, *Ansel Adams: A Documentary Film*, with a News and Documentary Emmy award in the category of Outstanding Cultural & Artistic Programming (long format).

Ansel Adams was nominated along with programs produced by ABC, CBS, and National Geographic. "We are very proud to have been included in this outstanding group of nominees," says **Inness Wei Shadrick**, Vice President of Sierra Club Productions.



"And to win exceeded our greatest expectations." The documentary was co-produced with Steeplechase Films, written and directed by Ric Burns, and produced by Burns and Marilyn Ness. Major funding was provided by exclusive corporate donor Hewlett-Packard and additional funding was provided by the Sierra Club Foundation and Rosalind P. Walter. The film first aired on PBS on WGBH Boston's "American Experience" and is now available on home video and on DVD.

Get Noisy About Boise

The Sierra Student Coalition (SSC) celebrated Boise Cascade Corporation's September announcement that it would become the first major U.S. forest products company to adopt a comprehensive environmental statement for its operations, including a promise to eliminate the purchase of wood products from endangered forests. "Today, Boise is sending the message that it is no longer acceptable to supply the American marketplace with endangered forest products," says **Sequoia Nagamatsu**, Forest Protection Coordinator for the SSC. "Young people spoke and Boise listened. We hope other companies follow their lead."

For months, thousands of students across the country generated postcards at local distribution centers, kicked Boise Cascade off their campuses, and educated students and university officials about the company's unsound environmental practices. "Thousands of students across the country can pat themselves on the back," says SSC Director **Meighan Davis**. "The forest products industry has relied on logging pristine forests for too long. Boise's decision shows that there's a better way."

In Memory

Longtime Club member and supporter **Avis Goodwin** of Santa Barbara, Calif., passed away in August at age 96. Goodwin was the lead funder for the Club's wolf introduction program in the Greater Yellowstone region, and she gave generously to help educate the public in the northern Rockies—ranchers, farmers, city folk, and visitors alike—to help change their attitudes and practices toward wolves. In 2002 she followed these efforts with a substantial gift to promote wolf restoration work in the southern Rockies, and she established an endowment providing permanent funding to protect top predators. She believed that if top predators were faring well, the entire habitat would be sound.



Avis Goodwin

Disenchanted

Sally Baron of Stoughton, Wisconsin, a waitress, cook, factory worker, mother of six, and wife of a coal miner who was injured on the job, had become increasingly disenchanted with the president of late. When Baron passed away in August from heart surgery complications, her obituary included the request that, "Memorials in her honor can be made to any organization working for the removal of President Bush." The Associated Press and MSNBC reported that dozens of people from across the U.S. had contacted the local newspaper vowing to make donations, and that her obit request had started attracting notice nationwide.

Meanwhile, **Alan Locklear** and **Marie Valleroy** of Portland, Ore., Sierra Club members since 1981, sent a large contribution to the Club "to demonstrate the depth of our support for your action" to defeat President Bush. "We are not rich and Bush's tax cuts have not helped us very much," the couple wrote, "but we are very prosperous compared with most of the world and with the poor in this country who have been getting the back of W's hand."

Organic Pedal Power

The journey of a thousand miles sometimes starts with a single pedal. It did for nearly twenty bicyclists who, with the support of the Sierra Club of Canada's Sierra Youth Coalition, set out on July 26 to travel from Vancouver, B.C., to Cancún, Mexico, for the World Trade Organization (WTO) conference. (Their human-powered wheels were scheduled to take them as far as Tijuana, where buses took over for the remainder.)



Geneva Guerin

As they hugged the continent's west coast, the bikers' goal was to meet with farmers, migrant workers, produce shoppers, and others to highlight the effects of WTO agriculture policies on the food we consume. "It's better to support local organic farmers and buy fruit grown in the region, and in season," says **Geneva Guerin**, who dreamed up the "Deconstructing Dinner Caravan" last year. Guerin and her colleagues want to see trade rules that encourage local organic farming rather than international agribusiness, which they believe is environmentally destructive, energy intensive, and subjects migrant workers to unfair labor conditions.

Their goal upon arrival at the beach resort-turned-finance center was to make as many one-on-one connections with WTO delegates as possible and, says Guerin, "share the stories of our travels."

Real Red Rock Canyon Saved

"Truth is stranger than fiction," writes Southern Nevada Group Chair **Karen Hunt**, who read "Explore, enjoy, and PROTECT" (on Sierra Club outings) in the September issue of *The Planet*. As readers may recall, the article included a photograph and caption referring to a fictitious Red Rock Canyon that had been saved through activism inspired by Club outings. But it turns out a real Red Rock Canyon was saved this year (though not the one pictured).

As part of a coalition of citizens and nature groups, the Club's Southern Nevada Group helped enact state and county regulations protecting the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, just west of Las Vegas. (Among other things, the regs precluded a developer from building 5,500 homes proposed for the area.) "We spoke at hearings, wrote to the papers, appeared on TV, gathered signatures at rallies and county events, rode through a hail storm at a bike event wearing Red Rock bumperstickers, and led a hike on which we were joined by a reporter who then wrote an article about the area's 'breathtaking beauty,'" Hunt says. "Outdoor Outreach [the Club's new Conservation in Outings program] is fun and effective!"

—TOM VALTIN AND BRIAN VANNEMAN

who we are

**Jill Workman—Portland, Oregon
Oregon Chapter Chair**

"A lot of people toil in obscurity," says Oregon Chapter Chair Jill Workman. But she's doing her best to change that. The Oregon Chapter starts every meeting by giving everyone a chance to—as Workman says—"toot their own horn."

"I say, 'we've accomplished a lot since the last meeting; what are the successes you want to share?' And if someone doesn't share, but I know they've made some progress, I bring it up."

One of the chapter's big victories was the protection of Steens Mountain in southeastern Oregon's high desert in 2000. "We had a big party, and I was one of the speakers," says Workman. "I emphasized about how it wasn't me or any one person who accomplished this. It was us collectively. Everyone played a part."

A self-described "desert rat," Workman, who works for Wells Fargo in Portland, devoted many years to protecting Steens Mountain, which is a long way from where most Oregonians live. She got involved in the Sierra Club through her mother, who is a member. "Someone from the chapter called my mother to ask her to get involved in protecting the high desert, and she said, 'oh, you should talk to my daughter.'"

Before long, Workman was leading trips to the Steens area. "People would show up for a hike and end up becoming volunteers," she said.

Of course, that doesn't happen by accident. "Once someone is there sitting around the campfire, once they've seen a beautiful area and seen cattle overgrazing on it, then you can ask them to write the BLM a letter. Pretty soon, they feel ownership."

—JOHN BYRNE BARRY



JERRY SUTHERLAND

**Hurlon Ray—Lonsdale, Arkansas
Clean Water Activist**

Hurlon Ray, one of the principal architects of the Clean Water Act, has not let retirement slow him down. At 82, he is deeply involved in what he calls "the most important fight of my life"—cleaning up the Middle Fork of the Saline River, the central Arkansas waterway beside which he and four generations of his family grew up.

A longtime EPA water specialist, Ray returned in 1980 to what he calls his "paradise remembered," only to find it ravaged by the effects of upstream development. But he says recent attention by the Sierra Club and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has "shined a hopeful light into the murky waters of the Middle Fork."

Ray cites the Club as a motivator and an inspiration throughout his career and his life. "It would be hard to overstate the impact the Sierra Club had in galvanizing public opinion and getting the Clean Water Act passed," says Ray, who calls the Act, "the greatest piece of legislation ever to come about."

Ray was the Department of Interior spokesperson in Portland, Ore., on the first Earth Day in 1970, and later with the EPA he fought in some of the toughest environmental battles during the early years of water pollution awareness in the United States. "One of my proudest life testaments is to have helped create the first federal water quality standards," he says. Ray was honored with the Arkansas Sierran award in 2002.

In June 2002, the people of Saline County honored Ray and his wife Tyjuana, who died in 2000, by dedicating a granite marker inscribed with the couple's names. The monument sits at a scenic pullout named after them on Arkansas Route 5, overlooking one of the most picturesque vistas in the state.

—TOMVALTIN



**Karen Rock—Omaha, Nebraska
Missouri Valley Group Membership Chair**

Karen Rock moved to Omaha from her native Iowa 21 years ago, and for all of those years she worked for a large insurance company—until this August, when she quit her job to go back to school in the environmental sciences.

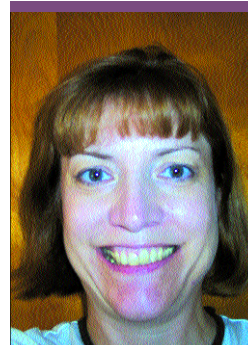
"It was tough to lose the job security," she says, "but through the Missouri Valley Group I've been exposed to some interesting ventures. There's an area of virgin prairie owned by the Audubon Society in north Omaha where I've been working lately, and I'm a Habitat Ambassador for the National Wildlife Federation—I have a table at a local Home Depot and I talk with people about making their backyards more wildlife-friendly, using native plants, conserving water."

The move to shake up her professional life followed a national Sierra Club outing she went on in Maui last January to do whale observation. "That really piqued my interest in conservation," she says. "After that trip, I found it hard to concentrate at my office job—I wanted to do something more for conservation causes. I recently found out about a paying position doing prairie restoration work through a local university that involves working outdoors and doing work I feel committed about."

Rock hopes to be a naturalist in a state or private park where she can promote native plantings and sustainable landscaping. "As for going back to school and giving up a secure income, I remind myself of Thoreau's words from *Walden*: 'If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.'"

—TOMVALTIN

Know someone whose story is deserving? Contact us at The Planet, 85 Second St., Second Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105; planet@sierraclub.org.



THE PLANET

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one-minute activist

Urge Your Senators to Oppose Bush's Energy Bill

The energy bill conference convened in early September to hash out the differences between House and Senate versions of the bill. The Sierra Club opposes both versions because they move us backward and put our communities at risk. Democrats on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee say they are being excluded from the talks, and their input is not being sought. "To this point, they have not sought involvement of Democrats at all," said Rep. Henry Waxman of California, a member of the conference committee.

Using the recent blackout as political cover, President Bush and congressional Republicans are claiming that their destructive energy bill is necessary to prevent future blackouts. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Bush bill ignores solutions at hand that would decrease our dependence on polluting, unsafe, and outdated energy systems. It attempts to open sensitive places like the Arctic Refuge to destructive oil and gas development, but conversely, does not save a drop of oil and does nothing to significantly increase our use of clean, renewable energy. It overlooks almost totally the importance of increasing efficiency, and fails to adequately prevent against further power outages.

Call your senator at the Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121.

To find out who your senator is, check out <http://eomer.sierraclub.org>

For more information, go to www.sierraclub.org/energy/bush_bill.asp

Call your senators and urge them not to support this regressive legislation.

Tell them that President Bush's energy plan:

- Ignores energy-efficient solutions in favor of increased oil, gas, coal, and nuclear production.
- Attempts to open sensitive places like the Arctic Refuge and other special places in the West to destructive oil and gas development.
- Allows automakers to sell more gas guzzlers by failing to raise fuel economy standards.
- Disregards the property rights of farmers and ranchers and provides incentives for destructive coal-bed methane drilling.

Encourage your senators to support only a much-scaled-back bill (with only the electricity reliability measures intact), eliminate the worst provisions from the current bill, or to spark a filibuster of the bill when it returns to the Senate.

updates

Okefenokee Victory

In August, the DuPont Chemical Corporation announced that it was retiring its mineral rights within Georgia's Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and donating nearly 16,000 acres of land to The Conservation Fund. This is one of the most significant corporate land donations in the history of the State of Georgia, and the largest ever for the DuPont Land Legacy Program, which since 1992 has placed nearly 18,000 acres of company land into permanent protected status. The Conservation Fund will in turn donate 5,000 acres to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

WMDs Burning in Alabama

Thousands of false alarms have sounded within the Army's chemical weapons incinerator in Anniston, Alabama, since it began operating on August 9. (See "Army Burns, Club Fumes," September 2003.) The Sierra Club favors a safer and more effective method of disposal called neutralization, and a second Club-organized rally (in which the canine pictured at right participated) opposing the incinerator was held in Anniston on Aug. 16. In early September, after insisting for nearly two weeks that an alarm on August 21 had falsely indicated a leak of the deadly nerve agent sarin, the Army acknowledged that there have been 10 such leaks. For more information, go to www.cwwg.org.



MARGARET WANCE

Estrada Withdraws

On September 4, controversial judicial nominee Miguel Estrada asked President Bush to withdraw his name from consideration for the federal appeals court in Washington, D.C. Bush had been pushing for Estrada's approval, but Senate Democrats filibustered seven times to block the move, insisting they would not allow a final vote until the appellate lawyer answered more of their questions in a public hearing or until the White House released Estrada's working papers from his time at the Justice Department.