

Mountain State Sierran

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Winter 2018

Welcome to our new Chapter Organizing Rep

Natalie Thiele

On behalf of the WV Executive Committee, I am pleased to introduce the Chapter's new Organizing Representative, Chela Barajas. Chela joined us Sept. 17 and has been busy conducting one-on-one sessions with Club leaders and key allies to start building the network and connections that are critical in our fight to protect West Virginians from the dangerous excesses of our various fossil fuel industries and their big-money corporate cronies.

In the coming months, Chela will be working with members of the WV Chapter to develop an organizing plan. If you are directly impacted by either fracked gas or coal and would like to help create the organizing plan — or if you'd like to schedule a one-on-one about a specific fossil-fuel issue affecting your community — please contact Chela (who uses the pronouns they/them/their) at: chela.barajas@sierraclub.org.

Chela's organizing will be split 50/50 between the Beyond Dirty Fuels and the Beyond Coal campaigns. The Club's Beyond Dirty Fuels campaign focuses on fighting the buildout of unnecessary oil and fracked gas infrastructure, protecting our public lands and waters from drilling, educating the public on the dangers of fracked gas development, and fighting the economic injustices associated with fracked gas (like regular West Virginians suffering a disproportionate health, tax and utility rate burden while CEOs make obscene profits) (<https://bit.ly/2PppWqt>).

Beyond Coal focuses on keeping coal in the ground and on replacing retired coal plants with clean energy alternatives such as wind, solar and geothermal energy. Moving away from coal is important — it currently leads to as many as 13,000 premature deaths each year and costs more than \$100 billion in health-care costs (<https://bit.ly/1GnKW7D>).

Chela brings with them an impressive resume of service and organizing around social justice, health and environmental issues. They're a board member of CARE (Call to Action for Racial Equality) and a volunteer co-director of Holler Health Justice, "a WV abortion fund bringing practical support and reproductive justice to West Virginia's holler folk of limited means." They are also on the board of the WV International Film Festival, where they've seen the impact that the Underground Cinema in Charleston has had in bringing communities together; as a WVIFF board member, they've used their voice to pick



Chela Barajas, our new Chapter Organizing Rep.

movies that feature people who are not always represented in or by the film industry.

In 2015, Chela began organizing around the water crisis in Charleston. After the Freedom Industries' chemical spill into the Elk River, they were part of the coalition that formed between reproductive health advocates and WV Rivers — the Women and Water campaign. Because our state is a coal and gas extraction colony with inadequate and under-enforced health and environmental protections, West Virginia desperately needs to continue the discussion on the intersection between reproductive health and water. I believe we are fortunate to have a staff organizer with experience listening, educating and advocating on these issues.

Chela enjoys being outdoors. They shared, "My favorite thing to do in the colder months, because I can't really kayak or paddleboard — well, I can, but it's a lot less fun — is get a lot of hiking and camping in, especially in the Monongahela National Forest ... And Kumbrabow — I really like that area."

Welcome, Chela. We are excited to work with you.

Ready for 100 Yet?

April Pierson-Keating

How can your town be on the forefront of the renewable energy revolution? How about a just transition to clean energy? When I approached my mayor about it, to my surprise, he said he wanted to learn more. Maybe it was because of the way I pitched it to him — as an opportunity for him to make a Declaration and get some media attention. Whether your mayor wants to support sustainability or just wants a photo op, everyone in your town will benefit from a commitment to 100 percent renewable energy.

The Sierra Club's "Ready for 100" program helps you be an agent of change. It teaches you how to get your mayor or City Council to commit to transitioning to using 100 percent clean energy. There are 88 cities and nine counties working toward 100 percent renewable energy. Some communities set targets such as 2050, others are more ambitious. The list of cities includes Cleveland, Denver, Minneapolis and Orlando. Read the case studies report here to see how it works in politically diverse towns.

Last June, two of us went to Columbus, Ohio, for a Ready for 100 training. Panelists included Cleveland's sustainability manager, the energy manager for Cincinnati (where they already have an aggregation program), and Oberlin's city council president. These "powerhouses" told us how they have been promoting or providing clean power to their communities, often at reduced rates, from the legacy utility.

While there, we met the Sierra Club leaders in Ohio—WOW. What a group! Jocelyn Travis is the RF100 team leader in Ohio and was a big part of Cleveland's commitment. Their mayor was really opposed at first, but Jocelyn kept at it for two years and got a commitment to 100 percent renewable energy by 2050 in a city where First Energy controls 73 percent of the market.

There are two main sectors: transportation and electricity. Transportation might include electric buses, while electricity covers power for homes, city buildings or businesses. Some mayors might wish to convert only their municipal buildings; others want to expand renewable energy to residents.

Not everyone can do a quick transition, so there are different levels of commitment. For example, my small town is in the middle of the extraction zone; gas is our legacy energy, it's going to be with us for a while. But towns or counties can designate themselves as "working toward" 100 percent renewable and that is still considered a commitment.

Every city, county and state has different circumstances, and your approach must be tailored to fit. Interested Sierra Club members should take a training and get started. You will get a toolkit that contains information to help you, but the best part is the one-on-one support that Sierra Club is so good at providing.

Contact Laura Comer in California, laura.comer@sierraclub.org, or Jocelyn Travis in Ohio, jocelyn.travis@sierraclub.org, to learn more about weekly orientation webinars every fourth Wednesday, and to get the toolkit so you can get started.

**Next ExCom Meeting
Jan. 12, in Buckhannon**



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

View from the Chair

— Justin Raines, Chapter Chair

Make a Difference with Your Vote

This has been a year that many of us will remember for the rest of our lives, for better or worse. Our state and our country are in a terrifying place. Those in power at every level and in every branch are working furiously to dismantle every pillar of government which is beneficial to society. From environmental regulations and protections to the very services that keep vulnerable people alive, everything that supports basic human decency is under attack.

At the same time, this has also been a year of great hope. Even as Nazis march in the streets and fossil-fuel lawyers shred our EPA, the resistance and activism on our side is like nothing I have ever seen in my lifetime. Nor is it matched by any period recallable by the folks I've asked who have done this work for decades.

As I write this, we're approaching an Election Day whose results won't be known until after the deadline for this submission. I hold a lot of hope for this election, and a lot of fear. In a few short days, we'll know the results. (Ed. Note: Space was held on page 2 for an after-election analysis.)

That's not the only election coming up, nor the only one in which changes beyond officeholders are proposed. This issue also marks the start of elections for the West

Virginia Chapter's Executive Committee (ExCom). And in tune with that rising activism I spoke of, we have an outstanding slate of candidates with vast environmental justice experience, more than we've ever had in recent memory.

The Chapter has grown tremendously over the past few years, as has interest in our work. Given our increasing membership, along with superior candidates, the ExCom is considering a change to the Chapter Bylaws that will expand the ExCom from its current five "at-large" members to seven. Because changes to the Bylaws need to be approved by the Chapter's general membership, you will have the opportunity to vote on this amendment as well as choose the next leaders of our Chapter.

One reason for this proposed amendment is that the Chapter has grown beyond what five people can reasonably manage and represent. I will be voting "Yes" on this measure, and I urge you to as well.

I'd also like to offer my sincere thanks for all the hard work many of you have put in this past year, especially our Gas Committee Chair, Natalie Thiele, who has constantly gone above and beyond to support the Chapter's work.

Thanks for this ride.

Wins and Losses in 2018 election

Election night, Nov. 6, produced some significant wins for the environment, and a couple of heart-breaking losses.

The WV Sierra Club endorsed Kendra Fershee and Talley Sergent for U.S. House of Representatives, but neither was able to overcome their opponents, in spite of a Blue Wave that shifted control of the House of Representatives to Democrats. As members of the minority party, McKinley, Mooney and Miller will be less likely to push through damaging legislation.

In WV legislative races, the WV Chapter endorsed five candidates for State Senate, but only two, Bob Beach (13th District) and Stephen Baldwin (10th District), won. Beach's opponent, former Democratic State Senator-turned Republican Mike Oliverio, sealed his fate with many voters by proposing to timber public lands. Our other endorsed candidates (William Wooton, Laura Finch, Stephanie Zucker) came close, but needed more help. Other key races included the defeat of State Senators Ryan Ferns and Ed Gaunch (both with 0% pro-environment votes on the Sierra Club scorecard: <https://www.sierraclub.org/west-virginia/political>), as well as victories by pro-environment Senators Mike Woelfel, Ron Stollings, Mike Romano and John Unger.

In the WV House of Delegates, the Chapter endorsed 14 candidates. Winners included Sean Hornbuckle (16th Delegate District), Margaret Staggers (32nd), Larry Rowe (36th), Mike Pushkin (37th) and Sammi Brown (65th).

The 51st District (Monongalia County) saw four endorsed candidates win, incumbents Barbara Fleischauer and Rodney Pyles, and newcomers Evan Hansen and Danielle Walker. Coupled with the win by Democrat John Williams, that meant the defeat of two anti-environment Republicans (Joe Statler and Cindy Frich). Unfortunately, five Chapter-endorsed candidates also lost: Lissa Lucas (7th), Dakota Nelson (16th), Renate Pore (35th), Cory Chase (53rd) and Bibi Hahn (58th).

While Republicans still control both chambers, Democrats net gain was two seats in the State Senate and five in the

House of Delegates. Overall, we expect that these victories and those of pro-environment delegates Andrew Byrd, Shawn Fluharty and John Doyle, coupled with losses or retirements of several of the most extreme anti-environment incumbents, will produce a marked improvement in the WV Legislature.

WV Supreme Court

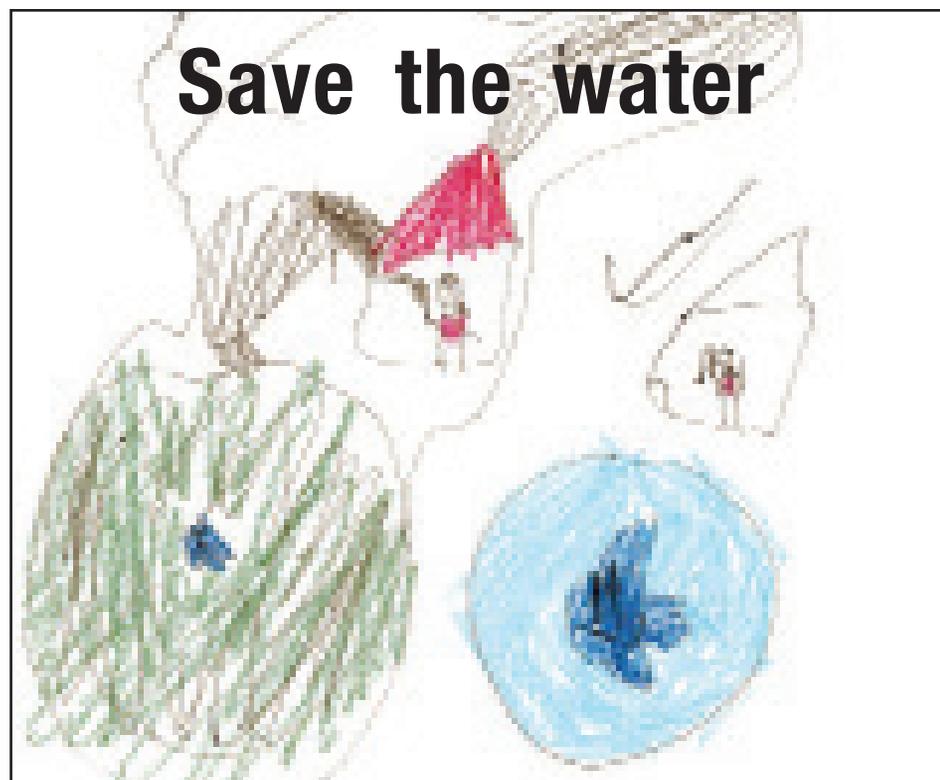
Special elections for two vacancies created by resignations of two Democrats (Menis Ketchum and Robin Davis) led to victories for two anti-environment Republicans. Former Speaker of the House of Delegates Tim Armstead and Congressman Evan Jenkins both won their respective seats. These will mark a pronounced anti-environment shift in the WV Supreme Court. That means passing good laws will be more important than ever.

National News

Democrats regained control of the U.S. House of Representatives. We are counting on them as an important check on the most anti-environmental extremism from the Trump Administration. But with Republicans still in control of the U.S. Senate, we will need to remain active to oppose polluters and regulatory rollbacks.

In some states, important environmental initiatives were on the ballot. An effort in Washington State to impose a carbon tax was defeated after fossil fuel companies dumped millions into last-minute advertising, using scare tactics of increased utility bills. A similar measure to restrict gas drilling in Colorado also lost. And a ballot initiative in Arizona requiring utilities to get 50 percent of their energy from renewables by 2035 also lost when the utilities dumped more than \$30 million into opposing it.

On the plus side, Nevada passed what Arizona rejected, a requirement to get half their electricity from renewables by 2035. Florida adopted an amendment banning offshore oil and gas drilling. California rejected an effort to repeal gas taxes and fees. The take-away is that voters fear higher energy costs, but support plans to diversify energy sources and create jobs.



Charlotte, age 6

Don't pollute the water. We need it. We drink it. Here are some uses for water.

1. We drink it.
2. We take baths with it.
3. We make water tables with it.
4. Without water, we wouldn't have ice cubes and ice packs.
5. Fish and all animals need water.
6. We can go swimming in water. Without water, there would be no swimming.
7. Plants need water.

This picture shows a person polluting water. In the next picture he decided to save water so he can eat the fish. His favorite fish is blue-tiful trout (I made that fish up).

(Editor's note: It's never too early to encourage a budding environmentalist.)

Please contact the Editor for submission guidelines or advertising rates. Contributions to the newsletter may be sent to the Editor at:



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Deadline for the
2019 Spring issue

February 2



Opinions expressed in the *Mountain State Sierran* are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Sierra Club. This newsletter is published quarterly by the WV Chapter of the Sierra Club and distributed to all paid members.



Jim Sconyers gets second memorial bench

A second bench memorializing Jim Sconyers was installed Oct. 16, on the edge of Pendleton Lake in Blackwater Falls State Park. Representing WV Sierra Club are Heidi Kammer (left), Lynn Sobolov, Tom Kammer, Mary Wimmer, Duane Lazzell and Sally Wilts. Thanks go to Park Superintendent Matt Baker and the Blackwater Falls SP workers for doing the installation.

Photo by Mary Wimmer

Public Lands Review and Outlook

Matt Kearns, Public Lands Coordinator
West Virginia Rivers Coalition

Hopefully, you considered our public lands when you cast your ballot a few weeks ago. You did vote, didn't you? It's one of the most important ways we can influence our public lands. Remember: the government doesn't own these lands; YOU do. Still, our elected officials are responsible for making the laws and policies that determine how these lands are managed. Participating in the process — through public comments, planning meetings, and voting — is key to ensuring your voice is heard.

Another is staying involved in critical issues. On this front, the West Virginians for Public Lands (WVPL) alliance has had a successful year. Most notably, we helped beat back proposals to open WV state parks to commercial logging. As part of the "Save Our State Parks" (SOSParks) campaign, business owners, foresters, naturalists, sportsmen, conservation groups, and concerned Mountaineers flooded the Capitol with more than 16,000 letters and phone calls. A last-minute lottery-bond bill — one of the many funding alternatives to logging proposed by the SOSPark team — put the issue to rest. For now.

WVPL was also successful in garnering Congressional support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), up for renewal this year. The fund did expire on September 30, but both Senator Manchin and Senator Capito voted in committee to support permanently reauthorizing and providing full, dedicated funds for LWCF. This is the first time Senator Capito has taken such a favorable position on the fund, and it's due in part to the thousands of letters and postcards that explained how people and communities have benefitted from the \$241 million invested in West Virginia by

LWCF since 1964. We expect the work of passing a new bill for LWCF to continue until the end of the 115th Congress. But the clock is ticking — our public lands lose up to \$2.46 million each day the fund is lapsed.

Looking ahead to 2019, we have our work cut out for us. The President's administrative review still has a few of our national monuments on the chopping block. Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments were reduced by millions of acres. Legal challenges to those reductions are still pending, leaving the fate of the other 27 monuments under review hanging in the balance.

The Forest Service's "Roadless Rule" is still under fire. Alaska and Utah are pressuring the Administration for statewide exemptions, and there is likely to be a slew of bills in the new Congress to create loopholes in the Roadless Rule big enough to drive a logging truck through. Inevitably, any exemptions and loopholes out west could creep into our National Forests here. Seneca Creek, Roaring Plains, North Mountain, Falls of Hills Creek — some of the most iconic landscapes on West Virginia's public land are currently protected by the Roadless Rule.

The logging issue on state parks could come back from the dead like a zombie lumberjack. Turns out that the 2018 lottery bond covered only part of the parks' maintenance backlog. The Charleston Gazette-Mail published the results of a legislative audit that once again raised the idea of fees for our state parks. The paper also ran a series of articles about the benefits and growth of our state's timber and forest products industry. Are these the opening salvos in the next fight for our state parks?

So sharpen those pencils and stretch out those dialing fingers. We've got 1.2 million acres of public lands to advocate for.

Navigating state public lands

Mel Waggy

In the last issue of the *Sierran*, we discussed various public lands, particularly those managed by the federal government. Here, we continue that discussion by focusing on public lands managed by the state of West Virginia.

Public lands in West Virginia are overseen by the Division of Natural Resources (DNR) and fall under one of three categories: State Parks, State Forests, or Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). These lands encompass nearly 200,000 acres of land in the state, or about 1 percent of West Virginia.

There are nearly 40 state parks, including two rails-to-trails systems, in West Virginia. The mission for these parks is to conserve sites with natural, historical, cultural and archaeological significance, and to provide outdoor recreational opportunities to citizens and visitors of West Virginia. The park system provides a variety of outdoor activities, such as hiking, biking, camping, boating, fishing, horseback riding and hunting.

Many state parks, however, are developed and managed as resorts, providing amenities such as lodging (i.e., cabins, lodges), restaurants, pools and golf courses. Other parks, such as Droop Mountain or the Cass Railroad, place an emphasis on historical and cultural resources. Regardless of the type of park, each typically contains a substantial proportion of undeveloped land. Hunting and resource extraction, including timber harvest, are not usually considered a part of their mission.

There are seven State Forests in West Virginia. These lands are managed for multiple uses that include developed amenities (e.g., cabins, pools, disc golf); outdoor recreational activities (hiking, biking, camping, fishing, hunting); fish and wildlife protection, aesthetic preservation, silviculture (e.g., forest propagation, timber production and harvest); and

scientific research. WV State Parks, under the DNR, manages recreational activities in the State Forests, while the WV Division of Forestry manages silviculture activities.

The third type of state public lands, Wildlife Management Areas, were created to conserve and manage high quality habitats for a variety of wildlife species and to improve public access to these resources. At this time, 1.4 million acres, or 8 percent of the state, are managed as WMAs. However, not all WMAs are owned by the state; some are federally owned, owned by conservation groups, or by municipalities. Construction of roads, parking lots, trails and public shooting ranges are a vital part of their mission. Providing hunting opportunities to all, including the physically challenged, is among their top priorities.

While most of the public lands in West Virginia are managed by either federal or state agencies, if you travel outside our state, there are a variety of lands managed by cities, counties, park districts and conservation groups that are open to the public. These lands also play an important role in protecting native plant and wildlife habitat, water quality, open space, and intact natural communities (e.g., forests, wetlands, riparian), in addition to providing outdoor recreation opportunities. For example, Forest Park, located within the city limits of Portland, Oregon, is one of the largest urban parks in the United States. This 5,200-acre park, comprised mostly of native forest, contains more than 80 miles of maintained hiking trails. Even larger than Forest Park is the Forest Preserve system in Cook County, Ill., just south of Chicago. More than 69,000 acres of native forest, prairie, and wetland have been set aside for the purpose of "protecting and preserving public open space."

Understanding the divisions within the public land system is central to protecting the lands we love.

Gasland Tour Instructs Group

Laura Yokochi

During the 26 years I've lived in Salem, the area just west of town has gone from peaceful countryside to industrial hub. Dark, silent nights have been replaced by the bright lights and giant gas flare of the massive MarkWest Sherwood Complex where fracked gas is processed 24/7. Neighbors with investments or jobs in the gas industry are delighted by the "exciting things" going on in Doddridge County, and so are our local politicians, but those of us who prefer trees, clean air and clean water are horrified.

Fighting this kind of "progress" is like swimming upstream and it's even harder when we don't really understand what's going on. How can we say gas is a "dirty fuel" when everyone has been taught that it's "clean and safe"?

It helps to get off the highway and take a closer look at the dirty work behind the scenes. Steep gravel roads full of

equipment and large tanker trucks are dangerous, so I decided to take the Oct. 26 bus tour offered by the Mountain Lakes Preservation Alliance (MLPA).

Kevin Campbell, former Doddridge County ambulance driver, expertly maneuvered the 12-passenger bus while April Keating offered expert commentary. Our group also included six from Maryland and one from Elkins. During the six-hour tour we saw pipeline being installed, staging areas, compressor stations, frack water storage tanks, "man camps" where the workers live, the Antero Clearwater treatment plant, and the Sherwood plant. We made numerous stops and took pictures. Both Kevin and April were able to answer questions and explain exactly what we were seeing.

I would highly recommend these tours for anyone who wants to learn about the gas industry's effects on a rural county. MLPA will offer more tours in the spring, but groups can arrange special tours by contacting them at: 304-609-2089.

Eastern Panhandle Group News and Outings

Maggie Loudon

The Eastern Panhandle Sierra Club (EPSC) moved closer to becoming a group within the West Virginia Chapter when they elected officers at their October conservation meeting. Chris Craig and Regina Hendrix were elected as Co-Chairs, Gail Kohlhorst as Vice Chair, Aileen Curfman as Treasurer, Maggie Loudon as Secretary, and Chris Craig as Outings Chair. They are proceeding with writing their Group Bylaws.

EP Sierrans have joined fellow citizens in working to prevent Rockwool from building a stone wool insulation factory in Jefferson County. Those opposed to Rockwool agree with David Levine ([Forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com), Sept 17, 2018) who said, "Rockwool was recruited to Jefferson County under a cloak of secrecy, requiring shuttle diplomacy between Charleston and Eastern Panhandle to get the deal done."

One of the reasons for opposition to Rockwool is its proximity to four schools, as it will emit air polluting chemicals that are associated with illnesses such as cancer, heart and lung damage and asthma. One of these chemicals, formaldehyde, is a neurotoxin associated with damaging memory, concentration, behavior and physical dexterity in children. Nearby residents are also concerned about air, water, noise and light pollution, which will affect local residents, but also cause problems for current important businesses there, such as tourism, the equine industry, bee keeping and farming.

Sierrans, along with other citizens, have testified before local governmental commissions, attended rallies and public educational forums, researched all aspects of this issue and reached out to their neighbors with facts about the implications of Rockwool coming to Jefferson County.

Sierrans here have also joined with others to prevent the Mountaineer Gas Pipeline from expanding into Jefferson County. Columbia Gas/TransCanada has received permission from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to connect its existing lines in Fulton, Pa., with the Mountaineer Gas pipeline currently being constructed in Morgan and Berkeley counties, with hopes of expanding into Jefferson County to service Rockwool.

Some of us participated in an organizing training group led by Jenna Jones. We have created a petition on the Care2 petition site to ask the National Park Service to deny

a permit for Columbia Gas/TransCanada to dig under the C&O Canal in Hancock, Md. (<https://www.thepetitionsite.com/467/898/162/>).



EPSC has continued holding public meetings every other month. In August, Don Conant, founder of Shepherdstown-based Solar Holler ([solarholler.com](https://www.solarholler.com)), spoke. Solar Holler pursues innovative approaches that bring solar within the reach of people and places traditionally left out from innovation. Besides being a full solar developer and installer for all West Virginians, they worked with others to launch the first solar job training and apprenticeship program in West Virginia.

EPSC participated in the National Drive Electric Week in September. Also in September, we held a Meet the Candidates Forum as our public meeting. Candidates

endorsed by the Sierra Club spoke to those gathered. Bib Hahn, candidate for District 58, Morgan County; Sammie Brown, candidate for District 65, Charles Town; and a representative of Talley Sergeant, candidate for House of Representatives District 2, explained their platforms.

In October, EPSC held their final 2018 meeting. Mary Ann Hitt, Beyond Coal Sierra Club, explained reasons why there must be a transition to clean energy:

- To end air and water pollution created by pollutants from coal-fired utilities, such as mercury, cadmium and nitrous oxide, that cause health problems for residents, including asthma.
- To end pollution that aggravates climate change.
- Alternates to non-renewable sources of energy — wind, solar power and battery storage — have become less expensive and more available.

She stressed how important it is to resist the roll-backs of the Trump administration that attack air and water protections. She noted that the economic tide is turning as even utilities are finding that energy derived from renewable resources is often cheaper than continuing to derive it from fossil fuel sources. She used an interactive map to show how many coal-fired electric plants have closed.

Chris Craig has continued to lead outings each month. They are attracting many participants. He publicizes on MeetUp, a social media site (<https://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Eastern-Panhandle/events/>) and on the West Virginia Chapter calendar. Recent hikes included an easy hike at Antietam Battlefield in September and a more strenuous hike in Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area in October. The November hike will continue along the Maryland part of the Appalachian Trail, and in December, there will be an easy hike on the C&O Canal. He has begun to lead one outing a quarter that will accommodate those who have difficulty on long or strenuous hikes. Look for a list of upcoming outings on p. 5 of this newsletter.

All EP Sierrans who, like us, are interested in keeping up with and supporting efforts to keep our Panhandle as wild and wonderful as it is are invited to contact either Chris Craig ccraig@laurelodge.com or Regina Hendrix regina.hendrix@comcast.net

EP team rally and PSC hearing a major success

Natalie Thiele

The Eastern Panhandle Protectors and members of the Sierra Club held a public rally ahead of an Oct. 24 Public Service Commission (PSC) public hearing on the proposed Mountaineer Gas Pipeline extension into Jefferson County. The rally and the hearing were both well attended; more than 300 attendees packed the Storer Ballroom at Shepherd University for the hearing. Most in the crowd seemed to be there in opposition to the proposed extension of the pipeline. Forty-five citizens made comments against the extension, while only five people spoke in favor of the project.

All five who spoke in favor were industry representatives, including the lawyer for the proposed Rockwool plant in Jefferson County. The remaining four industry viewpoints were presented by a representative from the WV Manufacturer's Association, one from the WV Oil and Gas Association, and two from Argos, a concrete company in Martinsburg.

As of Nov. 1, more than 300 letters of protest had been submitted to the PSC,

with the Eastern Panhandle team against the pipeline extension working tirelessly to encourage hundreds more comments before the Nov. 8 cutoff.

The pipeline extension represents a massive investment from Mountaineer Gas, which serves 220,000 customers in West Virginia. Opponents of the pipeline are concerned that utility customers and WV taxpayers will end up subsidizing the millions that Mountaineer Gas wants to spend to impose this unnecessary and unwanted pipeline on the people of Jefferson County.

Speakers at the PSC hearing raised many concerns about the proposed extension, including the risks associated with construction and karst geology. Because Jefferson County is a karst area, heavy construction activities can cause a host of ecological and health and safety hazards, including erosion and sinkholes along the path of the line. Pipeline leaks (or spills of any hazardous substances during construction) can travel quickly through karst and be difficult to trace, contain and clean. And explosions are a

real possibility as well. In the past year, two brand-new pipelines in our region exploded within days or months of being put into service, due to land subsidence. Mountaineer Gas is playing with people's lives by even attempting to put in a new pipeline in an area characterized by various forms of land subsidence.

This pipeline extension seems to have been "promised" to Rockwool during unscrupulous behind-the-scenes negotiations. In fact, some have taken the trouble to present the proposed Mountaineer Gas Pipeline extension (which would connect the project to Ranson, the site of the proposed Rockwool facility) as a done deal. If the extension is built, it will enable other Rockwool-scale heavy industries to invade the Eastern Panhandle; this seems to be by design. Our public servants should not be conspiring with profit-driven corporations to endanger our health, wealth and livelihoods. They cannot be allowed to keep making decisions about West Virginian lives without our input and without full transparency. These backroom deals, and the deliberate presentation

of both Rockwool and the Mountaineer Gas Pipeline extension as foregone conclusions, are unacceptable perversions of the civic process.

We stand with the people of the Eastern Panhandle as they confront the corporations who seek to burden vibrant, thriving communities with a future of heavy industry and toxic pollution.

If you are interested in working with the WV Sierra Club gas committee on issues affecting your community (fracking, pipelines or other gas infrastructure, industry truck traffic, etc.) please contact us at: wvgascommittee@gmail.com

A limited supply of
2019 Sierra Club Calendars
are still available for purchase.

Wilderness Wall calendar **\$13**
Engagement Desk calendar **\$14**

Discounts in effect after Jan. 1.
For details, celliot2@comcast.net

OUTINGS

For additional details about any outing, or to RSVP your intent to participate, please contact the designated leader ahead of time. To view Sierra Club's Liability Policy for Outings, go to sierraclub.org/west-virginia under Events.

Sat, Dec 15

Day Hike: C&O Towpath, Weverton(Md.) to Harpers Ferry

Distance/Difficulty: 3.5 miles, EASY

Duration: 2.5 hours

Description: After the crowds of Olde Tyme Christmas, Harpers Ferry quiets down for the winter. But the town and trails nearby provide some of the best views of the year and also an active launch to the Yuletide season. Join us for a walk from Weverton, Md., down to the C&O towpath, where we'll enjoy views of the Potomac and perhaps an eagle or two. We'll walk across the Appalachian Trail pathway on the old railroad bridge into the town, where a car shuttle* will return drivers to their cars. (Please RSVP and plan for a little extra shuttle time at the end.) This hike is open to any adult, or child accompanied by an adult, of adequate fitness for a mostly flat walk along unpaved trails.

Meet: 10 a.m. Weverton, Md., Park and Ride area on the Appalachian Trail (39.333125,-77.685541). From US340, take MD 67 north to first right turn onto Weverton Road. The parking lot is on your right in 1,500 feet.

Leader: Chris Craig, 304-433-1260, ccraig@laurellodge.com

Nearest Town: Harpers Ferry, WV

Additional Info: *Please be advised that Sierra Club assumes no responsibility for shuttle/ carpooling. Carpooling is at the sole risk of the participants. There is no charge for this hike. Those wishing to may gather for lunch at one of the lower town restaurants at the end of the hike.

Cancellation policy: We will carry on in light rain or snow but cancel if there's substantial ice or heavy precipitation.

Tues, Jan 1, 2019

Day Hike: C&O Towpath Ferry Hill to Killiansburg Cave, and back

Distance/Difficulty: 5 miles, EASY

Duration: 3 hours

Description: Start 2019 off in outdoor fashion by joining us on this easy Canal hike along the C&O Canal towpath, just across from Shepherdstown, WV. We will hike from the hilltop plantation of Ferry Hill to the Civil War landmark of Killiansburg Cave, and back. This hike is open to any adult, or child accompanied by an adult, of adequate fitness for a mostly flat walk along unpaved trails. Well-behaved dogs on leashes are welcome, too. There is no charge for this hike.

Meet: 10:30 a.m. Ferry Hill Plantation, 16500 Shepherdstown Pike, Sharpsburg, MD 21782. (This now-closed visitor center for the C&O NHP overlooks Shepherdstown from the opposite side of the Potomac River.)

Leader: Chris Craig, 304-433-1260, ccraig@laurellodge.com

Nearest Town: Shepherdstown, WV

Additional Info: Normally there would be an admission fee to the Park; but in celebration of National Public Lands Day, the National Parks System is offering **free admission to all National Parks.**

Bring: Snack and water

Cancellation policy: See Dec 15th event

Sat, Jan 26

Day Hike: Legacy Loop, Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship

Distance/Difficulty: 6 miles, MODERATELY EASY

Duration: 3 hours

Description: Not long ago Loudoun County Virginia held the record as the fastest growing county in America, and its rural landscapes are still vanishing beneath housing developments. But western Loudoun still has lots of beautiful and historic countryside along the eastern side of the Blue Ridge, including this facility dedicated to environmental education. Join us for this winter walk through historic farmland and past small lakes. With 695 feet in elevation gain, it is open to anyone, including minors accompanied by adults, of adequate fitness for a trail walk on rolling terrain. Well-behaved dogs on leashes are welcome, too. There is no charge for this hike.

Meet: 10 a.m. Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship parking area, 11661 Harpers Ferry Road, Purcellville, VA 20132 (39.293709 N, 77.7272399 W). Harpers Ferry Road in Virginia is VA-671, running south from US340 near the Potomac River Bridge. Look for the Center's sign on your right in 2 miles.

Leader: Chris Craig, 304-433-1260, ccraig@laurellodge.com

Nearest Town: Harpers Ferry, WV

Bring: Snack and water.

Cancellation policy: See Dec 15th event

Sat, Feb 23

Day Hike: Appalachian Trail Penn Mar to Wolfville Road (Md.)

Distance/Difficulty: 10 miles, DIFFICULT

Duration: 5.5 hours

Description: Our series of hikes along Maryland's AT ends with this interesting and varied northern stretch, including the dazzling views from Penn Mar Park at the Mason Dixon Line and at High Rock, a favorite launch site for hang gliders. The hike will include the rockiest and most strenuous section of the AT in Maryland, as well as some easier sections. The hike will begin at Penn Mar Park and will involve a shuttle back to the park at the end, so allow extra time and notify (RSVP) the outings leader if you wish to attend.* The hike is open to any adult, or child accompanied by adult, of adequate fitness for a long strenuous winter hike. The hike is free.

Meet: 9 a.m. Penn Mar County Park, 14600 Pen Mar/High Rock Road, Cascade, MD 21719. From I-70 in Maryland, take exit 35 north 19.6 miles on MD-66. Turn right on MD-491 14 miles to Pen Mar High Rock Rd in Highfield-Cascade. (39.5707454,-77.6229127) Park near and meet at the overlook pavilion.

Leader: Chris Craig, 304-433-1260, ccraig@laurellodge.com

Nearest Town: Highfield-Cascade, Md. (near Smithsburg, Md., and Waynesboro, Pa.)

Bring: A packed lunch, plenty of water, and a snack. Wear clothing and footwear appropriate for potentially changing weather of a winter day.

Additional Info: *Please be advised that Sierra Club assumes no responsibility for shuttle/ carpooling. Carpooling is at the sole risk of the participants.

Cancellation policy: See Dec 15th event

Sat, Mar 23

Day Hike: Schoolhouse Ridge South to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Distance/Difficulty: 3.5 miles, EASY

Duration: 2.5 hours

Description: Schoolhouse Ridge was site of Stonewall Jackson's Line in the dramatic Confederate invasion of Harpers Ferry in September 1862. This hike, therefore, contains plenty of history, but also a lovely walk through meadow and woods that's short and easy enough for the novice hiker. The trails are smooth and the terrain is gently rolling. The hike is open to any adult, or child accompanied by an adult, of adequate fitness for an unpaved trail on rolling terrain. Well-behaved dogs on leashes are welcome.

Meet: 10 a.m. Schoolhouse Ridge South Parking lot, 2083 Millville Rd, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425. (Millville Road branches south off US340, just west of Harpers Ferry/Bolivar, WV. (39.3077421,-77.7797649)

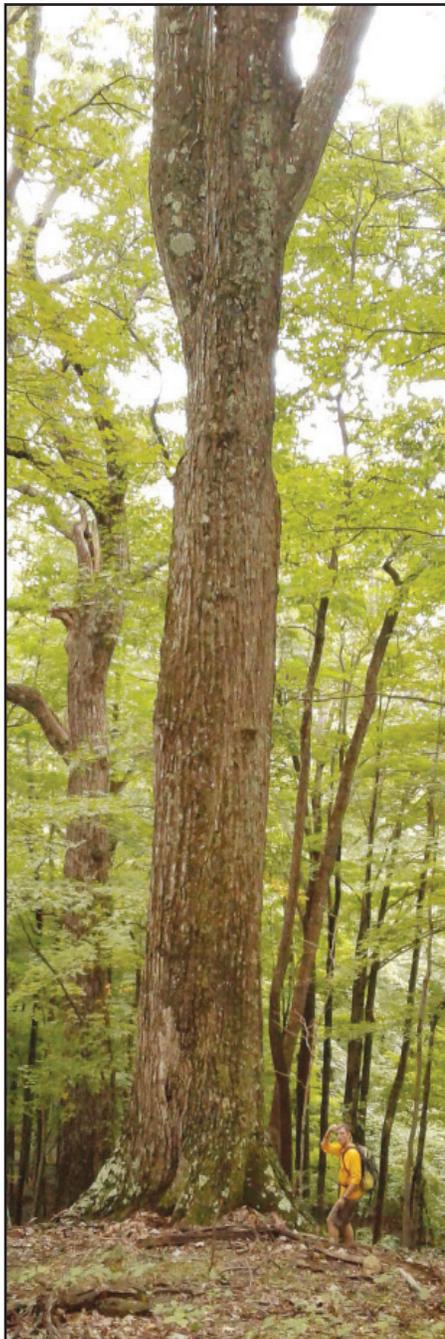
Leader: Chris Craig, 304-433-1260, ccraig@laurellodge.com

Nearest Town: Harpers Ferry/Bolivar, WV

Bring: Water and a snack, and dress appropriately for an early spring day.

Additional Info: Admission to Harpers Ferry NHP trails requires park passes or admission (\$10/car or \$5/person). There's no charge for the hike.

Cancellation policy: We will carry on in light rain or snow but cancel if there's substantial ice or heavy precipitation.



Tom Prall, who is about 6 feet tall himself, is dwarfed by this old growth oak tree, which has a 50-inch diameter trunk, making it around 300 years old.

Perspectives on Outings

— Laura Miller, Outings Chair

Public Lands Celebrated Nationally

On Sept. 22, the first day of autumn, a special day was celebrated all over the country: National Public Lands Day (NPLD). Held annually on the fourth Saturday in September, it's the largest nationwide volunteer event dedicated to helping restore our public lands and bring people outdoors to learn about and enjoy those lands. This year marked its 25th anniversary celebration. Organized events were held around the nation, ranging from educational hikes, trail maintenance, flower seeding, invasive weed removal and cleanup efforts to simply enjoying the outdoors on public lands. <https://www.neefusa.org/npld/snapshot>.

The WV Chapter joined the celebration by offering educational hikes. Outings leader Chris Craig lead a large group of participants at the Antietam Battlefield National Park. Attendees enjoyed learning

about the history of the bloodiest day in American history and also observed native plants growing along the trails. As a bonus, participants took advantage of the fee-free day offered by the National Park system in celebration of NPLD.

Another hike, held at Holly River State Park was organized in conjunction with the park's Foundation. It focused on learning about old-growth forests and the importance of preserving and protecting these forest ecosystems. Along the way, Tom Prall, Sierra Club member and president of the foundation, talked about his surveys to record the old growth that still remains in the park. The surveys led to the dedication of an old-growth forest area by the Old-Growth Forest Network, <http://www.oldgrowthforest.net>. Tom showed us a number of old-growth trees ranging from about 250-300 years old, including

the largest one he's found in the park so far, estimated at more than 300 years old. Attendees enjoyed the informative hike and participated in tree-measuring demonstrations, tree identification and discussions about conservation issues.

In all, NPLD was a success all over the U.S. However, as much as it is important to have a day dedicated to public lands, let's not forget that it is an ongoing effort to preserve and protect them, all the time and every day. Volunteer efforts are invaluable, whether they're clean ups, restorations, planting trees, building trails or educating the public. The rewards are a sense of accomplishment for a good cause, for our communities and for the planet. Please volunteer in any way you are able — for nature, for the planet — so we can continue to enjoy it.

Statements from Candidates for Chapter ExCom

Kevin Campbell, Adrian (Upshur County)

I have been a member of Sierra Club since 2012, and have actively worked with Club leadership since 2015. I was a member of WV Environmental Council from 2008-10. During those years, I worked with Don Garvin to get net metering in this state. I am currently running for local office to be an agent of change in my community. I have attended several ExCom meetings and SC retreats, been to the Council of Club Leaders and Ready for 100 training, and work with my local non-profit, Mountain Lakes Preservation Alliance, to keep tabs on pipeline construction and protect our watershed. I am on the Steering Committee for POWHR Coalition, perform stream monitoring and citizen oversight on pipeline construction, and as Vice Chair of the Buckhannon River Watershed Association, I work with state natural resource agencies to remediate impaired streams. I currently live off-grid, producing my own power from panels I installed myself, and collaborate with WV SUN and local installers to promote solar power in the state. I would be honored to serve on the WV Sierra Club ExCom to help bring about a just transition to renewable energy and preserve the natural beauty of our state for future generations.

Aaron Hackett, Charles Town (Jefferson County)

After being inspired by calls for a “political revolution” in 2016, I decided, at age 22, to run for Board of Education in Jefferson County in 2018. During my race, I organized a community discussion on mass school shootings, where 50 percent of attendees were students who were inspired to create change. Despite losing my race, I received 1,541 votes while spending substantially less money than my seven opponents. I had a 3:1 ratio in terms of votes received to dollars spent.

More recently, I organized a community discussion on internet accessibility and quality in West Virginia — approximately two weeks later, the Jefferson County Commission held a hearing on municipal broadband for the county.

Additionally, around the same time, I organized two rallies to protest the Jefferson County Commission and Ranson City Council’s support of Rockwool, which helped ignite the anti-Rockwool movement.

The main thing I’ve learned through my political experience is that real change happens when you get PEOPLE engaged and involved. I believe that I can use my organizing abilities to expand the fight for environmental justice and sustainability in West Virginia.

Eric Engle, Parkersburg (Wood County)

I’d like to join the WV ExCom because I strongly support Sierra Club’s mission to “explore, enjoy and protect the planet.”

I am a 32-year-old father of two and plan to wed my fiancée of 8½ years soon. I graduated from Marshall University with a B.A. in Political Science and minor in History; have a Certificate in Legal Studies from WVU at Parkersburg; and am employed by the Department of the Treasury’s Bureau of Fiscal Service

I am currently chairman of Mid-Ohio Valley Climate Action, which is also a chapter of Citizens’ Climate Lobby, 350.org, a Science Booster Club for the National Center for Science Education and a member of the Appalachian Gas Working Group (AGWG).

I am a Board Member of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition/West Virginians for Public Lands, a Board Member of the non-profit entity Parkersburg Pride (an LGBTQ+ advocacy and community service organization) and a dues-paying, card-carrying member of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), in

addition to being a member of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

I am deeply honored to have been nominated and I humbly request that you vote for me to join the WV Chapter’s Executive Committee.

Ciera Pennington, Nitro (Putnam County)

Ciera has extensive experience in field organizing and advocacy, including voter engagement, having worked for the Democratic Party of Virginia, West Virginia Citizen Action Group, WV FREE, and West Virginia Democratic Party. Ciera has served as the board vice president and president of the West Virginia Environmental Council (WVEC), and currently serves on the West Virginia Working Families Party executive committee.

As a seasoned trainer, Ciera is called upon by groups and universities across the state to lead trainings on topics such as citizen advocacy, progressive leadership, voter engagement, intersectionality, and even sex education. She is proud to have been among the first graduates of the WV Trainers’ Project — a project of Training for Change, a training and capacity building organization for activists and organizers.

At WVU, Ciera further grew her passion for political science, strategic social media, and women’s and gender studies. She is especially interested in economic, racial and reproductive justice, as well as youth development and empowerment. She has been the recipient of WVEC’s Youth Activism Award, as well as the first Young West Virginia: Power Building Conference’s Young WV Power Award.

Dan Taylor, Charleston (Kanawha County)

I currently work for the WV Community Development Hub, a non-profit doing community development work in rural communities in WV. I grew up in Ashland, Ky., as my father worked at the Ashland Oil refinery. After moving to Huntington to attend Marshall University, getting involved with the student environmental organizing group, I eventually came to be a board member and then employee for 2½ years for OVEC. One of OVEC’s first campaigns was a fight against Ashland Oil on pollution issues, something I knew about personally.

I worked primarily on legislative campaigns around energy efficiency, renewable energy, and campaign finance. I was also our rep to the WV E-Council, serving briefly as the vice president of the board. I was also liaison to the Alliance for Appalachia Economic Transition team.

After moving around between 2014 and 2016, working in NYC around housing and civil rights for the homeless, and fighting against a coal export terminal at the Port of Oakland, I returned to WV in 2016 to work at the Hub.

I have worked with Sierra Club many times before and admire the work of the

organization. I would be honored to serve and help steer and build up the Club’s work in WV.

Melissa Reid Hynes, Charles Town (Jefferson County)

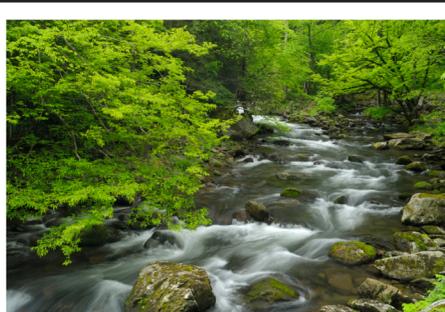
I am the mother of two young children and live in Jefferson County with my husband. I grew up in Maryland and have lived in West Virginia since 2011. I graduated from Towson University in 2006 with a degree in Social Studies. I have worked for 12 years in local government as an urban planner. One of the best parts of my job is helping people “live in a better place without moving” by providing opportunities for people to shape the future of their city through community outreach. I believe in complete neighborhoods, smart growth development and sustainable communities. I advocate for affordable housing that does not harm the environment but instead blends in with the environment. I want to attract environmentally conscious entrepreneurs to create new job opportunities in West Virginia that will respect the environment as good stewards. New businesses and new residential development should incorporate best practices for the responsible use of natural resources: specifically land, water and air. I do not want to see any waste of these precious limited resources. I believe that West Virginia’s economy can grow without sacrificing the natural beauty of this great state.

Aileen Curfman, Shepherdstown (Berkeley County)

I have enjoyed outdoor activities all my life, having served as a hike leader with the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and helped maintain sections of the Appalachian and Tuscarora trails. As a WV Master Naturalist, I am active in Potomac Valley Audubon Society. Currently, I assist with trail maintenance and invasive plant removal at several of Audubon’s nature preserves. People generally describe me as detail-oriented and persistent.

For effective environmental action, the WV Chapter needs to employ both cooperative action and vehement opposition. My personal style is the cooperative approach. We must find ways to work with groups whose priorities may not match ours. We need to educate the public, including elected officials and bureaucrats. West Virginia can recover from our addiction to fossil fuels.

As climate change looms larger, I hope to help West Virginia transition to a post-coal economy. Our state should become a leader in renewable energy, tourism and outdoor recreation. I see Sierra Club’s emphasis on political action as an important force for accomplishing this goal. It would be a privilege to participate in projects with such far-reaching results.



With your help we can clean up our water

Sierra Club Water Sentinels are the first line of defense of America’s waters. We live on the water planet. However, water is a finite resource with only about 1 % of the world’s water actually being available for human consumption. Water pollution & over-use are threatening both the quality & quantity of our water resources at an alarming rate.

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Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.



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Enclose a check and mail to:
 Sierra Club, PO Box 421041
 Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041
 or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org

2019 WV Chapter Ballot

ExCom Candidates (vote for up to 3)

_____	Aileen Curfman	_____	Kevin Campbell
_____	Eric Engle	_____	Aaron Hackett
_____	Ciera Pennington	_____	Write-in
_____	Dan Taylor	_____	Write-in
_____	Melissa Reid Hynes	_____	Write-in

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

I am in favor of amending the WV Chapter Bylaws to increase the number of at-large members on the Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) from 5 members to 7 members, with 4 and 3 members, respectively, being elected to staggered 2-year terms.

_____ YES _____ NO

----- Fold Here -----



Sierra Club Elections Committee
c/o Candice Elliott
414 Tyrone Avery Road
MORGANTOWN WV 26508

----- Fold Here -----

MAIL BY JANUARY 5, 2019

Proposal to Amend the Chapter Bylaws

Summary of the Proposed Amendment

This amendment would expand at-large membership on the Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) from 5 members to 7 members. If the amendment passes, the 4 highest vote-getters in this election would begin 2-year terms starting in 2019. For this election only, the 5th-highest vote getter would be elected to a 1-year term to complete the 7-member ExCom and bring the number of expired terms in 2019 to three. Next year, three members would be elected to 2-year terms beginning in 2020.

The current ExCom recommends voting YES on the Amendment.

Arguments FOR the Amendment

- Allows for greater representation across the state
- Allows for increased participation and more ideas put forth
- Will divide the workload among more people

Arguments AGAINST Amendment

- Meetings might be less efficient and discussions might take longer with

more members participating.

- More people would be needed to make up a quorum.
- It might be hard to find enough candidates to run in some years. If this happens, vacancies would need to be filled by appointment.

The current Bylaws (with proposed changes in parentheses) read as follows:

3.1 Number. Subject to the powers of the members as provided by these Bylaws, the management of the affairs and activities of the Chapter shall be in the hands of an ExCom of 5 (7) members elected by the Chapter membership for terms of 2 years, one representative from each Chapter group selected according to the group's bylaws, and the Council Delegate ex-officio, with vote.... In any election, up to 3 (4) members may be elected for full terms, as long as the size of the ExCom does not increase as a result and no fewer than 2 (3) terms will expire in any future year....

To view the complete Chapter Bylaws, select the "Get Involved" tab on the WV Chapter website and look under "About Our Chapter."

Make Your Vote Count

The Executive Committee (ExCom) for the West Virginia Chapter of Sierra Club is the primary decision-making body for the Chapter and approves policies, appointments and budgets. The ExCom (currently) consists of five members elected to staggered two-year terms. Three of those terms expire at the end of 2018, and a slate of seven candidates from which to elect three members for the new term is provided above. Their brief statements are on the facing page. Please consider your choices carefully, mark your ballot above and return it to the designated address by the deadline.

Thank you so much for your participation. — The Elections Committee

With our change to a quarterly newsletter this year, the new publication schedule allows us to include the annual Chapter ballot in the Winter edition of the *Mountain State Sierran*. Instead of mailing out separate ballots as in the past, ALL members will receive a paper copy of this edition. Even though we also send out several complimentary copies, **only members of the WV Chapter will have their votes counted.** We also plan to make online voting available in the future. It just didn't come together in time this year.

Voting Instructions

Please mark the spaces provided above next to not more than THREE (3) names. Voters whose address label has "JNT" written after their membership number (i.e., joint members) may use both columns to vote. Those with SNGL, please use only one column. And, don't forget to vote on the Proposed Amendment to the Chapter Bylaws.

Before mailing, cut the ballot on the dotted line and detach from the rest of the newsletter. If you wish, you may blacken out your name and address on the back, but please leave your membership number visible. Fold, tape the sides and top, add a stamp and mail your ballot to:

Sierra Club Elections Committee
c/o Candice Elliott
414 Tyrone Avery Road
Morgantown WV 26508

Ballots must be postmarked no later than January 5, 2019.



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West Virginia Chapter
PO Box 4142
Morgantown, WV 26504
sierraclub.org/west-virginia



Change Service Requested
Winter 2018

Look for your 2019 Chapter ExCom Ballot Inside!

West Virginia Sierra Club Chapter Directory

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Monongahela Group ExCom

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Vacant (term expires end of 2018)

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* Group Delegate to Chapter ExCom

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Fax: (202) 228-0002 (JM)
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(202) 225-9061 (EJ)

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Charleston, WV 25305

Dial-the-Governor:
1-888-438-2731
email: governor@wv.gov

To Contact STATE LEGISLATORS
email to WV Legislature:
cglagola@mail.wvnet.edu
(Put name of recipient under subject)

Messages for legislators can be left at:
1-877-565-3447 or 304-347-4836

Mail address:

Member, WV Senate or
House of Delegates
Bldg 1
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

website: www.legis.state.wv.us
has contact information for all state legislators.

Regional Sierra Club Staff
Chapter Organizing Rep Chela Barajas
chela.barajas@sierraclub.org



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

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