



Welcome to the first Mid-Hudson Group Email newsletter. We have tried to make it as easy to read as possible. Don't forget that it will permanently be posted to our website along with all previous newsletters.

Chair's Corner | Conservation | Energy | Legislative Outings | Fundraising | Calendars

[Note: Because of differences in Email programs, the links above and the "back to top" links below may not work.]

Chair's Corner by Joanne Steele

It is clear that the effects of human-caused climate change has been affecting "the weather" for a while now and will be affecting it to a greater and greater extent as time goes on.

At about the same time as the Massachusetts lawsuit was filed in April 2015, twenty-one young people from around the country, including the Earth Guardians organization, filed their constitutional climate lawsuit, called Juliana v. U.S., against the U.S. government in the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon against the Obama administration.

The complaint listed numerous defendants, including President Barack Obama, Secretary of State John Kerry, the Department of Energy, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense and the Environmental Protection Agency.

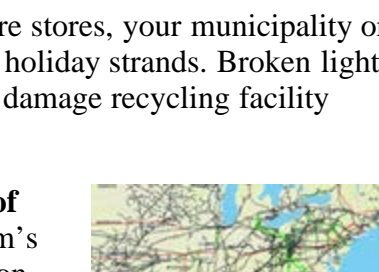
In April 2016, Judge Coffin recommended denial of both motions to dismiss. U.S. District Court Judge Ann Aiken upheld Judge Coffin's recommendation, with the issuance of an historic November 10, 2016 opinion and order denying the motions.

A three judge panel of the Ninth Circuit, made up of Chief Justice Sidney Thomas, and Circuit Justices Alex Kozinski and Marsha Barzon heard oral arguments on December 11, 2017.

Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden joined the kids along with Our Children's Trust, an Oregon-based advocacy group leading the lawsuit.

All of which brings immediately to my mind the high cost of legal defense! Your Mid-Hudson Sierra Club accumulates funds from your generosity, memberships and our fund-raising efforts.

If you want to donate your old gasser, Sierra Club has created a way for you to do so. It will benefit our (Mid-Hudson Group of the Atlantic Chapter) foundation company



Don't forget to Vote. You should have received your ballot card in the mail. Instructions for voting are on the card.

Conservation Corner by Joanne Steele

Know that synthetic Christmas trees are not recyclable. To make them worth it to Earth requires you to re-use them, depending on materials, from eight to twenty years!

NYS DEC informs us, "You can contact local big box hardware stores, your municipality or the manufacturer for information on proper disposal of broken holiday strands.

On November 16th Sierra Club released its Interactive Map of Gas Pipelines Across America. Doug Jackson said of his team's work, "It tracks projects that are in operation, under construction and proposed."



The Trump administration and Republican Congress have been a disaster for our climate. They have pulled us out of the Paris accords, started rolling back the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan.

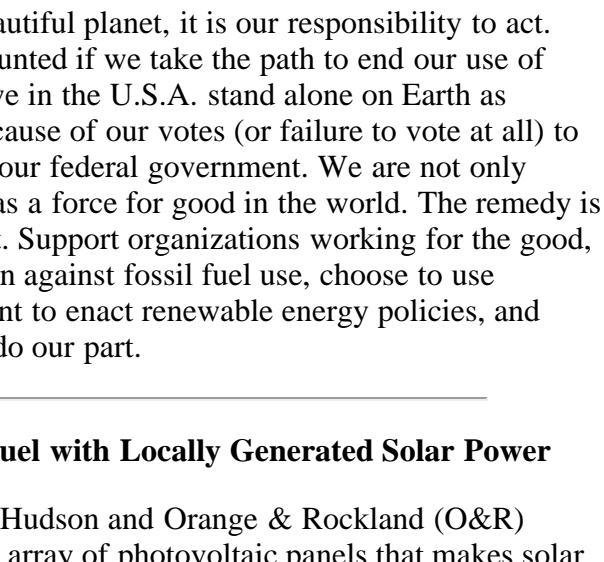
In the Good News department, over 400 organizations called on world leaders: End new fossil fuel development. Their letter stated: "Therefore, we, as over 400 civil society organizations from more than 60 countries, representing tens of millions around the world,

More Good News: scores of leading global economists recently demanded an end to the funding of fossil fuel projects and called for a massive increase to investments in renewables, saying "it will take unprecedented actions to limit the worst consequences of our dependence on oil, coal, and gas."

Central Hudson services almost the entire 6-county area that is represented by your Mid-Hudson Group. Central Hudson's proposed rate plan for 2018-2019 is being challenged by Citizens for Local Power.

Belleayre Developments by Kathy Nolan Over the past three years, the Catskill Heritage Alliance (CHA) has advanced two legal actions against Crossroads Ventures related to its mega-development, now proposed for the western side of Belleayre Mountain.

In the second case, the CHA challenged Crossroads Ventures and the Shandaken Planning Board over permits that would allow the project to construct various multifamily dwellings (condos) in zoning districts that permit only single-family or duplex residences.

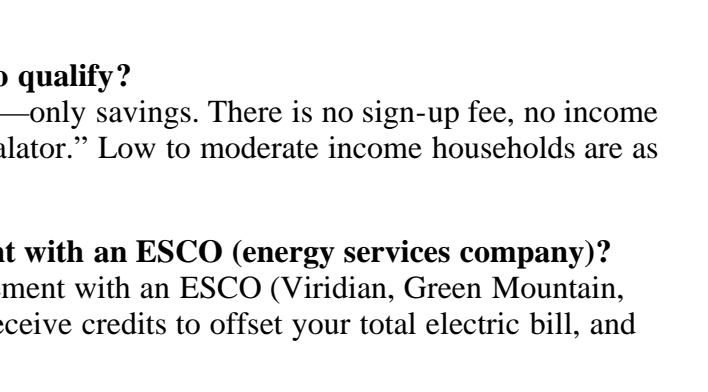


Once oral arguments are complete, there is no fixed time frame for each appeals court to review the issues and render its decision. Now, over 18 years after Crossroads Ventures initially proposed its resort, the CHA continues its work to protect Belleayre Mountain

Energy Corner by Nivo Rovedo

The energy sector of our economy is undergoing disruptive change as the cost for renewable power is reduced relative to fossil fuels and the world begins to realize (and to act) that global warming is an existential threat to its modern way of life.

Recently, StatOil of Norway (known for oil production) won a bid to develop an offshore wind farm 17 miles south of the Rockaways (Queens, NYC) to produce at least 700 megawatts.



A study of NYS GHG emissions indicates heating accounts for about 33% of this pollution. A start-up called NY-Geo is offering the possibility to combine the use of the geothermal energy underground with heat pumps to warm and cool our homes and businesses.

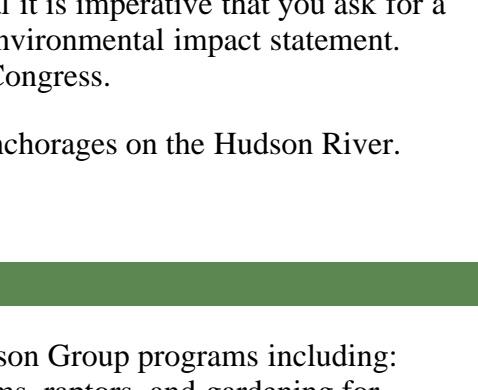
An upbeat report by the International Energy Agency lists the top 10 findings for solar power and its future.

To maintain our awareness of an important energy issue, information is now available in the form of an interactive map of pipeline locations throughout the U.S. which is searchable by zip code and pipeline name.

As the most destructive inhabitants of this beautiful planet, it is our responsibility to act. The worst effects of climate change can be blunted if we take the path to end our use of fossil fuels.

Save Money and Move Away from Fossil Fuel with Locally Generated Solar Power Community Solar is now available to Central Hudson and Orange & Rockland (O&R) ratepayers.

The subscription offer Solarize Hudson Valley is representing in this initiative brings a 10% discount off your total electric bill over 12 months.



How did this offer and this company get selected by Solarize Hudson Valley? Through our NYSERDA-mandated RFP process, we selected Nexamp, a Boston-based company that has built 22 solar farms in Massachusetts.

What is this lock me into a long-term agreement? No. Nexamp is guaranteeing the 10% discount for 20 years, but you don't have to make the same promise—you can exit the agreement at any time with 3 month notice.

What will this cost me? Do I have to qualify? With this subscription there is no cost—only savings. There is no sign-up fee, no income requirement, no credit check, no "escalator."

What if I already have an agreement with an ESCO (energy services company)? It's okay if you already have an agreement with an ESCO (Viridian, Green Mountain, Ethical Energy, etc.)

How does Nexamp make its money? Nexamp is able to build the solar project and put clean electricity into our local grid because of you. As a subscriber, you are paying Nexamp for the value of the electricity at a 10% discount—directly supporting the project.

What are the down sides? This is a first come-first serve opportunity. Each of these solar farms will serve 250 - 350 homes when fully subscribed.

To request more information, simply go to the Solarize Hudson Valley website and submit your contact information. You will receive a thank you email from Solarize Hudson Valley and a follow-up email from Nexamp.

Or call program manager John Wackman (a Mid-Hudson Sierra Club member) at (646) 302-5835

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Legislative Corner by Bob Heinemann

Update: Legislation Signed to Study "Tanker Avoidance Zones" on the Hudson River Legislation (S.5197b/A.6825) which passed the NY Senate and Assembly by overwhelming margins on June 21, 2017 was signed into law by Governor Cuomo on October 24, 2017.

You can contact New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) at their Bureau of Public Outreach at http://www.dec.ny.gov or public@dec.ny.gov or by calling 518-402-8044.

You may also contact your Congressional Representative to urge support of bill number H.R. 2619 which would prevent the Coast Guard from allowing any new anchorage grounds on the Hudson River without a report to Congress that details the potential impact on critical habitats and sites listed on the National Priorities List.

Sierra Club partner, Riverkeeper has two articles which provide information. The article "Hudson River Anchorages: What you can do" can be found here.

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Programs by JoyAnn Savino

This past year featured many very interesting Mid-Hudson Group programs including: electric vehicles, wetlands, Native American trail systems, raptors, and gardening for beneficial insects.

Outings by Andy Moss This is the time of year to plan your 2018 vacation on the Sierra Club website. The month of December is when the majority of national and international trips are posted.

Fundraising by David Friedman

It's That Time of Year! The 2018 Sierra Club Calendars are among the most beautiful in the world! The rich color photography coupled with the fact that the calendars benefit our Mid-Hudson group make them a wonderful gift for anyone on your list—including you!

There are two options. The Wilderness Calendar is a wall calendar with a large image for displayed for each month. The Desk Calendar has separate images for each week, and makes a wonderful appointment book.



The Calendars are available at Barner Books in New Paltz (3 Church Street/845-255-2635) or at Barner Books online.

Make A Gift - Make A Difference Our local group depends on the support of volunteers and the generosity of our membership. The work of the group takes Sierra Club volunteer effort, and of course funds. We hope that you will consider making a gift to the Mid-Hudson group of the Sierra Club.

To speak about specific opportunities, or with any questions, please contact David Friedman, Friedman\_David@msn.com or our Treasurer at ralphpollard@verizon.net. Our mailing address below.

Kudos to our Tag Sale Volunteers! by Marie Caruso We would have skipped holding our tag sale this year, but for a small but strong cadre of volunteers who were committed to carrying on this 35-plus-year tradition of our group.

We are extremely grateful to all of you who contributed to the success of this sale, through your labor and/or your donations. Given that many of our volunteers have been doing this for decades, however, the future of the tag sale is somewhat in question.

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Visit our Mid-Hudson Group Website Visit our Facebook Page Visit our Meetup website for Programs and Outings

Contact us:

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You can find the names of our Executive Committee members on our website:

Go to our Contact page

If you no longer wish to receive our Newsletter by email you can unsubscribe by sending an email request to Dave Thomas at dave@davidalexanderthomas.com.