

Fresh Air

The Quarterly Newsletter of the
Atlantic Chapter Mid-Hudson Group



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Visit our website:
sierraclub.org/atlantic/mid-hudson

Mid-Hudson Sierra Club
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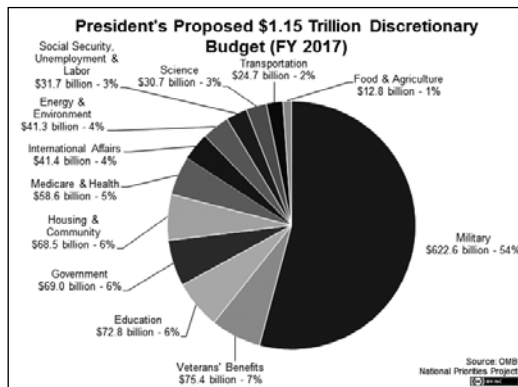
Chair's Corner

Joanne Steele

The number one thing that effects our environment is not a thing. It's YOU, together with the rest of us acting as CITIZENS. I'm cutting down on my time-wasting by hitting the delete button, playing fewer games, watching fewer movies, cutting out the TV and instead, going to see all those free live shows at Town Hall, the County Office Building and the State House! Just GO! Having decided to be a CITIZEN, my helpless depression and anxiety lifted! You check up on those who are governing: Town, County, State and National. You can find out all of that (agenda, members, meeting day and hour) by searching online and calling your representatives (or the chair or clerk) for help negotiating those websites. Please make it your new life to do that. Yes you can!

The second damage to our environment is government's failure to act on our behalf. Failure because the NYS DEC's budget is cut as Corporations involved in consuming OUR environment instruct our representatives. The Corporations, not us, give them the big bucks to run the expensive media elections so they can keep their cushy jobs. (Make a note to send SOME money to the helpful Reps.)

Nationally we have the EPA now directed by a man who has sued the EPA numerous times! He's part of an Administration that we have been saddled with that wants to UN-tax the rich (so we pay more) and further inflate the Military budget which is now OVER HALF of our total appropriated spending and supports nearly ONE THOUSAND U.S. Military Bases (highly polluted locations) all over our globe.



There is virtually no evidence of voter fraud, but as Gusti Bogok, of our Atlantic Chapter, wrote: "[We have] ample evidence of ELECTION FRAUD using the (Interstate) CrossCheck program that was employed in red (and red-governed blue, Democratic) states to dump hundreds of thousands of minority voters with similar names off the voter rolls." Dump more than the 'winning' margin. (<http://goo.gl/IsaLf1>) The all-Republican congress AND the Presidency was very probably stolen by computer manipulation. Brad Friedman, Bradblog.com (2008): "There is no reason to trust a touchscreen or DRE system with or without a paper trail. Period. You can hack the paper trails as easily as you can the internal numbers." The theft occurs electronically at the tabulating computer and is 'verified' on the local computer. Counting the paper trail would prove the hack, but WHO's going to pay for that counting, especially in our cash-strapped cities where it would show more? There are already several proofs of manipulation. (<http://www.goo.gl/AGHIAB>)

Truth is, computer hackers can change ANY election to select the winner at will by whatever percent victory is needed. That is, easily hacked electronic voting machines and scanners, 25% of which had the GEM program secretly installed in them to fractionalize the votes (ie: 1 vote = .5 votes or 1 vote = 1.5 votes depending on the district), are shown to easily manipulate final tallies (<http://goo.gl/c1bcqS>). Remember that the Republicans own the computers we vote on and promised the Bush administration... In other words, we PROBABLY have an unelected government!

You'd think that the Press would be digging in on all this already! However, the GEM discovery is fairly recent. Also, since the Republicans are now running things, the Press needs access to them, which might be keeping them quiet so far. Since election fraud is technical, you're going to have to know who you can trust. I trust Bev Harris, Benny Smith, Brad Friedman and Greg Palast and recommend them to your trust, too. To defend our environment, one of our jobs, as CITIZENS, is to investigate this and to TELL THE OTHERS! Next time, paper ballots and home count!

Conservation Corner

Joanne Steele

Belleayre Resort Developers Given Green Light

by Kathy Nolan, President, Catskill Heritage Alliance

On February 15, 2017 the **Shandaken Zoning Board of Appeals** voted to affirm that permits issued by the Shandaken Planning Board for Crossroads Venture's planned Belleayre Resort did not violate the town's Zoning Code. ... Kathy Nolan, chair of the citizens' group Catskill Heritage Alliance, issued the following statement about the vote:

"We are disappointed that the **ZBA** decided to follow the

Shandaken Planning Board in bending over backward to find a way to permit Crossroads Ventures to place multiple-family dwellings, or 'condominiums,' in residential zones. This is an important decision, and we are concerned that letting the ZBA's decision stand could open the door to massive over-development, not only at the site of the proposed resort but throughout Shandaken. We will be evaluating our options, both in regard to this case and in regard to our action against Crossroads and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation."

The following comment was posted online by Dave Channon at Watershed Post (Read more: <http://goo.gl/h66sHQ>)
"Aha! The proposed resort can't succeed unless subsidized with 75 million taxpayer dollars! It is simply not an attractive investment to any resort corporation. Thanks to Mr. [Kenneth] Pasternack [remaining financial backer for the Crossroads development at Belleayre] for admitting this fatal flaw that I have been writing to editors about for years. But even with us taxpayers footing the bill—yes, higher taxes—the project has very high risk and very low chance for turning a profit. A sure fire money loser! At least let the millionaires lose their own money, not ours. Belleayre is by geography a small family friendly ski hill. No "improvements" could turn it into a world class ski mountain that could support a resort of this gigantic size. My sympathy goes out to all the loyal resort boosters who have invested money and years, betrayed by a foolish fantasy. Vail Colorado in the Catskills? No way."

Good things, and unfortunately bad things, happen because of laws and regulations passed by federal, state and local politicians in their respective legislative chambers. The Sierra Club is not merely about reading the monthly national magazine or taking a walk in the woods. We must be ever watchful and active to protect the natural world around us, and especially to maintain the quality of our water, air and soil which supports our existence and is passed down to our children and grandchildren.

Legislation is vitally important to our environmental agenda. The Atlantic Chapter staff and your local Mid-Hudson Group stay informed and actively lobby our NYS Senators and Assembly members. The Chapter hosts a weekly legislative telephone call that includes representatives from each local Sierra Club group in NYS to promote this important responsibility of each citizen to stay informed about, and to participate in, our political system.

Here are just some of the important issues of environmental concern to New York State residents, and particularly to all who live in the Hudson Valley.

Coalition Against the Pilgrim Pipeline (CAPP)

The CAPP press release issued on February 1, 2017 states in part “The proposed project is a dual pipeline system down the Hudson Valley (mostly along the NY State Thruway in New York): one pipeline carrying crude oil south from Albany to Linden, New Jersey derived from fracking in North Dakota, a second pipeline is planned for carrying refined products from Linden back to Albany. Each pipeline would move about 200,000 barrels (8.4 million gallons) per day. Opponents point out that the proposed pipelines meet no needs of New Yorkers and that pipeline leaks would threaten the drinking water of millions and endanger vulnerable ecosystems along the Hudson.”

Assemblyman Frank Skartados (D-Milton) introduced a bill, A2446, which would require a two thirds majority approval by any village or town which will have a pipeline running through their community. Presently, towns do not have any ability to review or block a pipeline that may effect their drinking water and agricultural food sources. The Atlantic Chapter and the Mid-Hudson Group strongly support this bill.

Off Shore Wind Farms

Alternative forms of energy are vitally important to begin to limit the dependency on oil and gas production and distribution.

NYS is becoming a leader in developing alternative and naturally recurring forms of energy like wind and solar. The Governor in his recent State of the State address is attempting to combat climate change by proposing wind farms off the coast of the Rockaways and Montauk on Long Island. The Sierra Club and the Mid-Hudson group supports all forms of renewable energy efficient technology.

Electric Vehicles

Much more needs to be done to make electric vehicles affordable and even more practical. Additional charging stations for vehicles are necessary. A total of 500 new charging stations are proposed for the workplace, and 60 along the Thruway.

Separately, Assemblywoman Amy Paulin sponsored A288 (Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Tariff), to provide greater incentives for the ownership of electric vehicles and encourage responsible grid charging times. Bill A288 was referred to the Assembly Ways and Means Committee on January 24, 2017

Opposing Hudson River Anchorages

The Hudson River is a priceless resource of drinking water for NYS citizens and one of the great scenic waterways of the nation supporting many forms of wildlife and fish. Over the past 40 years extensive efforts made by organizations like Riverkeeper have slowly and incrementally improved the water quality of the Hudson. All of the decades of careful effort to improve the quality of our water will be put at great risk if the current effort to transport heavy crude oil by barge, with dozens of anchorages on the Hudson River, is permitted to go forward. Environmental groups including the Sierra Club, Scenic Hudson and River Keeper, and many related groups all strongly oppose Hudson River Anchorages.

We urge you to be as active a member of the Mid-Hudson group as possible to assist in preserving and protecting our air, water, and wildlife in the greater Hudson Valley. Here is a short list of websites for more information and how to help:

- Atlantic Chapter: <http://atlantic2.sierraclub.org>
- Mid-Hudson Group: <http://sierraclub.org/atlantic/mid-hudson>
- Coalition Against Pilgrim Pipeline: <http://stoppilgrimpipeline.com>
- Riverkeeper: <http://riverkeeper.org>
- Scenic Hudson: <http://scenichudson.org>
- Catskill Mountain Keeper: <http://catskillmountainkeeper.org>

Outings are posted on our group’s meetup site: Meetup.com/Mid-Hudson-Sierra-Club

As Outings Chair of our Mid-Hudson Group my goal is to get you up and out of the house so you can enjoy the beauty of the Hudson Valley and Catskills. My last two outings were successful because of the adventurous nature of the participants. If you are not already a member of our Meetup, please sign up so you won’t miss any opportunity to get outside.

We had a great day for a hike at Minnewaska State Park to Castle Point. Great views!



I was fortunate to have four enthusiastic snowshoers on our trip to Boulder Rock at North Lake State Park.



We would like to thank all of you who have donated to our Mid-Hudson Group to support our conservation efforts.

If you would like to make a donation mail them to: Mid-Hudson Sierra Club, PO Box 1012, Poughkeepsie, NY 12602. For general, non-tax deductible contributions, make checks payable to the “Mid-Hudson Group of the Sierra Club”. For tax deductible purposes, please make your gift payable to “Sierra Club Foundation” and in the notation line, please write “Mid-Hudson Group” to insure our local group benefits from your gift. We’re happy to answer any questions or to discuss contributions to the Mid-Hudson group. Please contact David Friedman at 845-255-2535 or email: Friedman_David@msn.com

The Pilgrim Pipeline ... A Potential Disaster for the Hudson Valley and Beyond?

If you are not familiar with this pipeline proposal, you need to be. Its impact will be significant for everyone, but particularly for those who travel the NYS Thruway or live along the west side of the Hudson River. Below are some basic facts you should know.

To find out how you can help stop this project, take action, see the route and learn more visit: StopPilgrimPipeline.com

WHAT

- Two parallel pipelines, 170 miles each, between Albany, NY and Linden, NJ; plus over 12 miles of single-pipe lateral lines.
- Bakken shale oil would be sent south; refined products (including kerosene) would be sent north.

WHERE

- Crossing 5 NJ counties, 6 NY counties, 30 NJ towns, 25 NY municipalities, & environmentally fragile areas/sources for water. See the maps: <https://stopilgrimpipeline.com/maps-ny>
- Much of route would use existing utility or highway rights-of-way, including the NYS Thruway, but additional tracts are required.

WHO

- Pilgrim Pipeline Holdings, LLC is led by 4 oil industry executives, including two former Koch Industries, Inc. managers.
- It receives financial support from parent corporation Ares Management, L.P.
- Pilgrim out sources all planning, design, engineering and construction work.

WHY NOT?

- Major impact on environment, public health and property values.
- Communities bear all of the burden along the path. No upside, only negatives. Emergency response. Property values. Construction traffic.
- Cements regional reliance on risky fossil fuel and oil infrastructure. Susceptible to corrosion and leakage problems.
- Transported products dangerous to humans and environment. Bakken shale oil is highly volatile, involved in many accidents.
- Damaging effects on urban communities and open spaces through which it would pass. Areas include the Hudson Valley, Catskills, NY/NJ Highlands.
- Could see wetlands destroyed, critical habitats leveled and impact to waterways. Endangered and threatened species affected. More erosion due to construction.
- Leaks threaten the water supply for our homes, businesses, and schools.
- As of August 11, 2016, the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's 188 federal inspection and enforcement staff and 340 state inspectors are responsible for regulating nearly 3,000 companies that operate 2.7 million miles of pipelines, 148 liquefied natural gas plants, and 7,574 hazardous liquid breakout tanks. Only one fifth has been inspected in the past 8 years. Eighty-one percent of past leaks have been discovered by the public, not the company.
- Shale oil fracking has harmful impact. Contributes to climate change crisis. Water depletion, toxic air emissions, waste-water, methane release.
- Pilgrim's claims about job creation are inflated and not credible.

Most of these bullet points are from StopPilgrimPipeline.com

Public Programs

JoyAnn Savino

PROGRAMS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBIC. BRING A FRIEND!

Visit our website: sierraclub.org/atlantic/mid-hudson for more details.

Thursday, April 20, 7:00 pm

Creating Habitats to Attract and Support Bees, Butterflies, Birds and Other Beneficials

As you may know, many of our birds and pollinators have come under severe environmental threats in recent years. In particular, the decline in honeybee and butterfly populations has become an extremely serious concern. So, what can you do to help?

This program will provide ideas, for beginner and experienced gardeners alike, on how to incorporate a variety of herbs, flowers, native plants and even veggies to provide food and habitat for

beneficial insects and wildlife. Come get inspired to increase the diversity and beauty of your yard and garden, while at the same time helping our endangered friends. You will make a difference and be well rewarded at the same time.

Your presenter: Florence Ancillotti is a self-taught "master" gardener with over 50 years of experience, 30 of them in the Hudson Valley. She has a deep love for the earth, its wildlife and beautiful flowers. She will share her extensive knowledge that includes natural, organic and sustainable practices, while avoiding common pitfalls and disappointments. Come learn from her successes and benefit from her many years in the dirt.

Please RSVP for programs: mhsierraprograms@yahoo.com

Location: Boughton Place, 150 Kisor Road, Highland 12528. **Directions:** From the NYS Thruway at New Paltz, drive East on Route 299, 2.7 miles. Turn right onto Kisor Road. From Route 9W, drive West on Route 299, 2.5 miles. Turn left onto Kisor Road.

Visit our website at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/atlantic/mid-hudson> | Join our meetup at: <http://www.meetup.com/Mid-Hudson-Sierra-Club>

We Need Volunteers!

We are seeking individuals who would like to help us Protect Our Environment! As you know, our environment is under greater threat than at any other time in recent history. We are

looking for volunteers to help with Energy, Population, and Transportation issues among others. If you can spare a few hours a month please email or call our Volunteer Chair, Marie Caruso at mariehv@verizon.net or (845) 684-7058.

James Hansen, Formerly head of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, writes in *Rolling Stone*: "We must make the price of fossil fuels honest by including a carbon fee—that is, a straightforward tax on fossil fuels when they come out of the ground, and which is returned directly to people as a kind of yearly dividend or payment... a carbon fee brings back jobs to the U.S... it will also drive the U.S. to become a leader in clean-energy technology, which also help our exports." Hansen is calling for what is known as a Carbon Dividend.

See the complete article at: <http://goo.gl/9DrG3c>

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Our Printed Quarterly Newsletter “*Fresh Air*” is Changing to Email Format in December

We are very proud of our Mid-Hudson Group’s (MHG) quarterly newsletter. It has been a wonderful method for us to communicate with you, our members. However, as Bob Dylan wrote, “the times they are a-changin’”. Your Executive Committee, after much deliberation, has decided to switch our quarterly news from its quarterly printed format to a bi-monthly email format. The impetus for this change is multi-faceted:

1. We spend approximately \$3,800 a year on printing/mailing costs for the four newsletters. This money could be better spent to support our environmental and conservation goals as well as our public programs. In addition to saving paper (read that as trees).
2. The email format will allow more articles, greater depth of content, and links to article sources and related information.
3. In addition to the bi-monthly email newsletter, we will use the same format for monthly updates as events warrant in order to keep you informed in a timely manner.
4. In addition to the articles, footnotes will contain useful contact information including: our mailing address and internet addresses (email, website, Facebook, Meetup), and an option to unsubscribe.
5. We may opt to use a cost-effective, targeted mailing, such as a postcard on occasion.

The Details

The email will contain a headline and brief summary for each article along with a link to the full article which will be posted on our website so you don’t have to read the full article in the email itself. Once posted on our website, the articles will be permanently available for reading at any time. Of course, if you prefer to read an article as hard copy you can print it out.

For those of you who have not provided an email with your Sierra Club membership, or have requested not to receive emails, you will be able to access the articles on our website at any time. If you decide at some future time that you would like to receive the email newsletters at home you can send your request to our database manager Dave Thomas at dave@davidalexanderthomas.com.

We believe it is in our collective best interest to make this change to an all-email format for our communications. We will repeat this announcement in our summer newsletter. The email newsletter will debut in December.

Thank you for your membership and support. We hope that in the future you will consider participating, volunteering, or taking action to help us fulfill our mission to protect our environment.

Sincerely,

Your Executive Committee

Joanne Steele, David Friedman, JoyAnn Savino, Gerald Davison, Shelley Bance, Andy Moss,
Alison White, Helga Klessen, Robert Heinemann
www.sierraclub.org/atlantic/mid-hudson