



# The Quinnehtukqut Connecticut Chapter

The Monthly Newsletter for Events, Information, and Action

APRIL 2017

## IN THIS ISSUE

- **NEW CONNECTICUT CHAIR GREETES CHAPTER**
- **REQUEST FOR CONTENT**
  - ~ APRIL/MAY/JUNE CALENDAR
- **APRIL OUTDOOR EVENTS**
  - ~ SPRING WILDFLOWER BOTANICAL WALK IN BARKHAMSTED
  - ~ PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MARCH ON WASHINGTON, D.C.
  - ~ EARTH DAY 2017 ACTIVITIES
- **APRIL EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS**
  - ~ CONNECTICUT ENERGY BRIEFING AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION 101
  - ~ LIVING BY SHORELINES, EROSION CONTROL
- **CHAPTER COMMISSIONED STUDY REPORT**
  - ~ COST OF LEAKY PIPELINES BURDENS RATEPAYERS
- **2017 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**
  - ~ LOBBY DAY FOCUS IS RENEWABLE ENERGY
- **EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION RECAP**
  - ~ HELP YOUR TOWN KEEP FRACKING WASTE OUT OF CONNECTICUT
  - ~ AGING MILLSTONE NUCLEAR PLANT CAN HIJACK CLEAN ENERGY
- **OPINION PAGE**
  - ~ CONNECTICUT STATE LEGISLATIVE IRONIES 2017
- **ARTICLES**
  - ~ THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF CLEAN ENERGY
  - ~ LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND DROUGHT, PART ONE
  - ~ WATER-WISE PRACTICES FOR HOMEOWNERS
  - ~ POLLINATOR HEALTH PROTECTION ACT UPDATE
  - ~ YOUR NEXT VEHICLE COULD BE AN ELECTRIC BIKE
- **POETRY**
- **DONATIONS**
- **STAFF**
- **SOLAR ENERGY**
- **LEGACY PLANNING**

## NEW CONNECTICUT CHAIR GREETES CHAPTER

Dear Members, Supporters and Friends,

A warm salutation from your new Chapter Chair! I am honored to report that the Executive Committee (Excom) of the Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club elected me Chair in January. I've been an Excom member since 2014; I serve as the Communications Chair and I served a two year term as the Council of Club Leaders state delegate to the national Sierra Club. One of my major roles with the Chapter has been as the lead volunteer of Beyond Gas. In that capacity I have extended my knowledge base by studying the literature to confidently express the chapter's position in white papers and newspaper articles and in interviews on radio and television.



Martha Klein, 2017  
Chair, CT Chapter  
Sierra Club

I am extremely grateful to outgoing Chair, Roberta Paro, who although no longer on the Excom is happily staying with us as Legislative Co-Chair. Roberta set a tone of tolerance and inclusion for our Excom that has become my model, and I am appreciative for all I have learned from her.

I would like to introduce the rest of the Excom to you, our members and friends.

The new Chapter Vice-Chair is **Dennis Desmarais**, who was voted onto the Excom for his first term in January. Dennis has been the volunteer IT Manager with our Communications Committee since late 2015. Dennis is also an outings leader for the Sierra Club Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO) program, which focuses on getting young people outside.

**Helen Applebaum** just began her first term as an Excom member this year, but she has served since September 2015 as editor of the *Quinnehtukqut*, our monthly newsletter. According to statistics from the National Sierra Club in Oakland, CA, our newsletter readership increased significantly over the last year, and that increase is attributable almost entirely to Helen's intense recruitment of interesting and useful articles from our member writers.

**Colin Bennett**, another new Excom member, is assuming the role of delegate to the Council of Club Leaders. Colin will travel to Oakland later this year to learn what the national Sierra Club is planning in this year of resistance and how they will help us achieve our mission. He has been a volunteer with the Sierra Club for more than 15 years, primarily serving at the national level to help advance what is now referred to as the Club's Equity, Inclusion and Justice goals and has served on the Equity Core Support Team since its creation. This is essentially Colin's first work in Connecticut since serving as the state coordinator for the Sierra Student Coalition while attending college.

**Linda Infante** is an Excom member who serves as the liaison between the Chapter and the Shoreline Group. Linda has become involved in local native tree planting projects, and submits testimony to the state legislature on our behalf in defense of endangered wildlife.

**Diane Lentakis** is a continuing Excom member. She volunteered for years on the Beyond Coal campaign, and is a member of the steering committee of 350 CT, one of our strongest allies. She is the new volunteer lead of the Ready for 100 campaign, and is our primary organizer for the April 29th People's Climate March (PCM) on Washington, D.C.

**Martin Mador** is continuing to serve on the Excom, and is also Legislative Co-Chair. Marty has many years of experience in legislative issues, in crafting testimony on behalf of the Chapter, and in the workings of state government. We benefit from his skills and knowledge.

**Peter McKnight** continues as an Excom member and as our Recording Secretary, and is leader of the Fairfield Group, which now meets as an unofficial but still active group. Peter has been a leader in the fight to protect Remington Woods, one of the few surviving urban forests.

**Tom Paul** has been an Excom member for many years, and is also a member of the Shoreline Group. Tom is a local historian with an interest in ancient Native American sites, specifically stone artifacts. Tom leads annual beach clean ups in his area with partner organizations.

**Marcia Wilkins** continues as an Excom member, and as our Conservation Chair. Marcia has been a leader on a number of campaigns, and is also a local leader in her community for clean energy initiatives.

Two members of the Excom have retired and we want to thank them for their service: **Rick Haeseler**, who remains as Chair of the Greater Hartford Group and **Desmond Batts**, formerly with Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice.

We are honored to serve as your volunteer Executive Committee. We welcome hearing questions and ideas from our members. We especially want to hear from you if you would like to volunteer with the Chapter or consider taking a position of greater leadership. You can find contact information for all of us on the website, [www.sierraclub.org/connecticut](http://www.sierraclub.org/connecticut).

I am proud to Chair our state's Sierra Club Chapter and appreciate the responsibility you have placed in my hands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martha Klein". The signature is written in a dark ink on a light-colored background.

Martha Klein, Chair  
Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club

## REQUEST FOR CONTENT

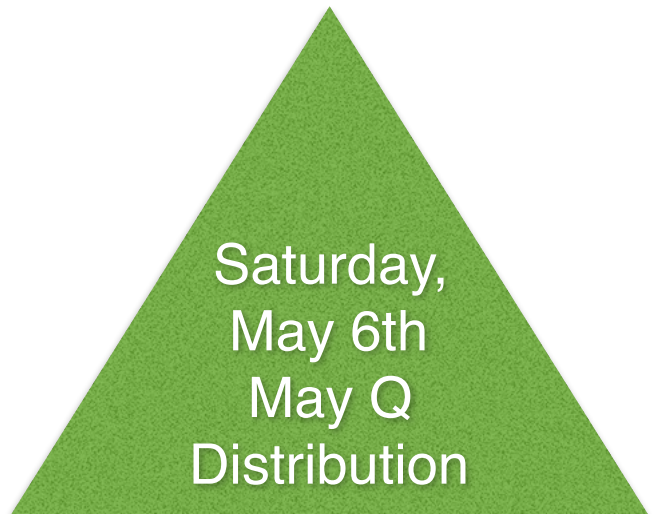
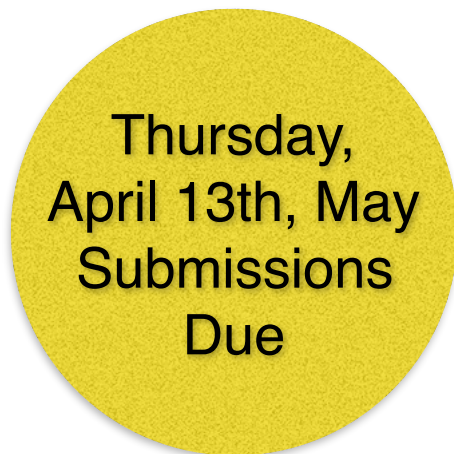
All Connecticut Sierra Club members are invited to contribute to the *Quinnehtukqut*. We accept articles, book reviews, puzzles, events, photos, poems, etc. Articles, limited to 500 words, should be on a subject of local or national interest to the Connecticut Chapter membership. The goal of the newsletter is to inform, educate, motivate and involve our members.

If you post information to the website and want it in the newsletter as well, you must submit those postings separately to the newsletter.

We have developed a newsletter calendar for the next two 2017 submission dates. Its purpose is to make it easier for you to plan your *Quinnehtukqut* contributions for publication.

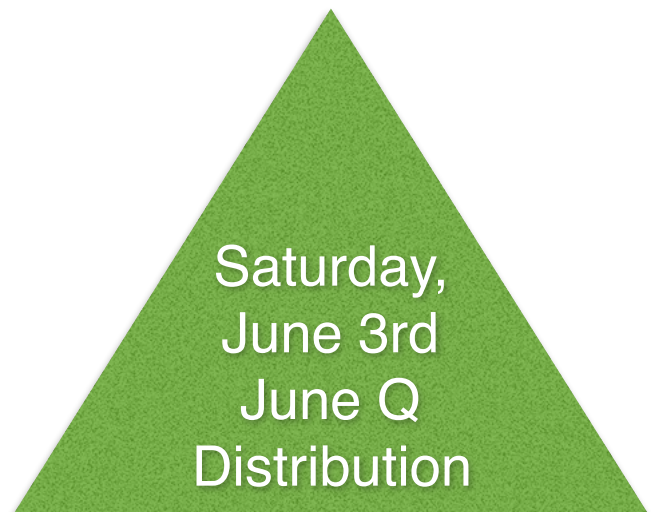
The *Quinnehtukqut* is distributed at the beginning of the month. Comments, letters to the editor and all submissions may be sent to [ctsierraq3@gmail.com](mailto:ctsierraq3@gmail.com) for inclusion in future newsletters.

### APRIL/MAY CALENDAR:



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### MAY/JUNE CALENDAR:



# APRIL OUTDOOR EVENTS

## Hike in Groton

It's spring and hiking is back with a new leader, Geneva Renegar. Here are the details:

**Location:** Bluff Point, Groton, CT

778 acres of coastal preserve, the largest undeveloped coastline in Connecticut. Wooded trails beckon as do photo ops: wildflowers, panoramic views of Fisher Island, Little Gull Island and Orient Point from Bluff Point summit.

**Date:** Saturday, April 1st

**Time:** 10:00am

**Level of Difficulty:** Moderate, steady uphill ascent 190 feet, followed by moderate descent

**Length:** 3.6 mile on the Coastal Reserve loop trail

**Weather:** Light rain OK; heavy rain postpones to Sunday, April 2nd

**GPS Directions:** Depot Road, Bluff Point State Park, Groton, CT 06340

**Written Directions:** [Directions to Bluff Point](#)

**Free Parking**



**Safety:** *All hikers must sign a liability waiver. You may review the waiver by clicking the attachment here:*

[Sierra Club Outings Waiver](#)

**Dogs:** Well behaved dogs on leash are permitted; messes must be cleaned up.

**Contact:** Geneva Renegar, 860.857.2091; [genevarenegar@gmail.com](mailto:genevarenegar@gmail.com)

*Geneva Renegar, a certified Chapter outings leader, is an avid hiker, walker and organic gardener who enjoys kayaking, hang gliding and observing nature. She believes in the restorative elixir of nature and hopes to inspire others to enjoy all the outdoors has to offer.*

## Spring Wildflower Identification Walk

Sierra Club members are invited to join members of the Connecticut Botanical Society on this outing in botanizing along the Henry Buck Trail in Barkhamsted, Connecticut. The trail is known for its profusion of native spring wildflowers.

We'll be pausing frequently to identify and photograph the various plants we see, so this will be a SLOW-moving outing. The portion of the trail we'll visit involves some moderate climbs with lots to see along the way. Dutchman's breeches, trilliums, blue cohosh, elderberry and hobble bush are a few of the plants we'll encounter.

As this is a joint walk, Sierra Club members are limited to 12 attendees. Sign up ASAP to assure your place. Our leader, David Yih is taking names at [yyih@wesleyan.edu](mailto:yyih@wesleyan.edu).



© 2001 Eleanor Saulys

*Dutchman's Breeches, a member of the poppy family.*

**Location:** Henry Buck Trail,  
American Legion State Forest,  
Barkhamsted, Connecticut.

**Date:** Saturday, April 29th

**Time:** 10:00am PLEASE BE ON  
TIME. We carpool to the trail head.

**Rain date:** Sunday, April 30th,  
10:00am

**Note:** Sunscreen and bug repellent  
are advised.

**Questions:** David Yih, [yyih@wesleyan.edu](mailto:yyih@wesleyan.edu)  
860 246-2077; 860 995-8669 (day of the outing)

**Directions:** From route 44, take either route 181 (Ripley Hill Road) or route 318 (River Road) to where the two intersect at the bridge over the Farmington River (67 Ripley Hill Road, Pleasant Valley, CT 06063). Cross the bridge and take the first right down into an unpaved parking area by the river. From there we will carpool 2.5 miles to a smaller parking area near the trailhead.

*David Yih, a Sierra Club volunteer and certified Chapter outings leader, occasionally leads outdoor events. He is currently president of the Connecticut Botanical Society.*

## People's Climate March on Washington, D.C.

**The March:** Join the People's Climate March (PCM) by acting together with concerned U.S. citizens, residents and visitors in demanding we continue to move PCM forward for a clean, green and safe planet. Hundreds of organizations and thousands of people who care about the health of our planet will march to protect our rights to clean air, water, land and communities for a world at peace.

**Connecticut Sponsors:** The Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club is partnering with 350 CT, one of our sister local environmental advocacy groups, to transport people to the march.

**Date:** Saturday, April 29th, the 100th day of President Trump's term in office.

**Itinerary:** Connecticut buses travel to and return from our Nation's Capitol, Washington, D.C. for 11:00am-4:00pm (tentative times) march.



**Transportation:** Click on your location of choice to reserve a seat(s). You will be linked to the appropriate page for your bus.

**Locations:** Buses may be boarded at the following locations:

[Hartford](#)  
[New Haven](#)  
[Fairfield](#)  
[UCONN, Storrs](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[Middletown](#)  
[Connecticut College, New London](#)  
[CCSU, New Britain](#)

**Cost:** You will see a ticket price when you reserve your seat. The price ranges from \$55 to \$65 plus a handling charge of \$5+.

**Donate a Seat:** If you would like to donate a seat to an activist who may not be able to afford one or who needs financial assistance, make a donation on your bus reservation page.

**Questions?**

**Contact Information:**

**email:** [dlentakis@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dlentakis@sbcglobal.net)

**cell:** 203.922.2151

## EARTH DAY ACTIVITIES 2017

### The Following Earth Day Celebrations Will Include Representatives From CT Chapter Sierra Club

#### HAMDEN

##### Family-oriented free celebration of Earth Day

**Date:** Saturday, April 22nd

**Time:** 10:00am – 3:00pm

**Location:** Hamden Middle School, 2623 Dixwell Avenue

**Features:** Exhibitors promoting earth friendly services, products and organizations

**CT Chapter Sierra Club Volunteers:** Linda Infante and John Calandrelli

**Activities:** Bird guessing games; a raffle drawing for native perennials and shrubs; seed giveaways; live native animals; a scavenger hunt (complete it and win a prize); a coloring contest and additional hand-crafts, activities and fun and games.

**Touch a Truck:** Hamden Fire and Police Department vehicles; an AMR ambulance; a diesel powered garbage truck and two electric vehicles (EVs).

**Weather Lab:** WTNH Meteorologist Kevin Arnone and the WTNH Mobile Weather Lab will offer a platform for kids and parents to learn about the weather.

**Entertainment:** music, food samples from Thyme & Season

#### NEW MILFORD

##### Child-centered, free outdoor activities

**Date:** Saturday, April 22nd

**Time:** 10:00am-6:00pm

**Location:** Pratt Nature Center, 163 Paper Mill Road

**Activities:** Mud Pit (Tonkas and squishing mud supplied), bring change of clothes

10:00am-4:00pm: Dunk Tank

11:00am: Kids Mud Run

Noon: 5k Dirt Dash

10:00am-4:00pm: CT Chapter Sierra Club

Collage Central: use various paper materials to create an Earth Day collage; Environmental Library: select a nature book or magazine to take home

**CT Chapter Sierra Club Volunteer:** Helen Applebaum

**Entertainment:** music

**Features:** Pratt 50th year Birthday cake







**UCONN, STORRS**  
**Spring Fling**

**Date:** Tuesday, April 18th; raindate: Wednesday, April 19th

**Time:** 11:00am-2:00pm

**Location:** Fairfield Way

**CT Chapter Sierra Club Volunteer:** John Calandrelli

**Spring Fling:** Co-sponsored by UConn's Office of Environmental Policy and other departments. Celebrate sustainability with student groups by sharing organic and local food; visit eco-friendly vendors and green companies.

**FAIRFIELD**

**Anniversary: 20 Earth Day Celebrations**

**Date:** Sunday, April 30th

**Time:** 10:00am-4:00pm

**Location:** Fairfield Theatre Company, 70 Sanford Street

**CT Chapter Sierra Club Volunteer:** TBD

20th Anniversary Earth Day Celebration of the town's environmentally-friendly and financially-wise green initiatives and green infrastructure.

**UCONN, AVERY POINT**

**Date:** Friday, April 21st

**Time:** 12:00am-11:59pm (24 hours)

**Location:** 1084 Shennecossett Road, Groton, Connecticut

**CT Chapter Sierra Club Volunteer:** Walter Grant

# APRIL EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

## Connecticut Energy Briefing and Legislative Action 101

Attend a legislative briefing on energy and climate in Connecticut and discover how you can make change with Legislative Action 101. A panel featuring three Connecticut energy leaders will review energy legislation and opportunities for clean energy breakthroughs including shared solar, virtual net metering, energy efficiency in public buildings, strengthening of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, pushing back on the natural gas expansion and more.

Come to learn about legislative action tips and strategies and take the opportunity to write a letter to your legislator. Gear up for an effective season. You're invited to join the action.

**Date:** Saturday, April 8, 2017

**Time:** 10:00am to 11:30am

**Location:** The Kitchen Gallery, 140C Green Street, New London, Connecticut

**Date:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017

**Time:** 7:00pm

**Location:** Willoughby Wallace Library, 146 Thimble Islands Road, Stony Creek, Connecticut

**Date:** Wednesday, April 12, 2017

**Time:** 7:00pm

**Location:** Wesleyan University, Albritton 103; 222 Church Street, Middletown, Connecticut

**Sponsors:** Clean Water Action, Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club and Connecticut Fund for the Environment



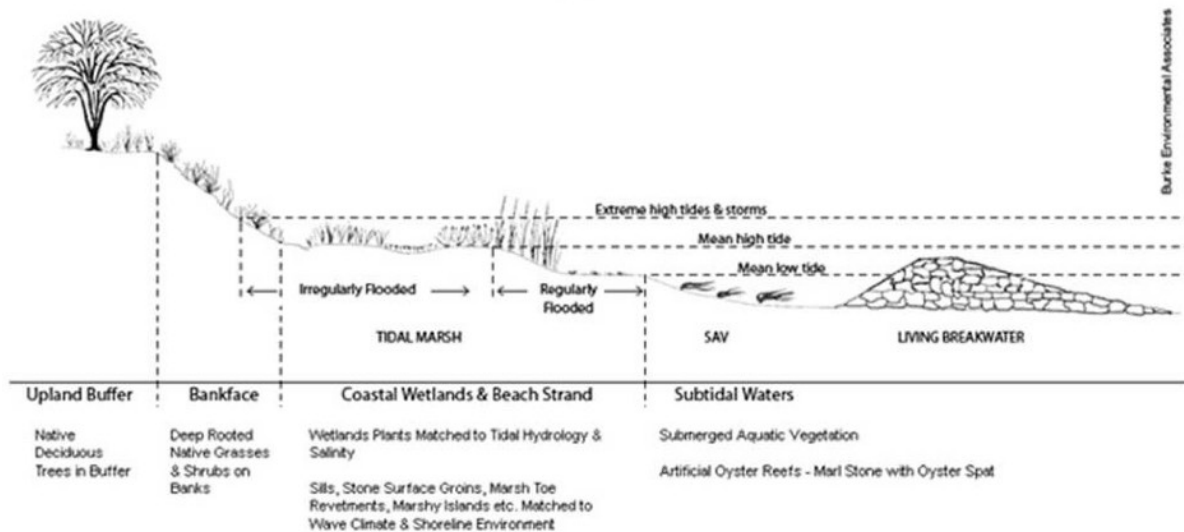
Connecticut Fund  
for the Environment  
Save the Sound®

PROTECT  
CLEAN  
WATER

## Living by Shorelines, Erosion Control

Living shorelines are nature-based erosion control techniques. As much of the state's shoreline is armored with hardened structures, there is a growing interest in preserving the natural elements while also providing protection from erosion.

### Coastal Shoreline Continuum & Typical "Living Shorelines" Treatments



Living shorelines can be an excellent alternative to hard structures at the coast. Importantly, hard structures (e.g. bulkheads, revetments, seawalls, etc.) are often damaging to a coastline. They can increase erosion at the shore, inhibit natural coastal processes and destroy natural habitat for fish, animals and plants. Where hard structures 'fail,' living shorelines succeed. Living shorelines mimic natural settings and have many positive co-benefits to erosion control, including, but not limited to: habitat creation, water quality enhancement, and maintaining natural coastal processes.

**Speaker:** Dr. Rebecca French, Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA), Dr. French is the Director of Community Engagement for CIRCA. She will provide examples of living shorelines in Connecticut and regionally, discussing ongoing CIRCA research projects.

**Sponsor:** Greater Hartford Sierra Club

**Location:** Westmoor Park, 119 Flagg Road, West Hartford

**Date:** Thursday, April 13th

**Time:** Activist letter writing: 7:00pm; Program: 7:30pm

**Donation:** \$4 to defray hall rental fee

**Questions:** Renee at [mchawigirl@yahoo.com](mailto:mchawigirl@yahoo.com)

# CHAPTER COMMISSIONED STUDY REPORT

## Cost of Leaky Pipelines Burdens Ratepayers

by Martha Klein

### Connecticut Gas Pipelines Are Leaky and Ratepayers Bear Cost

Connecticut ratepayers are paying for natural gas leaks statewide. In Hartford alone, gas pipelines leak approximately 43,000 cubic feet per day, or 313 metric tons per year, enough gas to power about 214 U.S. households annually. The cost corresponds to a likely statewide loss of millions of dollars each year.

A recent study commissioned by CT Chapter Sierra Club found that the number of gas leaks identified, far exceed the number of leaks reported to the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA), the agency that oversees gas pipeline safety in the state. The study found approximately 3.2 leaks per road mile in Hartford.

The academic research used precise measuring devices, including the Picarro Cavity Ring-Down Spectrometer that found more gas leaks than the estimates of regulatory agencies.

### Missing Gas Leaks

According to Gale Ridge, PhD, a scientist and researcher on the study, “In a one month period, we found about 700 leaks in Hartford. Over a one year period covering the same area, PURA reported 139 leaks. Even recognizing that some of the leaks we found are known to PURA, that’s about a five-fold difference. We believe that CNG may be missing a large percentage of its leaks.”

Why should natural gas leaks matter to Connecticut ratepayers? For two very important reasons: the economy and the climate.

### Ratepayers Foot Gas Company Leaks

Due to a 2014 law, PA 14-152, Connecticut ratepayers are paying for leaked gas. The gas distribution companies estimate the amount of “lost and unaccounted for gas” that escapes from their pipelines, and then bill customers to recoup lost revenue. It is perhaps more economically rewarding to gas companies to get paid for leaking than to invest in pipe repair and to save wasted tons of gas. Based on the Hartford study, it can be estimated that our state is losing millions of dollars of value in wasted gas and our bills are more expensive since we pay for natural gas that doesn’t get used.

### Natural Gas Causes Climate Disruption

Natural gas is 97 percent methane, the second most common greenhouse gas (GHG) in our atmosphere. Methane is an extremely potent GHG compared to carbon dioxide, and causes nearly 100 times the rate of global heating over the short term. The high leakage rate associated with methane, contribute to its terrifying global warming potential.



Martha Klein explains results of Chapter Commissioned Study Report

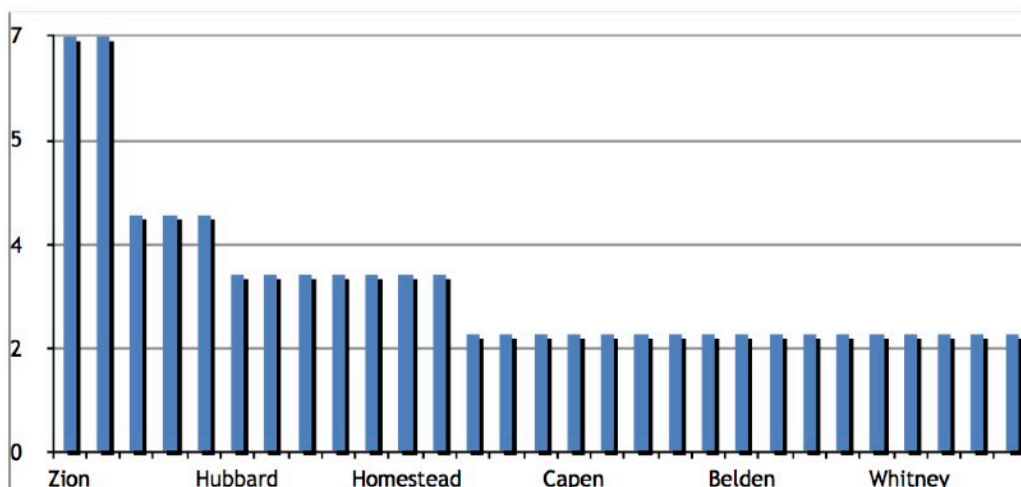
We have a nearly bankrupt state economy, yet the state makes ratepayers, the working people of Connecticut, pay the energy giants UI and Eversource for leaking fracked methane into our atmosphere. It makes infinite sense to require them to find and fix their leaks, and stop destroying the climate while at the same time protecting ratepayers from unneeded and excessive costs.

### New Eyes Needed on Energy Strategies

The state of Connecticut has an energy policy which is committed to expanding the use of natural gas, and transporting exponentially more gas across the state in massively expanded pipelines. Clearly, the rate of methane leaks is much higher than the state estimated, and they should take another look at the gas expansion plan. Otherwise, the state will suffer from increased GHG emissions and worsening climate.

Of potential interest to social and environmental justice groups, the Hartford gas leaks study data revealed a tendency for leaks to be repaired more quickly in certain areas, such as the business and downtown district, and more slowly in poorer residential communities. Hartford's leaks traveled the length of Main Street.

## Hartford Comparative Leak Reports



**Figure 1. Reports To PURA**– October 15, 2015 to October 17, 2016. Graph showing 7-2 highlighted is yellow. Totals are: 2 streets x 7 leaks; 3 (st.) x 4 (lk); 7 (st.) x 3 (lk); 17 x 2; 58 x 1 per street. **TOTAL 139.**



**Figure 2. Tests** by Gas Safety Inc. - February 25, 2016 to March 31, 2016. Graph showing 26 – 6 highlighted in yellow. Totals are: 1 streets x 26 leaks; 2 streets x 17 leaks; 1 x 16; 1 x 15; 2 x 12; 1 x 11; 3 x 9; 3 x 8; 2 x 7; 7 x 6; 14 x 5; 21 x 4; 33 x 3; 2 x 48; 1 x 122 per street. **TOTAL 704.**

The solution to this problem is probably legislative, where there should be a zero leak tolerance policy maintained for natural gas pipelines, as there is for petroleum pipelines. In the long run, Connecticut needs to ramp up its home grown renewable power, and run our electricity from safe, carbon free and inexpensive local wind, solar, and water power. In the short run, we could save our impoverished state budget and recoup millions of dollars of lost value, by repairing all the gas pipeline leaks now.

*Martha Klein is the Chair of CT Chapter Sierra Club*

## 2017 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### Lobby Day Focus is Renewable Energy

by Roberta Paro

Efficiency and clean energy have created tens of thousands of jobs in Connecticut, but some of these jobs are at risk if the legislature doesn't act to build upon Connecticut's successful clean energy policies. Instead, Connecticut's residents could be stuck paying higher bills for more dirty and dangerous energy. To make sure Connecticut legislators hear our support for clean energy and opposition to dirty fuels, Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club organized a lobby day in Hartford on March 8th, with our partners 350 CT, Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE) and Connecticut Fund for the Environment (CFE).

#### Legislators Address Group

Lobby Day at the Legislative Office Building opened with comments in favor of renewable energy and climate protection from a number of Connecticut legislators. State Senators Paul Formica and Edward Kennedy Jr., and State Representatives Mike DeMicco, Lonnie Reed, Jonathan Steinberg, Josh Elliot and Mike Winkler addressed the assembled crowd of more than one hundred volunteer lobbyists. Representatives Caroline Simmons and Joseph Gresko dropped by as well. It was an honor to have so many politicians eager to speak to our group!



#### Volunteer Lobbyist Training

One of the goals of Lobby Day is to train Club volunteer lobbyists how to focus on clean energy. An introduction to lobbying was conducted by Laurie Julian, Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club Lobbyist, Lou Burch of CCE and Claire Coleman of CFE. These experienced professional lobbyists discussed the most influential ways of reaching our representatives: visits, letters, phone calls and email.

#### Clean Energy and Protecting Open Space Priority Bills

The Lobby Day committee decided that training would be on three or four bills/issues that the Connecticut Chapter has identified as its legislative priorities for 2017. Fact sheets and talking points were distributed and the lobbyists reviewed each issue, including training on and advocating for the following three bills/issues.

1. The bill introduced by State Representative Christopher Rosario, Bridgeport, **An Act To End Ratepayer Subsidy For Interstate Gas Pipelines, H.B.6546** prohibits additional costs on utility customers to subsidize the cost of interstate natural gas pipeline capacity. It was referred to Joint Committee on Energy and Technology, 1/24/2017.

2. **S.B. 630, An Act to Increase the Renewable Portfolio Standard** as introduced by State Senator Gary Winfield, Deputy Majority Leader, representing New Haven and West Haven was to expand and extend Connecticut's renewable portfolio standard. Renewable Portfolio Standards increase the amount of clean, renewable energy used and mean cleaner air, less climate disruption, more employment opportunities and more investment dollars in local communities.

Since then, the bill was drafted by committee and referred to Joint Committee on Energy and Technology (3/17/2017). The language in the committee bill expands our renewable portfolio standard at the rate of one percent a year, and only gets us to 40 percent clean, renewable energy by 2040. Forty percent is not enough clean, renewable energy for Connecticut to meet the goals of our own Global Warming Solutions Act. It also puts Connecticut at a disadvantage with surrounding states, as Rhode Island is currently committed to expanding its Renewable Portfolio Standard by 1.5 percent a year, and Massachusetts is considering a bill that would expand their renewable portfolio standard by 2-3 percent a year.



3. State Senator Kevin D. Witkos, Deputy Senate Republican Pro Tempore, who represents Avon, Barkhamsted, Canton, Colebrook, Granby, Hartland, Harwinton, New Hartford, Norfolk, Simsbury and Torrington, introduced **Bill S.J. 6, Protect State Lands, now S.J. 39**, that would be an amendment to the state constitution for approval by the general assembly to protect real property held or controlled by the state. The bill was referred to Joint Committee on Government Administration and Elections on 1/4/2017.

The same open space issue fact sheet instructs citizen lobbyists to ask legislators for the assurance that the Community Investment Act (CIA) be restored to 100 percent funding as of July 1, 2017. (Currently only 50 percent of conveyance fees are going to the CIA.) Reinstating 100 percent of conveyance revenue into the CIA as of July 1, 2017 is in the Governor's proposed budget.

Laurie Julian, Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club lobbyist, said she "understands that revenue generated by CIA is a source of funding for the Open Space and Watershed Acquisition grants. I believe these grants and collaborations with local land trusts have the biggest impact on Connecticut reaching its goal of putting 21 percent of its land into open space by 2023."

4. A fourth bill the Club advocated for was to remove the cap on net metering. That bill did not get a public hearing.

There was brief mention of bills to oppose, including S.B.106, which would provide further subsidies to the nuclear power plant, Millstone.

## Meeting Your Legislator

Next on the agenda of Lobby Day was a demonstration on how to give an issue briefing and review a form for taking notes (if the volunteer actually meets her/his legislator). Instructions were given regarding what to do if the volunteer is not meeting directly with said state representative or state senator and where to return their notes about experiences with legislators or their aides.

While many volunteers unfortunately didn't get to meet with their representative, nearly everyone found the office of their legislators and left fact sheets and in some cases, met with aides and were able to lobby for our issues.

Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club is considering another lobby day in early May to bring volunteers back together. At that point, all bills will be out of committees and ready for the full

legislature to look at. We may have a different set of two or three issues to lobby for at that time.

We are very grateful that so many of you took the time to attend lobby day. We are all realizing, if we didn't already, that political engagement is no longer optional. It is up to us to make sure our elected officials know what we want.

*Roberta Paro, former Chair of Connecticut Chapter Sierra Club is now Co-Chair of the Legislative Committee*



## EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS RECAP

### Help Your Town Keep Fracking Waste Out of Connecticut

by Stephanie Beals

**Best scenario.** A temporary moratorium mandating that CT DEEP submit regulations for review on the 2014 law is due early this summer. A new bill, HB 6329 would amend the current law, remove authority from DEEP and create a permanent ban against fracking waste in Connecticut.

**The current scenario.** Until the fracking ban is in place, activist Jen Siskind, local coordinator for Food & Water Watch, has a strategy she calls, "Keeping Fracking Waste Out of Connecticut - What Your Town Can Do." Siskind shared her plan with the Greater Hartford Group on March 9th at their monthly meeting.

Presenting a history and overview of the fracking industry, Siskind informed us of the consequences that have occurred from drilling the Marcellus Shale formation in Pennsylvania. 1.9 billion gallons of liquid frack waste must now go to waste treatment facilities and Connecticut is one of eight states Pennsylvania is eyeing. Connecticut faces many problems that could result from taking fracking waste for disposal in the state. There are traces of other toxic



chemicals in the waste, including naturally occurring radioactive materials or NORMs, which come from deep inside the earth." Historically gas companies who frack have not been regulated nor are they required by law to disclose the chemicals they use in their practices.



Jen Siskind, speaker and Rick Haeseler, Chair of the Greater Hartford Group, CT Chapter Sierra Club show materials available to citizens to use to ban fracking in their town.

**The hazards of accepting fracking waste.** Three Connecticut publicly owned hazardous waste treatment facilities in Bristol, Bridgeport and Meriden all have had significant DEEP violations over the past three years. Possible contamination risks are very high at these sites from accidents, leaks and spills during transport, transfer and storage. Waste can run off into waterways and leach into sewage systems and soil. Potential hazards for our population can include water and soil contamination, medical issues such as bone and breast cancer, organ failure, birth defects and neurological impairment. Trucks carrying waste can cause damage to already stressed highways and access roads in our densely populated state. An accident and the potential cleanup of toxin spills could bring enormous cost to Connecticut taxpayers.

**Fighting waste transfer to your town.** Ten Connecticut towns have already passed no fracking waste ordinances. To achieve that status in your town, Siskind urges citizens living in towns with no bans to look up their town charter and collect signatures to move ordinances forward. Contact Jen Siskind at: [jsiskindfwwlocal.org](http://jsiskindfwwlocal.org) for materials. She has volunteered her experience to help anyone interested in acquiring an ordinance against fracking in their town. The state of New York banned fracking in 2014 and Jen emphasized the importance of a Connecticut fracking waste ban to send a message to the gas industry and bring Connecticut one step closer to renewable energy alternatives.

*Stephanie Beals is a freelance writer, editor, environmental advocate and volunteer with the Greater Hartford Group, CT Chapter Sierra Club.*

## Aging Millstone Nuclear Plant Can Hijack Clean Energy

by Paul Brunner

"Stopping the Millstone Nuclear Power Station Bailout" was the argument presented by Tim Judson, Executive Director of the Nuclear Information & Resource Service on Saturday, February 18th at an educational meeting hosted by CT Chapter Sierra Club and 350 CT. Judson supports the compelling need to act now to stop the multi-billion dollar subsidy for nuclear power in Connecticut because the subsidy could hijack the fight for clean energy.

### Dirty Energy is Costly and Wasteful

Judson's position is as follows: Nuclear power is a dirty source of energy with severe impacts and risks, including massive amounts of waste both in the mining of the nuclear fuel and the irradiated waste produced through the power generation. It is also increasingly uneconomical because of rising maintenance costs and decreasing energy demand/ electricity prices. Operating costs have risen more than 50 percent in the period 2002-2012. Additionally, the age of nuclear reactors in operation in the U.S. is much older than reactors in the rest of the world. This age factor only worsens the economics as more maintenance is required as reactors age.



Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Waterford, CT

### Subsidies Pose Health Concerns and Limit Clean Energy Expansion

Dominion Energy, the owner of Millstone, is urging the state legislature to pass a bill, Senate Bill 106, now published as LCO 5352, that would force Connecticut ratepayers to pay billions of dollars to subsidize Millstone for years. For the second year in a row, the legislature is considering this bill, even though the company says Millstone is still earning a profit. Millstone has posed an unacceptable safety risk to Connecticut residents and the Long Island Sound for decades. The daily threat of a disaster like Fukushima will be prolonged by subsidies to Millstone; four "near-miss" incidents have occurred under Dominion's watch since 2004.

As long as Millstone is part of Connecticut's energy plan, nuclear waste will accumulate on the shores of Long Island Sound with no program for addressing the risk it poses to the public's health. If passed, the bill could cost Connecticut nearly \$5 billion by 2030, money that should be spent expanding clean renewable energy and real solutions to climate change. Benefits that a ramp up in clean renewable energy would deliver, such as lower wholesale power prices and more jobs in the region-would be negated by the bill.

### Support Clean Energy Projects for Future Benefits

Providing clean energy should be of the utmost importance to the state; allowing contracts for the Millstone plant is a risky and unaffordable proposal. The authority for contracting with Dominion should be deleted from the bill, focusing resources instead on supporting deployment of new wind and solar projects in Connecticut, as well as expanding programs to support electric vehicles.

*Paul Brunner is a volunteer with the CT Chapter Sierra Club*

# OPINION PAGE

## Connecticut State Legislative Ironies 2017

by James Root

Among all environmental news stories at the current session of the Connecticut state legislature, there has been one that stands out in its irony within the environmental community. Apparently, advocates of in-state farming and farmland preservation have been butting heads with solar and wind power advocates.

### **Land: Farms vs Solar and Wind**

Indeed, the Connecticut Farm Bureau Association made statements at the February 28th Connecticut General Assembly Energy and Technology Committee public hearing in support of several pieces of legislation, foremost (*SB 412 AN ACT RESTRICTING THE USE OF INCENTIVES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOLAR ARRAYS ON AGRICULTURAL LAND*). The legislation would put tighter oversight on state subsidized purchases of farm land against large-scale solar development.

Although opponents of this type of legislation point out that as little as one percent of state agricultural land is affected at this time by renewable energy developers, proponents argue that the percentage of prime farming land is higher because south facing property is as sun hungry from solar generation projects as it is for farm crops. Local farmers are described as being priced out of land they rent and/or on which they want to expand.

It appears there is some real substance to this problem. DEEP and others took the trouble to host a well done seminar/workshop a few months back that focused on resolving the conflicts between these two worthy causes. One of the strategies explored suggests increasing the use of brown fields and public lands like highways and school rooftops. While promising and helpful, these more public locations fall well short, in current models, of providing the amount of solar energy needed to meet the state's renewable energy goals, and might require more hard to come by subsidies.

### **New Agency Proposed to Evaluate Land Usage**

Also at the legislature public hearing, a related and mysterious piece of legislation, (*HB 6547 AN ACT CONCERNING A CT GREEN PLAN AND LAND RESOURCE AND USE INVENTORY FOR ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE*), sponsored by Energy and Technology committee chairman, Lonnie Reed and state senator, Ted Kennedy Jr., came up for discussion. This legislative proposal suggests setting up a whole seemingly redundant bureaucracy to evaluate land usage by any and all new energy generation projects-citing the solar/farm conflict as a prime justification. Other speakers, including representatives of existing state bureaucracies like DEEP and the Siting Council, questioned the need to spend money on such a new office.

In my personal observation at the public hearing, Kennedy, in response to questions after his supporting testimony, had virtually no specific information on how the legislation would help the renewable energy/farm quandary or justify new tax expenditures associated with setting up a new oversight body. One could only wonder about the real source and motivation behind the bill as one of its two sponsors was uninformed about it (i.e. as if he played no part in its crafting). In any case, where was this interest in power generation and infrastructure land usage during the natural gas blitzkrieg?!

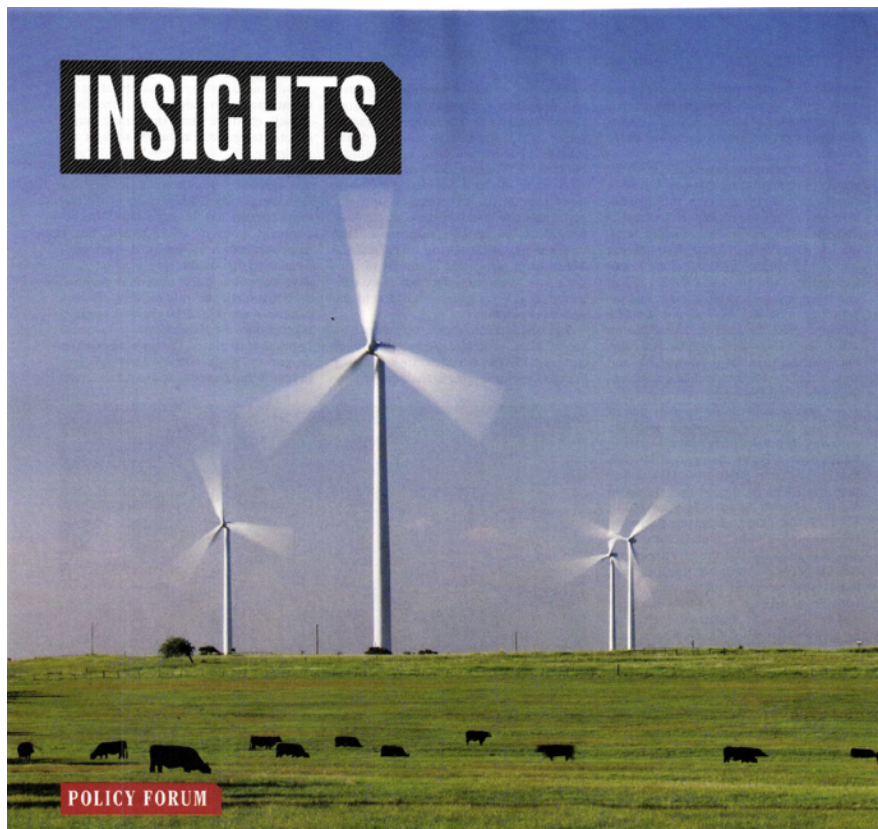
The farmland issue, blown out of proportion or not (deliberately or not) is a bit of a stumbling block for renewable energy development—especially solar. The discussion with regard to farmland evinces the growing, tangible presence that renewable energy development has become in Connecticut, and forces us into a more holistic, concrete, difficult, but necessary conversation on our local environmental/energy future. At the same time, we should be vigilant about fossil fuel interests exploiting the farm issue behind the scenes in an effort to retard renewable energy development.

*James Root is a CT Chapter Sierra Club volunteer and leader of Occupy Danbury.*

## ARTICLES

### The Economic Benefits of Clean Energy

by Beva Nall-Langdon



CLIMATE AND ENERGY

## *The irreversible momentum of clean energy*

Private-sector efforts help drive decoupling of emissions and economic growth

By Barack Obama

**T**he release of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other greenhouse gases (GHGs) due to human activity is increasing global average surface air temperatures, disrupting weather patterns, and acidifying the ocean (1). Left unchecked,

the continued growth of GHG emissions could cause global average temperatures to increase by another 4°C or more by 2100 and by 1.5 to 2 times as much in many mid-continent and far northern locations (1). Although our understanding of the impacts of climate change is increasingly and disturbingly clear, there is still debate about the

proper course for U.S. policy—a debate that is very much on display during the current presidential transition. But putting near-term politics aside, the mounting economic

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Email: [press@whitehouse.gov](mailto:press@whitehouse.gov); After 20 January 2017:  
[contact@obamainoffice44.org](mailto:contact@obamainoffice44.org)

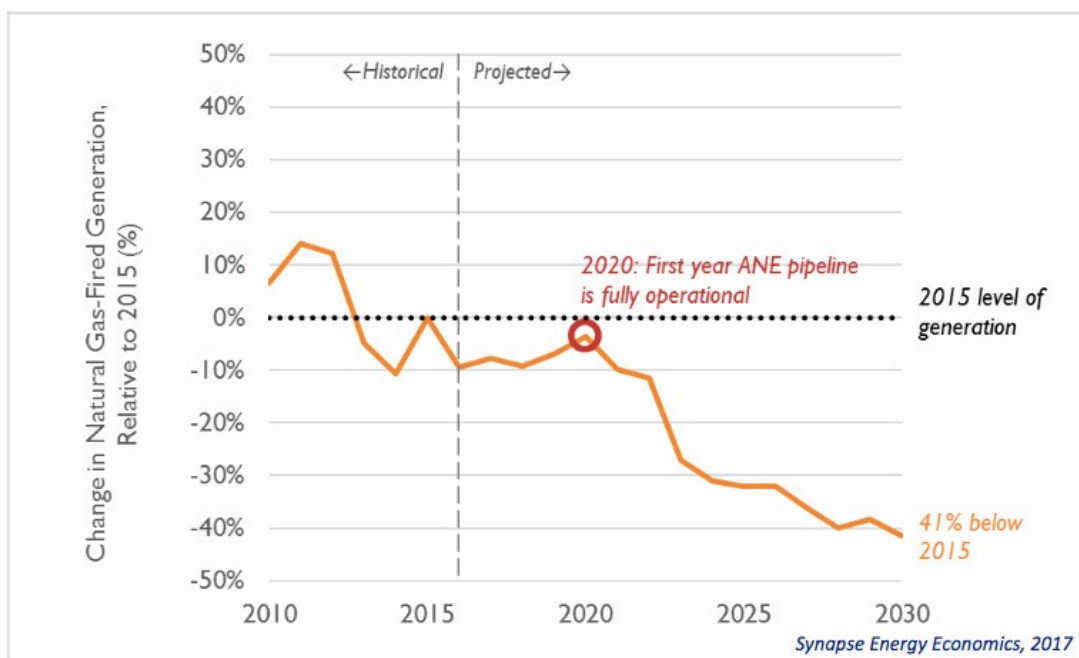
PHOTO: JEREMY WOODHOUSE/GETTY IMAGES

One enduring myth put forward by opponents of renewable energy is that conventional fossil fuel-derived “dirty” energy is necessary to enhance economic growth. Refuting this myth, former President Barack Obama published an article entitled, "[The Irreversible Momentum of Clean Energy](#)," in the (13 January 2017) prestigious, peer-reviewed journal, *Science*. The article presents U.S. macroeconomic data since 2008 that shows significant economic growth (more than 10 percent) with simultaneous reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted per dollar of GDP during this period declined by 18 percent.

### Clean Energy Continues Growth

In the *Science* article, President Obama discusses the rapid and continued expansion of employment in clean energy production and the dramatic decline in the cost of production for clean energy. Approximately 2.2 million workers are now employed by the clean energy sector; in contrast, only 1.1 million workers are employed in electric power generation from burning fossil fuels.

From 2008 to 2015, the cost of wind-generated power fell by 41 percent as solar photovoltaic power fell by close to 60 percent. Obama asserts, the economic advantages of clean energy have generated powerful market forces that will drive its continued growth despite any federal government intervention to promote fossil fuel use.



### Local Energy Conundrum

In New England, economic considerations have driven decisions on the fate of two proposed natural gas pipeline projects (Northeast Energy Direct and Access Northeast). Both pipelines intend to supply natural gas to use in electricity generation and both require large upfront investments in their construction. The developers of these pipelines argue that the domestic natural gas that would flow through the pipelines is needed to provide stability of supply to meet variable demand and to lower overall cost of electricity production. They do not, however, take into account projected declines in electricity demand expected from energy conservation and increased efficiency. They also do not account for the significant projected increased supplies of

electricity generated from renewable sources and they ignore the mandated (by CT's Global Warming Solutions Act) reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Furthermore, the developers have put the cost burden on electricity ratepayers (you and me) to provide upfront funding to pay for the pipeline construction. Recent judicial decisions in nearby states (Massachusetts and New Hampshire) have rejected this scheme as too burdensome on those states' electricity ratepayers. The courts' decisions shift the prohibitive costs for pipeline construction to Connecticut ratepayers. As of April 2016, the developers of the Northeast Energy Direct pipeline abandoned their plans for the pipeline because of the difficulty in obtaining approval for funding from electricity ratepayers as well as a lack of commitments for gas purchases from customers (electric power generators).

[A recent independent financial analysis](#) of the remaining proposed Access Northeast pipeline by Synapse Energy Economics, Inc. of Cambridge, Massachusetts, found that the likely cost to ratepayers would be double what the developers contend. The results of this study increase the likelihood that the Access Northeast pipeline may be abandoned.

Environmentally, the greatest reason to reject the New England pipeline projects is the state's need to limit greenhouse gas production. Increasing renewable electricity production will help achieve that goal. Future costs of global warming must be factored into the overall cost of energy production. Good economic stewardship requires that climate change be addressed.

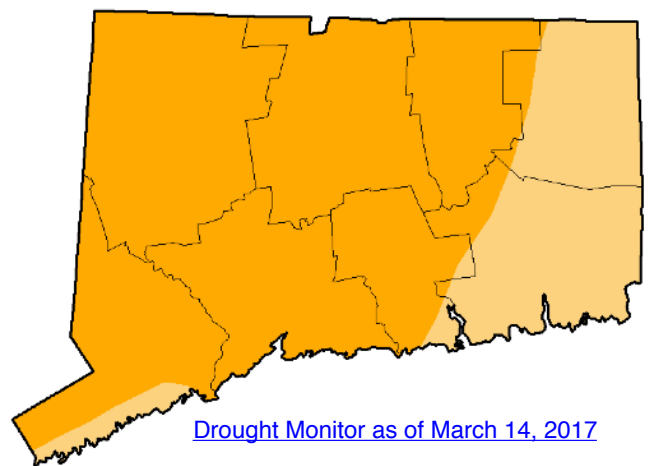
*Beva Nall-Langdon is a science writer and volunteer for CT Chapter Sierra Club. She is a member of the Council of Science Editors (CSE). She is chapter author and editor, CSE Scientific Style and Format for authors, editors and publishers, 8th Edition, University of Chicago Press, 2014.*

## Low Impact Development and Drought, Part One

by Nora Hulton

Even the most oblivious individuals couldn't help but notice that at the end of last summer there was something abnormally wrong with our local water levels. Ponds were diminished to oversized puddles, streams and creeks were reduced to faint trickles and, most alarmingly, the news outlets were reporting that dozens of household wells were drying up.

With the seemingly abundant precipitation that has been falling this winter in the form of rain or snow, daily conversations haven't been focused on Connecticut's drought as much as they were last August and September. The sizzling hot, rainless days of Summer 2016 may be a distant memory, but don't allow yourself to be lulled into a false sense of security. The latest statistics report that the entire state of Connecticut is still in a state of drought; as of March 14th, 77 percent of the state was categorized as Severe and 23 percent as Moderate drought conditions (CT Drought Conditions Map). See weekly updates at: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Home/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?CT> These numbers are sobering, but they are an improvement over the latter part of January, when 41 percent of the state was recorded as being in an Extreme state of drought (Campagna).



### **Practices to Trap and Purify Water**

As technologically advanced as we've become, Nature always holds the winning card regarding rainfall. It is impossible to squeeze rain from the skies, but we can, however, implement practices that will trap and purify the water that does become available to us. Properly executed, these methods can enable us to build up our freshwater reserves so that the effects of a future drought may not be as damaging or profound. These strategies mimic nature's system of cleansing and storing water, and are collectively known as Low Impact Development (LID). LID is the terminology used when discussing the natural approaches implemented in managing stormwater runoff.

### **Understanding the Water Cycle**

To comprehend this concept more clearly, it's important to have a good understanding of the water or hydrologic cycle. It truly is a cycle, with no real start or finish, but for ease of explanation, evaporation is usually used as the starting point. Evaporation is simply the transformation of heated water to a gaseous state. The predominant sources of evaporation are surface water and transpiring plants (also known as evapotranspiration). The water vapor rises into the colder atmosphere where it condenses back into water and forms clouds. Eventually, the liquid laden clouds release their moisture and it falls back to the Earth in the form of precipitation. Precipitation enters lakes, rivers, and oceans directly or as surface run-off. It can also infiltrate a vegetated surface and either seep into a stream bed or recharge the groundwater. The latter is the most favorable result as it allows the water to be cleansed and purified before it is released into aquifers or surface water; this is the exact scenario that Low Impact Development engineers work on imitating.

*Note: Part Two of this article will be in the May issue of the Quinnehtukqut.*

**Works Cited:** Campagna, Fred, "No Change in Drought Status for Connecticut." [wtnh.com](http://wtnh.com). N.p., 16 February 2017, Web. 13 March 2017. "Connecticut Drought Conditions Map," March 14, 2017.

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Hayden, Sean., "LID and Drought," e-mail interview, 10 February 2017.

*Nora Hulton is a Connecticut Certified Wildlife Conservationist.*

## Water-wise Practices for Homeowners

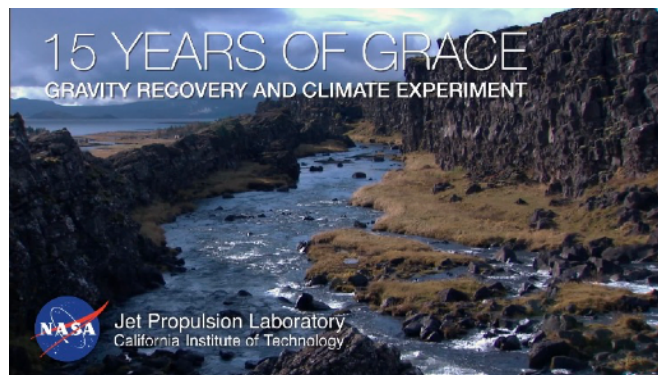
by Michele MacKinnon

“Just Plain Gorgeous, Resilient Landscapes for Drought or Deluge” was the theme of the recent annual symposium held by Mad Gardeners, a regional Connecticut non-profit organization. Three speakers shared their approaches to landscaping in the face of erratic weather conditions.

### Where’s the Water?

“Managing Landscape Green Water with the Watershed Approach,” was Pamela Berstler's subject. Berstler is a California-based landscape expert whose talk captivated everyone since approximately 75 percent of Connecticut is experiencing a severe drought, as classified by the US Drought Monitor.

Although our local media provides frequent coverage of the drought which began two years ago, Berstler shed new light on how extreme the situation has become. An Internet search for NASA’s “GRACE Based Root Shallow Groundwater Drought Indicator” map provides a current view of groundwater and soil moisture levels across the U.S. The February 27, 2017 map showed Connecticut is experiencing drier conditions now than California has seen in recent years. See: [NASA Propulsion Laboratory Video](#)]



### Droughts Affect Soil Health

As with many environmental concerns, an issue with one part of an interconnected system has a ripple effect on the rest of the system. Droughts are no exception. Berstler explained that precipitation shortfalls lead to a decline in soil health, which depend on a balanced ratio of oxygen, water and microscopic life forms. Without healthy soil, plant health declines too since 80% of a plant’s energy is generated and consumed below ground, in the root zone. Healthy roots attract and hold water in the soil, a key element for effective watershed functioning. In short, Berstler urged audience members to create mini-watersheds in their own landscapes.

### Steps Homeowners Can Take

Berstler explained that one inch of rainfall on a 1,000 square foot roof equates to 620 gallons of water. There are several ways to capture this bounty. An immediate action homeowners might consider is diverting downspouts into rain barrels. The capacity of most barrels is less than 100 gallons but kits are available to link multiple barrels. For a mini-watershed, direct rainfall away from foundations into an area of ground measuring 150 square feet and six inches deep. Those



dimensions are about the same as a modest-sized kitchen or bedroom, so capturing runoff is possible with a small portion of property. This approach is similar to that of a rain garden, which is created from a shallow depression in a size large enough to hold periodic downpours. With this increasingly popular landscaping technique, downspouts or excess water flow is directed into a rain garden. Native plants in the garden filter water before it seeps into the underlying soil. UCONN's "Rain Garden" iPhone app provides a thorough reference for interested homeowners.



These are some options homeowners might consider to retain more water on their property. Retaining water is not just an eco-friendly practice. It will be essential to combat drought conditions without doing more harm to our fragile environment.

*Michele MacKinnon, is a UCONN Certified Advanced Master Gardener, garden educator and speaker.*

Visit <http://bit.ly/NewtownAdultEd> or <http://bit.ly/ShermanPrograms> to register for one of MacKinnon's upcoming programs, or to ask gardening questions email [beehappygardener@gmail.com](mailto:beehappygardener@gmail.com). We'll publish answers in the next edition of the newsletter.

## Pollinator Health Protection Act Update

by Mary Gaudet-Wilson

As the Connecticut legislature makes its way through the 2017 session, it's informative to look at the path successful legislation from 2016 has taken. The Connecticut Act Concerning Pollinator Health was signed into law in 2016. It was hailed as groundbreaking legislation, not only because it provided comprehensive strategies to protect pollinators, but also because it passed unanimously in both the House and Senate, a rare occurrence.

The law requires a number of studies and reports on various aspects of the pollinator health problem including the use of dangerous pesticides, loss of habitat, varroa mites and increased state involvement.

### Neonicotinoid chemicals:

[Neonicotinoids In Your Garden](#)

[Are Neonicotinoids Killing Bees?](#)

**Imidacloprid** products include **Bayer Advanced 3-in-1 Insect, Disease & Mite Control** and **Bayer Advanced 12 Month Tree & Shrub Insect Control**. **Merit**, **Confidor**, **Admire**, **Gaicho**, and **Advocate** are also manufactured by Bayer.

**Thiamethoxam** products include **Amdro Quick Kill Lawn & Landscape Insect Killer**. **Actara**, **Platinum**, and **Cruiser** are manufactured by Syngenta.

**Clothianidin** products include **Bayer Advanced All-in-One Rose & Flower Care**. **Poncho**, **Dantosu**, and **Dantop** are manufactured by Sumitomo Chemical and Bayer.

**Acetamiprid** products include **Ortho Bug B Gon**, **Ortho Flower Fruit & Vegetable**, and **Ortho Rose & Flower Insect Killer**. **Mospilan**, **Assail**, and **Chipco Tristar** are manufactured by Nippon Soda.

**Thiacloprid** is in **Calypso** manufactured by Bayer.

**Dinotefuran** products include **Ortho Tree & Shrub Insect Control Plus**. **Starkle**, **Safari**, & **Venom** are manufactured by Mitsui Chemicals.

**Nitenpyram** products **Capstar** and **Guardian** are manufactured by Sumitomo Chemical.

The news to date is encouraging. Many of the legislation's strategies are being rolled out by various state agencies, some actually ahead of established deadlines. While not perfect, these strategies, if implemented properly, should go a long way in improving the health of Connecticut's bees, butterflies and other pollinators.

### **Resulting Actions and Reports Already Published**

**Neonicotinoids and Their Distribution.** Neonicotinoids (sometimes shortened to neonics) are a class of widely-used pesticides, toxic to bees and other pollinators. They are distributed in a variety of ways with products easily available to the public. Now, as a result of the legislation, they are reclassified as restricted use only. The new classification allows use only by certified commercial and private applicators. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) moved the reclassification date forward by one year. The reclassification is in effect.



Photo Credit: Mary-Gaudet Wilson

Prior to legislation, neonics could be applied to all plants, in bloom or not, but as of the 2016 act, no neonics may be applied to plants bearing flowers (except for those in a greenhouse which are inaccessible to pollinators, as specified in the legislation).

**A Pollinator Advisory Committee** has been established by The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES). Its purpose is to serve as an information resource for the state's General Assembly.

Members are Dr. Richard Cowles (CAES), Mark Creighton, State Beekeeper (CAES), Nelson DeBarros (DEEP), Dr. Kirby Stafford III, State Entomologist (CAES) and Dr. Kimberly Stoner (CAES).

**Study of Varroa Mites.** Varroa mites are microscopic and debilitating parasites that attack both honey bees and their brood. They were first found in Connecticut in the early 1990s and by 2007 were found in virtually all inspected bee colonies.

The pollinator health legislation tasked the State Entomologist to make recommendations to offset the effects of varroa mites. See the published guide for recommendations for control: [Published Guide for Recommendations for Control](#)

**Guide to Model Pollinator Habitat.** Much of the decline of pollinators in Connecticut is due to loss of habitat from development, natural plant succession, pesticide usage and changes in the way agriculture is carried out.

CAES followed the pollinator health legislation by developing and issuing a 26-page report. It contains sections on developing pollinator habitats for beekeepers, farmers and orchardists, managers of large land areas and gardeners. Each section is complete with references and suggested plants. [Citizen's Guide to Creating Pollinator Habitat in Connecticut](#)

*Mary Gaudet Wilson is a founding member of Protect Our Pollinators (POP), a non profit group that advocates for pollinators and their habitats [www.propollinators.org](http://www.propollinators.org). In addition, she sits on a Newtown committee to plan meadow restoration.*

## Your Next Vehicle Could be an Electric Bike

by Philip Huerter



Your first EV (Electric Vehicle) could be a three-wheeled bike (called a trike) with an enclosed shell enabling all-weather cycling. It's an unbridled electric vehicle called a GV (GinzVelo) and it's light enough to pedal, but also has an electric motor boost that can propel the rider to 100-200 miles per charge, eliminating range anxiety.

The GV is a way to travel to all your errands without the need of a car. People who would love to ride a bike, but may be deterred by temperature, the weather or concerns about their knees and back with rider's posture, can sit very comfortably on an inclined seat. The GV is a recumbent trike cycle that allows the rider or 'pilot' to relax as it enables unlimited biking endurance.

### **Warming/Cooling Options, Aerodynamic Shell**

A heated seat, warming 'defrost' option and cooling for the summer are available. The aerodynamic shell is eye catching plus it provides room for drinks, storage, groceries, backpack, (with laptop), etc. A tow and trailer hook-on give the rider the option to tote surfboards, canoes, or even children. The 750 watt motor and NuVinci hub transmission offer a lot of torque allowing the rider to feel the power on hills instead of self-generating it. Launching from traffic lights and merging with traffic is also easy and safe.

### **Interior Air Filtered and Reported**

GV is serious about helping the rider maintain optimal health by promoting awareness of urban air quality...a very real concern in our modern world of toxic concentrations. The interior air is filtered and detoxed. In addition, the onboard air quality monitoring system senses external pollutants and displays pollution levels experienced as you travel. This data will be sent to the EPA's [www.AirNow.gov](http://www.AirNow.gov) site to provide high-resolution 'pollution maps' for public viewing...the more Hybrid Cycles out there, the better!

Developer of the GV hybrid electric cycle, GinzVelo won a competitive state grant at the February Connecticut Entrepreneur Innovation Awards. The award will be used to establish the company's manufacturing and assembly in Connecticut. The GV was also featured on the Discovery Channel, "American Makers" program. Expect GinzVelo production will soon provide jobs that help re-invigorate the cycling community through the network of bike shops interested in carrying these models. All-weather cycling can bring healthy exercise to every community year-round!

The Hybrid Electric Cycle renews a "futuristic" mindset about how sensor and data technology applied to our daily lives can change the way we understand our environment and alter the way we live, commute, and...even breathe! For more information, see [www.ginzvelo.com](http://www.ginzvelo.com).

*Philip Huerter is volunteering with the Sierra Club EV Team to help outline measures from legislators to local businesses that will change transportation in our society.*

## POETRY

### My Birdfeeder

Just outside my window,  
As I sip my morning tea,  
The crossroads of the local bird world,  
Rain or shine, is there to see.

It dangles from a shepherd's crook,  
A dear friend gifted me.  
Squirrels climb up to have a look,  
Then scamper off, seeds spraying loosely.

Cardinals, jays, chickadees and sparrows,  
Flock there for my view.  
So do flickers, grackles, finches and juncos,  
Mourning doves and yes, two ducks waddling by too!

It's the only one in my neighborhood,  
Though I wish others would.  
It took so long to attract them,  
With just the seeds that could.

They found the pricey pistachio feed quite grand,  
Settling into a pampered rut,  
And totally ignored the bargain brand,  
What choosy beggars – we've settled on one with peanuts.

I wonder at the variety,  
Even pigeons and gulls find this suburban yard,  
And marvel at the lack of propriety,  
From birds that get only seed, no lard.

They squabble with their own kind,  
Yet like humans are patient with winged cousins.  
It makes no sense to my mind,  
But I'm glad for their cheery company by the dozens.  
*M. Renee Taylor*



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## SOLAR POWER

### *Have you ever considered going solar?*

If so, **now is the time** because it's cheaper and easier than ever. Here's the proof: A new study just found that in 42 out of 50 of the largest U.S. cities, a typically-sized, \$0-down home solar system costs less than the energy purchased from a residential customer's local utility.\*

**Join more than 1,100 Sierra Club supporters in making the switch to clean energy.**

With flexible financing through different Sungevity Energy Plans, you can get an efficient solar system without emptying your pockets. Plus you'll lock in your electricity rate for years to come! It sounds too good to be true, but it's not!

*Now is the time to go solar.*

**Join the clean-energy movement today!**

**Check it out at:** [Solar Homes](#)



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