



# The Quinnehtukqut Connecticut Chapter

The Monthly Newsletter for Events, Information, and Action

March 2016

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## HIKE

### Penwood State Park, Simsbury, CT

**Date:** Sunday, March 27th

**Time:** 12 Noon

**Difficulty:** Easy hiking on rolling terrain

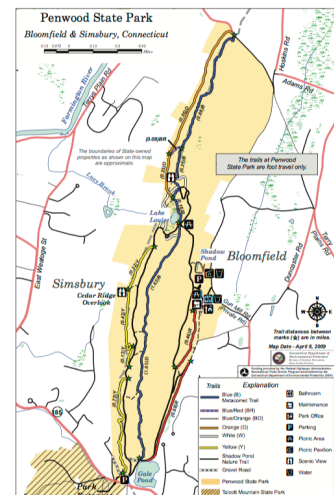
**Meet:** Parking lot just off the Rte.185 park entrance

**Hike Leader:** Renee Taylor

**RSVP:** YES only by 3/25 to [mchawigirl@yahoo.com](mailto:mchawigirl@yahoo.com)

**Note:** If you say YES and change your mind, please let Renee know so she can hike nearer to her home instead.

**GPS:** You can mapquest/GPS Stafford Street and Hartford Road intersection in Simsbury, CT for a site close to park entrance.



**Directions:** Rte. 91 to exit 35B, Rte. 218 west. Take 218 until you reach Rte.189 north in Bloomfield. Turn right onto Rte.189 and continue north to Rte.178. Turn left onto 178 and proceed to end where it intersects with Rte.185. Turn right onto Rte.185. Ahead about a mile on the right is park entrance.

**Dogs:** Friendly dogs are welcome but must be leashed as others approach. Messes on the trail must be removed.

### **RAIN/SNOW THAT DAY CANCELS**

*All hikers, adults and children over 10 years of age, with or without dogs are welcome as long as they refrain from cell phone use and smoking and can tolerate our dogs.*

### **Hiking Waiver**

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please click the following link. [https://content.sierraclub.org/outings/sites/content.sierraclub.org/outings/files/forms/local-outings-sign-in\\_waiver.pdf](https://content.sierraclub.org/outings/sites/content.sierraclub.org/outings/files/forms/local-outings-sign-in_waiver.pdf)

## **GROUP MEETINGS**

### **Greater Hartford Sierra Club Group March Meeting and Presentation**

**Topic:** Connecticut Legislative Update: Current Bills and Issues for Your Information and Action.

**Overview:** Long-time CT Sierra Club member Laurie Julian brings the value of her experience with public, private and the non-profit sectors to our meeting as she updates us on CT's environmental bills and identifies opportunities to act on current issues. Her extensive knowledge of the legislative process based on her close relationships with policy makers and staff of both major political parties has earned her a reputation as a respected and credible resource.



Laurie Julian, Esq.

Julian, an attorney and a registered lobbyist, holds a Master's degree in Public Health. She is an expert in public policy and government affairs and has a proven record of successfully developing and advancing state and federal policy initiatives and lobbying passage of landmark legislation.



CT State House, Hartford

**Date:** Thursday, March 10th  
**Speaker:** Laurie Julian, Esq.  
**Time:** 7:30pm; Activist letter writing at 7:00pm on multiple activist topics  
**Location:** Westmoor Park, 119 Flagg Road, West Hartford, CT  
**Questions:** Renee at [mchawigirl@yahoo.com](mailto:mchawigirl@yahoo.com)  
**Refreshments:** Provided  
**Suggested Donation:** \$4.00 to defray cost of hall rental

## Shoreline Group Meeting March General Meeting

**Date:** Wednesday, March 9th  
**Time:** 6:30pm-8:00pm  
**Location:** Common Grounds  
**Address:** 1096 Main Street, Branford Center  
**Note:** This is a return to Shoreline's previous meeting location  
**Contact:** Jennifer Yoxall 203-457-2624 or [jyoxall@comcast.net](mailto:jyoxall@comcast.net)



## MARCH EVENTS

### The Southeast Group of the Sierra Club

#### ***A Welcome to Spring Social - "Drown the Snowman"***

**Overview:** Featured activities during the evening include: drowning a snowman in effigy and a poetry reading session. Attendees are encouraged to bring their choice of poetry, prose or folderol, with a spring theme to share, or they may choose to read from selections provided.

The event has been celebrated over the years and is open to the general public. This time, once again, the drowning ceremony will take place in the waters of Long Island Sound. The dastardly deed has occurred, in ceremonies past, along the shores and docks of Noank, Gales Ferry, Stonington Borough, New London and several times indoors in a bucket, due to inclement weather.

**Date:** Wednesday, March 16th  
**Time:** 6:00pm  
**Location:** Nautilus Lounge at Ocean Beach Park, 98 Neptune Avenue, New London  
**Charge:** \$16.25 per person  
**Reservations:** Required by March 6th  
**Refreshments:** Light Supper Provided

**Questions and Reservations:** Louise Fabrykiewicz at [lowf@juno.com](mailto:lowf@juno.com) or 860-444-8916

*Open to the public*



Annemarie Kretschmann for [WestportNow.com](http://WestportNow.com)

## APRIL EVENTS

### Shoreline Sierra Club Program

#### ***Bring the Family to Guided Tour of Energize Center***

**Overview:** Shoreline continues the theme of renewable energy with hands on learning for adults and children to discover efficient and renewable energy solutions at Energize Center. The Energize Center is a joint venture between United Illuminating (UI) and Eversource. There is no charge for the tour.

**Date:** Wednesday, April 13th  
**Time:** 7:00pm  
**Location:** Energize CT Center, 122 Universal Drive N, North Haven  
**Questions:** Jennifer Yoxall 203-457-2624 or [jyoxall@comcast.net](mailto:jyoxall@comcast.net)

*Open to the public.*



### **New Haven Inner City Outings (ICO)**

#### **8th Annual Rock to Rock Bike Ride**

**Event:** Riders of all ages and abilities participate in any of five bicycle routes from 8 miles to a metric century (64 miles). The day starts at West Rock with a farm breakfast and ends with a festival at East Rock Park.

**Date:** Saturday, April 30th  
**Before the Ride:** Registration, breakfast and entertainment  
**Location:** Common Ground High School, 358 Spring Side Avenue, New Haven  
**Time:** 8:30-10:30am  
**End of Ride:** Festival  
**Information:** Learn more at [www.rocktorock.org](http://www.rocktorock.org)

**Schedule and Logistics:** <http://rocktorock.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=cms.page&id=1014>

**Goal:** Support more than 20 local groups working to create a healthier, greener community. Your pledge to contribute may go to a single group or any number of groups in the community. Last year \$175,000 was raised for two dozen local environmental groups. The goal in 2016 is \$200,000.

**Background:** New Haven ICO is in its 20th year working with four local partners (schools and after school programs) to take kids on all kinds of outdoor adventures including hiking, swimming, rollerblading, canoeing, rafting, camping and visits to nature centers and natural history museums. ICO promotes youth leadership and stewardship while having fun. For more information or to volunteer, contact [melinda.tuhus@gmail.com](mailto:melinda.tuhus@gmail.com) or call her at 203.623.2186.

**Register:** Sign up to donate and/or ride with our New Haven ICO team at:  
<http://rocktorock.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.team&teamID=5169>

## Greater Hartford Sierra Club Group

### April Meeting and Presentation

**Topic:** Methane Pipelines Planned for Connecticut -  
*Update on Issues*

**Speaker:** Martha Klein, CT Chapter Activist

**Date:** Thursday, April 14th

**Time:** 7:30pm; Activist letter writing at 7:00pm on multiple activist topics

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

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



## ARTICLES

### Why Defeat the Trans-Pacific Partnership?

by Marcia Wilkins

Members of Congress need to hear from you about the importance of defeating the passage of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) treaty. The TPP is a multi-nation trade agreement between the United States and 11 Pacific Rim countries. While the stimulation of trade with these countries is advantageous to the US, it would come at a terrible cost to environmental, labor, safety and other accepted national standards and laws.

Under the TPP, foreign investors and foreign corporations will wield tremendous power when it comes to exercising their rights of developing resources in the signatory nations. A signatory nation's sovereignty and laws are usually successfully challenged and overcome as rights of investment are enforced by trade tribunals in the Investor-State Dispute Settlement System (ISDS). Within ISDS small teams of lawyers, appointed by corporations, have ultimate authority. Enforcement is similar to that of previous trade agreements such as NAFTA.

#### Dispute Settlement Process Raises Issues

Past experience with ISDS tribunals under similar pacts has shown that any country and its citizens must pay foreign corporations if said country tries to deny the development plan of the foreign corporation under its laws.

**Example:** In Nova Scotia it appears Canadian citizens must pay a US mining company for losses resulting from the Canadian government's environmental impact statement which rejects the mining company's rock blasting on the Bay of Fundy. The Canadian government argues that the blasting will harm endangered species such as the right whale and threaten commercial fishermen, local and indigenous communities and the local environment and landscape. Nevertheless, Canada is required to reimburse the corporation for rejecting the company's intent to blast its rocks on the Bay of Fundy.

**Example:** In Quebec, Canada a US oil and gas firm is suing the Canadian government for denial of its rights for shale gas exploration including fracking. Quebec asserts the exploration will produce pollution and have major impacts on local communities if it allows the US firm to

mine. The US company rejects the argument and declares that Canada is preventing a stable business and legal environment.

**Example:** In another case, a Swedish energy firm successfully forced the German government to allow it to build a new coal-fired power plant. Now the Swedish energy firm is suing the German government for its losses in the phasing out of all nuclear plants in Germany.

**Example:** No doubt you have heard that Trans Canada is suing the US government because the US rejected Trans Canada's plan to build the Keystone XL Pipeline and thus its investors will be denied the profits with such development.

### **Ineffective Rules Prevail**

Not only is enforcement ineffective, the TPP conservation rules are considered weak.

**Example:** Illegal trade in flora and fauna is not actually prohibited with sanctions but merely written asking that projects discourage illegal logging and taking of wildlife.

**Example:** Shark finning and commercial whaling are not banned, but the TPP suggests promoting the long-term conservation of these animals.

### **Expected Deleterious Outcomes**

With regard to natural gas, the US Department of Energy is required to approve all exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to all TPP countries. This approval will bring about increased fracking and consequently more fossil fuel infrastructure to support it, the process of making LNG creates even more greenhouse gas emissions than the extraction and transport of natural gas (NG).

Indeed one of the most condemning features of the TPP is its failure to even mention climate change or the United Nations Convention on Climate Change although all TPP countries are subject to this Convention.



Protestors call for the rejection of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal under negotiation. (Paul Handley / AFP/Getty Images)

**Notify Your Member of Congress. This article only deals with the environmental problems caused by the TPP. Labor and safety concerns are also very real and damaging. Please let your member of Congress know that the TPP treaty should not be passed.**

*Marcia Wilkins is the Conservation Chair at Sierra Club Connecticut.*

## **Bridgeport Harbor Station Due to Retire**

by Diane Lentakis

There are currently five states in the US that no longer have any coal plants (ME, VT, RI, ID and CA). The next state to retire a coal plant is Massachusetts. It's Brayton Point and is set to retire in 2017. Happily, Connecticut is joining the list.



The Bridgeport Harbor Station

The campaign to retire the Bridgeport Harbor Station (BHS) in CT has been extremely challenging. PSEG went to great lengths to avoid installing modern pollution controls by claiming to import more "environmentally-friendly" coal from Indonesia. As PSEG is the owner of Connecticut's plant, difficult negotiations were expected and occurred.

At a press conference held February 11, 2016, an agreement was announced by PSEG and the City of Bridgeport to retire the Bridgeport Harbor Station coal-fired power plant, owned by PSEG, by mid 2021. BHS is a huge environmental justice polluter, located in the poorest city in Connecticut. While the retirement is enforceable by that date, the coal plant will no longer receive capacity payments in mid 2019. It is very possible that the plant will stop operating by that date.

### **Sierra Club's Role**

About five years ago, the Sierra Club began meeting with our partners and volunteers in Bridgeport and its surrounding communities. The Healthy Connecticut Alliance (HCA) was created shortly thereafter. This coalition was focused on urging PSEG to retire BHS and was committed to environmental justice, redevelopment efforts for the plant site and a just transition for the plant's workers.

In 2014, Bridgeport's City Council voted in favor of a bipartisan resolution which called for the plant's retirement. At the time, PSEG responded to the concerns of the community by insisting that they had no plan to retire its coal plant.

Former Mayor Finch appointed members to the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) which was empowered to negotiate a Community Environmental Benefits Agreement (CEBA) between Bridgeport and PSEG, including a set date for the plant's retirement.

### **Gas Plant to Replace Coal Plant**

Sierra Club and Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice (CCEJ) volunteers worked diligently alongside the CAC throughout 2015 to finalize the CEBA. In the end, only the City of Bridgeport, PSEG and one environmental organization actually signed the CEBA. Many of the environmental organizations decided not to sign the CEBA as it calls for a new gas plant to be built and operated by PSEG which is now required to apply for air and water permits.

To prevent potential hazards associated with methane emissions from the gas plant, it continues to be important for members from Bridgeport and surrounding communities to express their concerns about the gas plant.

*Diane Lentakis is a member of the Sierra Club CT Executive Committee and its representative to Healthy Connecticut Alliance.*

## Make Every Day Earth Day

One way you can make every day Earth Day is by contributing through EarthShare. Take advantage of one of the easiest and most convenient ways to support the Sierra Club of Connecticut. You can make a gift to national or the chapter by payroll contribution through EarthShare, New England's workplace giving program. Numerous private companies, many state and municipal government organizations, and in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) participate.

Select your organization's CFC# on your pledge form. Contributions to EarthShare New England support a broad range of charities committed to protecting public health and our air, land, water and wildlife.

The Sierra Club is a member of EarthShare, a nationwide federation of the country's most respected environmental and conservation charities. To find out more about how you and your workplace can support the Sierra Club through an EarthShare New England charitable giving campaign, please contact Jessica Wozniak at: [info@earthsharenewengland.com](mailto:info@earthsharenewengland.com).

You can also visit EarthShare New England's web site at: [www.earthsharenewengland.org](http://www.earthsharenewengland.org)





# POEM

## *Winter's Palette*

Vibrant, sunlit aqua bands streak over the grey sky,  
As smoky purple, broad brush strokes under them lie.  
Deeply drink this bolder winter palette, before it passes by!

Snow clings to the windward side of once barren trees,  
Like white icing on a chocolate cake set in nature's deep freeze.  
A rare scarlet cardinal at my birdfeeder among dozens of dun sparrows,  
Winter's palette can be so narrow.

Seldom seen strong sunlight gilds fallen snow,  
Raising my spirits with its reflected glow.  
Tufts of beige grass peek through now and then,  
Mossy green flower bulb tips poke up, it's safe when?

Disappointment and false starts are midwinter cares.  
Gratitude for January thaw respites we share.  
Greedy gallivanting about when nature allows.  
When whipping winds blow, window gazing to merely browse.

But lo, three red robins graced my yard today.  
While yellow crocus flowered, they sought worms, their prey.  
With such harbingers, I'm impatient for the season on the way,  
My life force is rising, with more energy to play!

*M. Renee Taylor*



Smoky Purple Winter Palette

## The Q is brought to you by:

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*Comments, letters to the editor and written and graphic contributions may be sent to [ctsierraq3@gmail.com](mailto:ctsierraq3@gmail.com) for future newsletter inclusion. All decisions regarding use are made by the communications committee.*

## 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:** [www.sierraclub.org/solarhomes](http://www.sierraclub.org/solarhomes)



Solar energy lifts life on earth

# CREATE YOUR LEGACY



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

## Create a Lasting Legacy

By creating a charitable bequest to benefit Sierra Club or your favorite Sierra Club Chapter, you remain in control of your assets during your lifetime and help protect the environment in years to come.

For confidential assistance, contact:

**Sierra Club**

**Gift Planning Program**

85 Second Street, Second Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

[gift.planning@sierraclub.org](mailto:gift.planning@sierraclub.org)

(800) 932-4270



...Your lasting legacy...

**To create your legacy go to:**

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**or email:**

[gift.planning@sierraclub.org](mailto:gift.planning@sierraclub.org)