



# The Quinnehtukut Connecticut Chapter

The Monthly Newsletter for Events, Information, and Action

WINTER 2017

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**Note:** *The second installment of the Chestnut Tree article by Nora Hulton will be in the February issue*

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## EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION

**Topic:** The Challenge of Managing Invasive Plants to Improve Wildlife Habitat

**Speaker:** Peter Picone, DEEP Wildlife Biologist at Sessions Woods, Burlington, CT

**Sponsor:** Greater Hartford Sierra Club Program Meeting

**Date:** Thursday January 12th

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

**Time:**

*Activist letter writing:* 7:00pm

*Program:* 7:30pm

**Overview:** Mr. Picone will share his insights on the management of invasive plants on state wildlife management areas and his own property: Charter Oak Tree Farm in Southington, CT. He will also highlight native plants that provide valuable seasonal food and cover for wildlife.



Peter Picone, CT DEEP Wildlife Biologist

**Donation:** \$4.00 to defray hall rental fee

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



Persicaria or Mile a Minute Weed

Photo credit: [UConn.edu/pa](http://UConn.edu/pa)

## EVENTS

### FUTURE OUTING: JUNE

#### Eating/Greeting/Biking/Hiking/Kayaking Event

**Put this future event on your calendar!**

**Sponsor:** Greater Hartford Sierra Club

**Date:** Saturday June 10th

**Time:** Noon to 4:00pm

**Location:** Northwest Park in Windsor, CT

**Event:** Relax, enjoy this pleasant spot and learn about Sierra Club activities in your area. Learn how volunteers who provide even a small amount of time help our environmental efforts.

*Spend the rest of the day on sports and food.*

**Invited:** Sierra club members and the public are invited to join us for this outing. *There is no charge.*



The Entrance to Northwest Park

### REWIND: November 2016 Hike

Friends of Remington Woods [friendsofremingtonwoods.org](http://friendsofremingtonwoods.org) is a project of the Eastern Fairfield County Sierra Club Group led by Peter McKinght. With Dave Wright as leader, the group hiked around Stratford Point in Stratford on November 19, 2016.

Stratford Point is currently owned by duPont, but has been open to the public with the assistance of the Connecticut Audubon Society and Audubon Connecticut at various times. For more information about Stratford Point, visit <http://www.ctaudubon.org/conservation-science-our-work/stratford-point/#sthash>

Thanks to Dave Wright for guiding us and sharing his great knowledge of the area and its rich history.



Hikers Gather



The lighthouse at Stratford Point

## REQUEST FOR CONTENT

All CT Sierra Club members are invited to contribute to The *Quinnehtukqut*. We accept articles, puzzles, events, photos, poems, etc.

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

The February *Quinnehtukqut* will distribute at the beginning of the month. **Submissions are due the week of January 9th: Final deadline is January 16th.** Comments, letters to the editor and all submissions may be sent to [ctsierraq3@gmail.com](mailto:ctsierraq3@gmail.com) for inclusion in future newsletters.

All decisions regarding use are made by the Communications Committee.

## ARTICLES

### A Call for Mindfulness, Not Carelessness The Era of Climate Change

by Julius Graefe

Earth is the only planet in our galaxy that supports life by providing living species with a relatively fixed set of essentials: oxygen, water, and a non-extreme temperature range on the majority of its seven continents. Throughout most of human history humanity assumed we could never affect or influence vast climate cycles (e.g. fluctuations in global parameters such as atmospheric temperature). Those events were governed exclusively by a benign “balance of nature.” The notion of human induced climate change is a rather contemporary scientific “discovery,” and it is only recently that researchers and scientific institutions arrived at 97% consensus that anthropogenic climate change is, in fact, happening.

So, what is the significance? Knowing that we are trapped in the midst of the Anthropocene – or the Sixth Extinction, as author Elizabeth Kolbert coined it – it would be practical to direct considerable attention towards addressing the symptoms and the underlying cause(s) of climate change because it threatens to undermine the integrity of our global environmental systems and poses a risk to the very existence of the human race. It is well established that international cooperation and collaboration are required to successfully combat the present and future effects of climate change. The ability to accept failures and flaws, the ability to acknowledge the danger of ignorance and the ability to invite change are all of extreme value in addressing one of the greatest challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

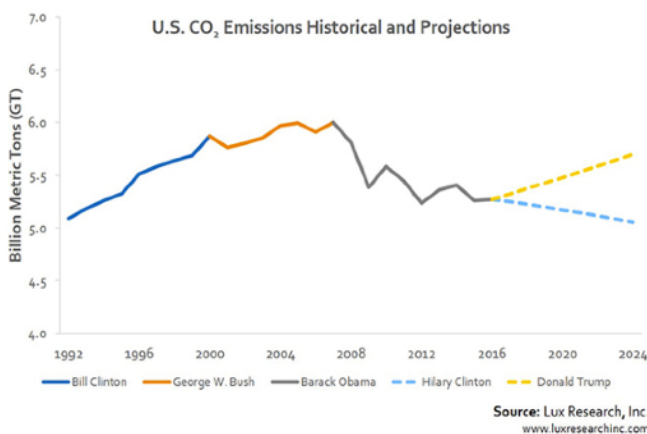
#### The Human Factor

Given the overwhelming scientific proof that humans are the primary driver of climate change, we need to amend our environmentally injudicious behavior and renounce commonplace dependencies (yes, like oil). Although this transformation cannot be achieved overnight, it is a process that can be accomplished over time. Those who have the power to make wide reaching decisions, namely governments and corporations, are tasked with initiating the process. Unfortunately, powerful entities do not always share enthusiasm for long-term wellbeing if they are blinded by short-term profit and guided by illusion.

Will President-elect Trump unleash an “energy revolution that will bring vast new wealth, make America energy independent, and conserve natural habitats, reserves and resources”? <https://www.donaldjtrump.com/policies/energy>. Although the promises may sound reassuring, and perhaps even encouraging, Donald Trump says he does not believe in the type of energy “revolution” that most progressive thinkers and environmentalists envision; one inspired by a desperate need for fundamental change that marks the transition from a state of fossil fuel dependency to a more sustainable model of energy production. Trump also says he is prepared to establish energy policies that will reinforce nonrenewable dependency and will pave the way for expanded exploitation. His proposals include aims to reinvigorate coal, to increase shale gas extraction, open offshore drilling in the Arctic and Atlantic (look no further than ANWR or the Gulf of Mexico) and construct highly invasive pipelines that enable a widespread movement of some of the worlds dirtiest oil (i.e. Tar Sands).

### The Scientific Factor

Depending on the steps countries take to restrict their respective carbon dioxide emissions, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts the Earth’s average temperature to rise anywhere between 1.4 and 6 degrees Celsius (2.5–11°F) over the course of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In late 2015, The Paris Climate Agreement result is a non-binding worldwide agreement to cap global warming at 2°C, or 3.6°F, recognizing 2°C as the threshold for irreparable climate disaster.



Lux Research, an independent Boston-based research firm, recently concluded that two terms of implemented Trump energy policies can amount to 3.4 billion tons’ greater emissions over the next eight years. See graph (yellow for Trump, blue for Obama) to compare the continuation of President Obama’s environmentally conscious carbon goal to reduce domestic emissions up to 30% by 2025. Without strong climate and clean energy policies in place, the world’s second largest emitter of carbon dioxide –the United States – could sabotage the world’s hopes of remaining under the 2°C threshold.

### Working Together for Conservation

Challenging, yes, but opportunities big and small exist to stand in the way of the president-elect's climate denial strategies. Consider joining or starting an environmental group for your neighborhood. Here's why:

1. *Grassroots movements* can yield enormous success for the future of American energy. Environmental organizations and nonprofits consistently fight key issues that afflict particular regions or the nation as a whole. Organized movements, including the recent efforts to block the final easement for the Dakota Access Pipeline, accomplish social and environmental victories.
2. Specific *land conservation strategies*, including conservation easements, can block the path for proposed pipeline construction. Conservation easements are legal agreements between a landowner and a local land trust or conservation group placing permanent restrictions on land use to protect its conservation values in perpetuity. Such easements

may be sold or donated, and may prohibit commercial and industrial activity while continuing to permit agricultural, forestry and wildlife management activities. In the classic case of the ongoing Northern Pass project, Eversource spent over \$40 million buying property to gain access to a potential route from Canada to New Hampshire. To conserve the land and prevent the Northern Pass from gaining legal access to its preferred route, local NH landowners outbid the energy giant. How did they do it? The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests joined together with land owners and demonstrated the power to protect parcels of land. They played a winning game of chess by denying energy companies the ability to form an economical route for construction.

Many more opportunities exist to take action, from purchasing Electric Vehicles (EVs) to voting on behalf of policies to curtail climate change. One thing is certain: Americans must be fully cognizant of the dangers of an impending fossil fuel “revolution,” and the repercussions that are bound to it. While oil continues to be the backbone of American capitalism, renewable energy and sustainable solutions can gradually phase out dependency on finite energy sources. It is imperative that Americans – of whom approximately only 50% understand the phenomenon of human induced climate change – are better educated, vigilant, and prepared to take a stand against anti-climate change policies (Yale Program on Climate Change Communication).

*Julius Graefe is a recent graduate of Colby-Sawyer College, with a B.S. in Environmental Studies. He is a volunteer with the CT Chapter Sierra Club Communications Committee.*

# Jobs, Justice and a Livable Earth

by Richard Wrigley

HARTFORD, CT., December 3, 2016. It was a bitter December morning as people started gathering on the steps of the State Capitol Building. Regardless of the chill and the biting wind, hundreds gathered to secure "Jobs, Justice and a Livable Earth."



A Cold November Day for Activists

Nearly 400 participants turned out to rally and march for a renewed commitment to secure their objectives: Jobs, Justice and a Livable Earth. The CT Chapter Sierra Club co-sponsored the event with 350 Connecticut, Consumers for Sensible Energy and Inter-Religious Ecojustice Network. The march was endorsed by dozens of labor, peace, social justice and environmental organizations and groups from within the state.

## Marching to Implement Renewable Energy Sources

People were there to advocate and show their support for a variety of environmental, economic and social causes. One message that reverberated throughout the rally and march was the demand for state legislators to make a commitment to move Connecticut away from fossil fuel dependency and to develop renewable energy alternatives.

Making this happen remains an uphill battle as Martha Klein, Communications Chair, CT Chapter Sierra Club and Beyond Gas lead volunteer, pointed out during her speech at the rally.

"Right now the state of Connecticut is dedicated to a policy of expanding the use of fracked natural gas," said Klein. "They want to convert hundreds of thousands of new customers to the use of natural gas."



400 Marchers for Jobs, Justice and a Livable Earth

At a time when environmentally friendly options for energy are readily available, and Connecticut produces enough energy to sell to other states, it may come as a surprise that Connecticut legislators are pursuing growth and investment in new fossil fuel infrastructure.

Klein explained how the state's push to convert energy users to natural gas is really just a ploy designed to fabricate a need for fossil fuel when that need doesn't exist.

“The reason the state wants to create this need for fracked methane is to justify the expansion of massive interstate pipelines,” said Klein. “Overwhelmingly our energy policy is taking us in the wrong direction, and Connecticut remains committed to this.”

There is hope, Klein said at the end of her speech, as she pointed out that Connecticut's energy policy is due to be revised soon. "The best idea," Klein added, "is to develop a better Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES) for the future."

### **Marching for Causes**

Committing Connecticut to a path for renewable energy was high on the list of priorities at the event, but there were many other causes people marched for including:

- The fight for a \$15 federal minimum wage
- A push to end environmental racism
- A proclamation that Black Lives Matter
- Standing with Standing Rock
- Saying "No" to the Dakota Access Pipe Line (DAPL)
- Protecting the water of Connecticut

The causes were many, the march was respectively lengthy, the cold never abated, and in fact, the wind only grew stronger.

Despite the weather, hundreds of people, representative of our nation's diversity marched together in solidarity through the city, stopping at the Union Railroad Station to rally for organized labor, the TD Bank to protest the bank's corporate investment in the DAPL, the downtown Burger King to protest low wages and to an unmarked grave of a black man to underscore the importance of the Movement for Black Lives.



Clean Water Marchers

The march ended where it began, at the steps of the Capitol building. This diverse group of Americans were unified in their demands. The people demand change from Connecticut State Legislators. Connecticut residents want change for:

- *A better economy*
- *Economic justice for workers*
- *Renewable energy*
- *An immediate transition away from fossil fuels*
- *Jobs, justice and a livable Earth*

*Richard Wrigley is the volunteer photojournalism intern for the CT Chapter Sierra Club. All photos for this article are his work product.*



# Power Plant in Approval Process in Danbury

by Helen R Applebaum

A Danbury, CT energy development project is in the third of five stages necessary to build a power generation plant at 100 Saw Mill Road on the Ridgefield/Danbury line. The Lotus Energy Group has bought 23 acres of land and named the site Lotus Danbury Technology Center. The power generation plant intended for the site is to have three generators using natural gas as the fuel source and contain a fuel cell assembly component. The function is to generate electricity.

The site is planned to house two 112MW simple cycle turbines and one 4.3MW reciprocating internal combustion engine.

This third stage of development is called "Permitting" and according to the company's website <http://lotusenergygroup.com/energy-development-projects.html> there are five possible permits required:

1. Liquid discharge (ZLD) System
2. Emission requirements
3. Ammonia discharge limitations
4. NoX emission limitations
5. CO2 emission limitations

## Connecticut DEEP Air Management Holds Hearing

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), Bureau of Air Management held a public hearing in Danbury on December 7, 2016 as the first step for Lotus to obtain three air permits that probably fall into the "emission requirements" category mentioned on the Lotus website. DEEP references two simple cycle turbine generators and one internal combustion generator all firing natural gas. The Bureau of Air Management document refers to "A New Source Review of Air Management to construct and operate a stationary source."

The plant is expected to emit 32 tons of air pollution annually according to the newstimes, November 10, 2016 article <http://www.newstimes.com/local/article/Hearing-set-on-air-pollution-10606800.php>

DEEP indicates nitrogen oxides will be released and can impact air quality although the power plant will not violate the standards of the 1990 federal Clean Air Act. Nitrogen oxides are the toxic byproduct of fuel burned at high temperatures and can help produce smog on hot days.

## Comments from Connecticut Citizens

The CT Chapter Sierra Club was well represented with four current and future Executive Committee members in attendance. Martha Klein, Chair of the chapter's Communications Committee referred to the state's 2013 Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES) that reads, "the state is already over reliant on natural gas for power generation and that over reliance, both present and projected, threatens the state and the utility ratepayer through price volatility; reduced reliability and compromise of efficiency programs." She asked that DEEP evaluate the



A Lotus Complete Power Generation Plant  
Photo credit: [lotusenergygroup.com](http://lotusenergygroup.com)

Lotus application for air permits by taking into account the stated strategic natural gas policy problems.

Diane Lentakis, CT Sierra Club Executive Committee member and a 350 CT Steering Committee Member commented that natural gas is a fossil fuel. She said, "According to a study conducted by the Massachusetts Attorney General's office, there is no need for additional natural gas to power the grid."

In a separate interview, Lentakis added, "According to a November 18, 2015 press release, the Acadia Center states, 'New England states' aggressive energy efficiency programs are causing Winter energy demand to decline, reducing the need for additional pipeline capacity and other energy infrastructure.' The article also says ISO-NE forecasts that through 2024, the Winter peak will decrease annually by 0.1%."

Lynn Taborsak, a Danbury resident, reminded all attendees that a permit isn't needed for a tech center, but is required to develop a power plant that burns fossil fuels to produce electricity that creates greenhouse gas emissions. She noted that the three stacks enumerated in the permit applications implies three engines will power those stacks.

Paul Rotello, current member of the Danbury City Council, 6th Ward, confirmed three points:

1. Jet engines will spin approximately 3,000 hours a year at the heart of the machine
2. The engines will operate mostly when the weather is hot, the grid is near capacity or during extreme cold.
3. Decibel level requirements must be met and permitted through zoning.

Ellen Weininger, Education Outreach Coordinator for Grassroots Environmental Education stated that shale gas has high levels of radon interlaced with methane gas which is then carried through from pipelines to homes, schools and businesses. She also noted there can be leakage throughout pipelines.

Ben Martin, a 350CT Steering Committee member, noted that while Lotus claims to be a renewable energy provider, the proposed plant is powered by natural gas. Martin also inquired as to who the contractor is. There was no answer from Lotus. Martin stated, "Anything with a stack is releasing pollution and anything with gas is releasing pollution."

Danbury resident James Root said he is looking to know details about the emissions. He reported that permits can be modified in the future although that would require redoing the same process currently underway.

Testimony was also submitted by local residents about the acute health impacts that are possible and the fact that children are uniquely vulnerable to chemical contaminants. The decibel level is important to know as 85 decibels are considered a high level of sound.

Members of the public should refer to the DEEP Calendar of Events at [www.ct.gov/deep/calendar](http://www.ct.gov/deep/calendar) for the official schedule in this matter, including cancellations, or other schedule alterations. [sierraclub.org/Connecticut](http://sierraclub.org/Connecticut) will also cover the power plant under "issues."

For more information about the air quality by county in Connecticut, go to <http://www.lung.org/our-initiatives/healthy-air/sota/city-rankings/states>. Danbury is in Fairfield County.

*Helen R Applebaum is editor of The Quinnehtukqut.*

## A Blueprint: How to Preserve 800 Connecticut Acres for Nature, Forever

by Chad Seewagen

It is not every day that a new nature preserve, hundreds of acres in size, is established in Connecticut, but that is what happened in New Fairfield last year thanks to the efforts of a local environmental philanthropist.

The modern history of the property begins with prominent lawyer, Walter Gordon Merritt, who began to buy connected parcels of land on both sides of the Fairfield County, Connecticut and Putnam County, New York border in the 1920's. Eventually the property he came to call Great Hollow reached more than 1,000 acres in size. Upon his death in 1968, he left a portion of his property to Wesleyan University for "charitable, scientific, and educational uses and purposes."

The property was subsequently conveyed to the Regional YMCA of Western Connecticut, which operated the Great Hollow Wilderness School on the property for many years. Despite the deed restriction placed on the land by Walter Merritt, Great Hollow experienced tremendous development pressures during the time it was owned by the YMCA and while it was for sale following the Wilderness School's closing.

Through the hard work of many local residents to whom Great Hollow was a beloved natural treasure, as well as some intervention from the State Attorney General's Office, these efforts to build sports fields, cellular communications towers, and other projects were prevented. In 2015, the property was acquired by a local philanthropist to establish the Great Hollow Nature Preserve & Ecological Research Center with the intent to continue honoring Mr. Merritt's wish that the land be available to the public and used by students and teachers for education and scientific research.

Great Hollow Nature Preserve & Ecological Research Center is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to land and wildlife conservation, applied ecological research, experiential environmental education and outdoor recreational opportunities for the public. Today the preserve totals approximately 825 acres, spanning the towns of New Fairfield and Sherman. It is contiguous or nearly contiguous with thousands of acres of additional protected land in Connecticut and neighboring New York, including Pootatuck State Forest, Squantz Pond State Park, Michael Ciaiola Conservation Area, Cranberry Mountain Wildlife Management Area, and the Great Swamp.

The preserve is predominantly second growth forest and also contains a freshwater stream, emergent wetlands, vernal pools and approximately six miles of hiking trails wind throughout the western side of the preserve and are open to the public for passive recreation year-round. All the facilities of a biological field station, including lodging, a wet lab, office space and lecture room are available to both professional researchers and students to use Great Hollow for conservation science.



An aerial photograph of the southern end of Great Hollow, facing north. The campus at the bottom of the photograph includes Great Hollow's offices, research facility, and housing accommodations.

If you love nature and being outside, we encourage you to come take a hike on our trails, participate in the various community events we offer throughout the year, and get involved in everything else we do at Great Hollow. Go to: [www.greathollow.org](http://www.greathollow.org) for directions and more information. We look forward to seeing you in the great outdoors!

*Chad Seewagen, Ph.D. is Executive Director of Great Hollow Nature Preserve & Ecological Research Center*

## Help Our Feathered Friends Survive Winter

by Michele MacKinnon

Winter, perhaps Mother Nature's invitation to slow down and restore ourselves for a new year, is also an opportunity to observe our feathered friends and offer aid to help them survive the season's challenges.

### Bird Survival Requirements

#### 1. Water

Birds need access to fresh water daily. A bird bath is a lovely gift for yourself or nature lovers. Purchase one capable of withstanding temperature extremes with a shallow bowl a maximum of two-inches deep. Place it where you can enjoy watching birds frolic, but also near a shrub or tree where birds can perch to dry their feathers. Birds are vulnerable when their feathers are wet because it's more difficult for them to fly. Inexpensive heaters prevent bird bath water freeze-ups. Never add antifreeze to water.

#### 2. Food

Most birds overwintering in Connecticut are seed-eaters and need high quality protein and fat to maintain their energy levels. Consider providing different feeders for various sized birds to ensure they all have an equal chance to find nourishment. Similar to bird baths, place feeders within view of activity, yet allow birds to take cover nearby if a predator approaches. Place feeders about six feet away from windows to avoid crashes. According to a bird-watching enthusiast, black oil sunflower seed is the filet mignon of the bird world. It attracts northern cardinals, blue jays, finches, grosbeaks and chickadees. These seeds have a high meat-to-shell ratio, can be dispensed from many styles of feeders and their shells discourage visits from non-native birds such as house sparrows and starlings. Safflower seed is smaller and tougher than sunflower seed and is an alternative if squirrels become pests. Nyjer seed (sometimes spelled niger) is the top choice of finches. Sprinkle millet for ground feeders, such as doves, juncos and towhees.



Winter Birds in CT Need Water  
Photo credit : duncraft.com

Suet, a waxy white fat, is available in the meat department of most food stores. Cut it into blocks and keep a supply in your freezer. Since suet converts into energy with ease, it is a critical food source when frigid periods limit foraging activity. Upside down suet cages prevent nuisance birds from dominating feeders. Restrict suet use to colder months to keep its melted fat from dripping onto bird feathers and creating health issues.

Encourage children to take part in bird feeding by making tasty treats. Roll pine cones in peanut butter and roll a second time to coat with seeds and cornmeal. Pieces of dried or fresh fruit will delight your winged visitors as well. Bread and crackers are unsuitable as they lack nourishment.

*Caution:* Backyard bear sightings are steadily increasing, often due to well-stocked bird feeders. Stay safe and remove feeders each afternoon and before the ground thaws in spring, which is when bears start leaving their dens. Rake up and discard seeds and shells to eliminate traces of feeding activity.

### **3. Shelter**

High winds and snowfall are another concern to birds. Dwarf Alberta Spruce, Norway Spruce, Eastern White Pine and Eastern Red Cedar, commonly known as Juniper, are a few of the many evergreen trees that provide dwelling places in winter months. Their dense structures offer protection from predators and the elements. Evergreens in a variety of sizes in your garden allow birds to live and forage in different layers of the eco-system, from ground level to tree tops. Juncos, for example, prefer the ground while cardinals like midlevel trees.

### **4. Friendly Habitats**

Think about reducing bird dependency on purchased seed and feeders by creating a natural bird feeder in your backyard. Plants that produce nuts, seeds and fruits are all important food sources. Winter is a good time to research plants to add to your garden next spring. Visit the American Beauties website at [www.abnativeplants.com](http://www.abnativeplants.com) for ideas. You will find plant descriptions, pictures and garden designs to inspire your winter daydreams.

### **Bird Identification**

You may want to learn more about your bird visitors. Audubon Field Guides and Peterson Field Guides are time-tested books, with the latter publishing an extensive list of print titles. Check [audubon.org](http://audubon.org) for bird photos and their recorded sounds. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology website [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu) relieves boredom on stormy days with a number of educational options and activity ideas, such as Project FeederWatch. For those with smart phones, try downloading the Lab's Merlin app. Answering prompts within the app help identify birds in your area. Upload photographs with the app to enlist other birding enthusiasts in making identifications.

No matter the season, a bird's basic needs are like our own: water, food and shelter. When you help make these essentials items available, birds will flourish and their frequent visits will brighten your winter days.

*Michele MacKinnon, is a UCONN Certified Advanced Master Gardener, garden educator and speaker. For a list of MacKinnon's 2017 programs, or to ask gardening questions email [beehappygardener@gmail.com](mailto:beehappygardener@gmail.com). We'll publish answers in the next edition of the Quinnehtukqut*

## The History of John Muir and The Sierra Club *A serial in seven parts. Part Seven: The Importance of John Muir*

Source: The life and contributions of John Muir. Biography. A part of the John Muir Exhibit by the Sierra Club John Muir Education Project.<sup>1</sup>



If you define a great American as one who helps change the direction of this country toward more socially desirable goals, then John Muir was as great an American as all but a handful of U.S. Presidents.

When Muir began his conservation career in the late 1880's, America was committed to a totally devastating attack on the environment. When Muir died in 1914, the nation was committed in spirit, if not always in fact, to the wise use of its natural resources. That in a nutshell, is his greatness.

Muir did not invent conservation any more than Henry Ford invented the automobile, but as Ford popularized a radically new concept in transportation, Muir popularized a radically new concept in American land use.

Gifford Pinchot was perhaps a better forester and Asa Gray a better botanist, but it was Muir's writings that moved presidents, congressmen and plain Americans to action:

"Any fool can destroy trees. They cannot run away; and if they could, they would still be destroyed--chased and hunted down as long as fun or a dollar could be got out of their bark hides, branching horns, or magnificent bold backbones...Through all the wonderful, eventful centuries since Christ's time--and long before that--God has cared for these trees...but he cannot save them from fools--only Uncle Sam can do that."

The above quote is from Muir's *American Forests*, which supported President Cleveland's acts to establish 13 Forest Reserves totaling more than 21 million acres and the creation of what was to become the U.S. Forest Service.

Muir had a direct hand in the establishment of Yosemite (1890), Sequoia (1890), Mount Rainier (1899), Petrified Forest (1906) and Grand Canyon (1908) National Parks.

In 1892, he helped found and was president for life of the Sierra Club, that private watchdog of the environment.

Muir was on personal terms with three presidents and many writers and philosophers of the time, but it was with Theodore Roosevelt that Muir exerted his greatest influence. After a 1903 meeting with Muir at Yosemite, Roosevelt embarked on a course of action that established 148

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<sup>1</sup>[http://vault.sierraclub.org/john\\_muir\\_exhibit/john\\_muir\\_national\\_historic\\_site/the\\_importance\\_of\\_john\\_muir.aspx](http://vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/john_muir_national_historic_site/the_importance_of_john_muir.aspx)

million acres of National Forest, 5 National Parks and 23 National Monuments during his term of office.

### **June 2016: President Obama and Sierra Club President Aaron Mair Visit Yosemite**

President Barack Obama's visit to Yosemite to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Parks System followed in the tradition of Presidents Roosevelt and Cleveland by adding 20 new sites under the protection of the National Park Service. In total President Obama had as of June 2016 protected 260 million new acres and proposed change to the Regional Haze Rules to make the air in national parks and wilderness areas cleaner.<sup>2</sup>



Muir's Philosophy Continues  
*Photo: Marta Stoepker*

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sierraclub.org/lay-of-the-land/2016/06/then-and-now-celebrating-legacy-yosemite-national-park>

# POETRY

## Winter Reverie

A calming covering of snow,  
And it's a quieter, slower world I know.  
If I tire of no human company but my own,  
It's harder to relieve time alone.

My genes cry out for warm sun on my face,  
But at best a pale glow shines on this frozen place.  
So I'm ambivalent about this hibernation,  
Of fewer social choices and more consternation.

My mettle and stamina are tested,  
Shoveling, slippery shivering walks, but overall I'm more rested.  
When nature pauses its onslaught,  
Quieter moments to savor as sought.

Mulled cider or wine before the pellet fire,  
Relaxed, reading or as the poetic muse inspires.  
Nesting in my cozy cottage, canine children cuddling,  
Homey habits and hearty cooking, when not huddling.

While I burn my candle at both ends spring through fall,  
I've made my peace with winter,  
For its meditative, sedentary hours,  
That recharge when they call.

*M. Renee Taylor*





## The Q is brought to you by:

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**Heather Fronczek**, Graphic Designer  
**Dennis Desmarais**, IT  
**John Calandrelli**, Website, Program Manager

## 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!**

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Solar energy lifts life on earth



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

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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**  
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San Francisco, CA 94105  
[gift.planning@sierraclub.org](mailto:gift.planning@sierraclub.org)  
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... Your lasting legacy...

## CREATE YOUR LEGACY

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