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## Georgia Chapter

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Footnotes Issue #65: September 28, 2012

### Bullish on Solar? Not Quite Yet...

On Wednesday, Georgia Power [filed plans](#) with the Public Service Commission (PSC) to develop 210 megawatts (MW) of solar power in the next three years, enough to power about 16,500 homes. **This is four times more solar capacity than the last "big deal" of 50 megawatts they announced. It is substantial progress and Sierra Club applauds it.** To put Georgia Power's announcement in context, Georgia currently has about 17 MW of solar installed, according to state tax credit data. Last year, the Public Service Commission added an additional 50 MW, meaning that 210 MW more is a significant step in the right direction. However, in the first half of 2012 alone, New Jersey added 277 MW. New Jersey is not adjacent to the Sunshine State. **A group called the Georgia Solar Utility is proposing to add 2,000 MW in Georgia.**



Public Service Commissioner Chuck Eaton, up for re-election in November, scooped the announcement by publishing an [OpEd in the Savannah Morning News](#) on Tuesday. Eaton, according to the most recent polls, is running neck and neck with his challenger Steve Oppenheimer. The idea is that Eaton will prove to voters that he is capable of moving our energy mix into the 21st century without harming ratepayers, and voters will in turn re-elect him.

This is an especially important election, because Georgia Power will be filing their next Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) in January. This plan will detail how the company plans to meet expected demand for the next 20 years. Many of Georgia's aging coal-fired power plant fleet will be retired in coming years, and the question before the Public Service Commission will be whether those retiring plants will be replaced primarily with natural gas, or by smart investments in clean energy and energy efficiency, doubling down on plans like the one announced this week.

While natural gas seems like the lesser of two evils -- it is at historically low costs and releases less carbon dioxide than coal -- it is still a fossil fuel, and the fracking process that has driven down prices poses huge risks to the climate and to community water supplies across the east coast.

We have the opportunity to demand best-in-class energy efficiency and a true commitment to renewables, and we can do it with a Public Service Commission that takes the long view.

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### Quick Links



In other Wednesday afternoon renewable energy news, our Beyond Coal Campaign published an Action Alert targeting Governor Nathan Deal's office for their failure to pursue the development of Georgia's significant clean offshore wind energy resources, by not participating in the Department of Interior's Smart from the Start program.

Even though Georgia has the fourth largest potential to develop offshore wind energy, Governor Deal is one of only two Governors from the Atlantic Coast states that is not currently working to streamline permitting and leasing that would attract wind energy jobs to our state.

**Please take a moment to send an email to Governor Deal and his staff saying "Wind Works for Georgia Jobs" and to share/post the action alerts on social media.**

## Sierra Club Meetings

**Smart Energy Team Meeting**, Monday, October 1, 7:00 p.m.  
Seth Gunning - Staff, [seth.gunning@sierraclub.org](mailto:seth.gunning@sierraclub.org)

**Wildlands Committee Meeting**, Tuesday, October 16, 7:00 p.m.  
Mike Murdock - Chair, [murdock1@mindspring.com](mailto:murdock1@mindspring.com)

**RAIL**, Monday, October 22, 7:00 p.m.  
David Emory - Chair, [david.emory@gmail.com](mailto:david.emory@gmail.com)

**Atlanta Inner City Outings (ICO)**, Tuesday, October 23, 7:30 p.m.  
Naomi Bock - Chair, [atlantaico@gmail.com](mailto:atlantaico@gmail.com)

**Fundraising Committee**, Wednesday, October 24, 7:00 p.m.  
Clay Tucker - Chair, [tuckerwf12@aol.com](mailto:tuckerwf12@aol.com)

## Upcoming Events

### October 3 – Presidential Debate: Make Climate Change a Priority

Millions of voters will get their information about our presidential candidates by watching televised debates this fall. If moderator Jim Lehrer, whose show, the PBS NewsHour, has objectively and factually covered climate change, asks the candidates about the issue, millions of viewers will have a real chance to hear a substantive discussion about climate change on the national stage. **Will you add your name to the list to make sure climate change is a priority at the debate?**

**the debate?**



### October 7 - Atlanta Streets Alive

Join thousands of fellow Atlanta residents from 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., as we take over 5 miles of car-free public space. It's your time to ride, walk, run, skip, cartwheel, skate or sing your way down North Highland Avenue, Virginia

Avenue and the Atlanta BeltLine Eastside Trail. To join the Great Atlanta Halloween Bicycle Parade, lineup at Corley Street and Highland (next to P'Cheens and Highland Bakery). We'll have kickoff announcements at 1:50pm and the Parade will roll right at 2:00 p.m.!



### October 13 - Ogeechee River Orchestra Premiere

Nicole Chamberlain will perform her piece "Ogeechee" which was inspired by the Ogeechee River and the surrounding marshlands. at Georgia Symphony Orchestra at Zion Baptist Church Zion Baptist Church, Marietta at 4:00 p.m. Visit her [web page](#) for more details.

### October 20 – Hike at Dobbins Mountain (near Cartersville)



Join expert botanist Jim Allison for a rare opportunity to see one of the largest remaining populations of Georgia aster. After viewing the Georgia asters, the group will hike through the adjacent hardwood forest in the "saddle" between the unusual double ridges of Dobbins Mountain, which is protected by a conservation easement that was designated as a wildlife refuge and administered by the City of Euahlee.

[Click here attend the hike](#), space is limited.

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