



THE ENGAGED SIERRAN

DRASTIC CHANGES TO SUSTAINABLE ENERGY PROGRAMS PROPOSED

The successful Renewable Portfolio Standard program that encourages new renewable energy projects, like wind, biomass, in-state small-scale hydro and solar, is on the chopping block. Two bills are scheduled for this week at the State House in Representatives Hall on Tuesday Jan 27 starting at 10 a.m. and lasting until about 12 p.m.

Major Issues:

HB143: This bill tries to equalize things that are not the same. First, it includes any and all hydroelectric sources -- including projects like Northern Pass, which is currently not allowed because it is from a foreign country and it is so large -- and dams that do not have protections for wildlife. The whole point of expanding renewable sources is to lower air pollution and shift away from fossil fuels so as to protect our environment. This bill would fail on both counts. [Access HB143.](#)

HB234: This bill eliminates the stimulus for fuel diversity by lowering the priority of sources and devaluing them. It sets overall goals for all sources to meet; in effect, this bill would allow one major project, like Northern Pass, to take all of the resources reserved for all. Secondly, if the utility does not meet the standard, the alternative compliance is set the same for all sources. Again this proposal lacks parity -- 20 solar panels on a house should not compete against a project like Northern Pass. [Access HB234.](#)

Over the past 20 years NH has made progress with the Renewable Portfolio Standard, such as increasing local renewable energy, reducing air pollution and greenhouse gases, diversifying energy sources, increasing sustainability and shifting away from fossil fuels. Local energy installers, state agencies, and energy experts warn that these destructive bills are the beginning of the end for future local energy projects as well as the environmental, jobs and economic benefits that come with it.

Please read the bills and come to the hearings on Tuesday, January 27, at the Representatives Hall in the State House at 10 a.m. For directions, more information, or just to let us know you are coming, contact Catherine Corkery, catherine.corkery@sierraclub.org or (603) 224-8222.

Mount Sunapee Highlands Protection Threatened

The Mount Sunapee Highlands continues to need defense against a significant threat. Okemo/Mount Sunapee Resort, which manages the state-owned ski area at Mount Sunapee State Park, wants State approval for a major expansion. If approved, development will breach the park's border and extend ski and resort infrastructure westward into Goshen onto private land owned by the resort operator.

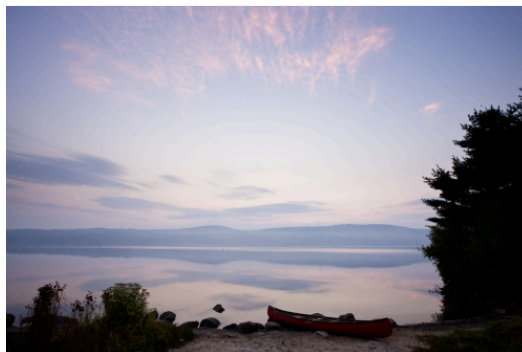
The Mount Sunapee Highlands and the west bowl are part of the Quabbin to Cardigan Initiative, a collaborative effort to conserve a north-south corridor extending from central Massachusetts to the White Mountains. State agencies have identified this area as "Priority Landscape" because it is one of the largest remaining areas of intact, interconnected and ecologically significant forest in central New England providing important benefits, both economic and environmental.

Land protection on the mountain began in the early 1900s when preservationist Herbert Welsh, a summer resident of Sunapee, led efforts to protect Mount Sunapee's scenic beauty and ancient forest for public benefit.

"Now, it is our turn. We must embrace this challenge and help preserve what Herbert Welsh and Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests worked so hard to protect," said Jolyon Johnson, president of Friends of Mount Sunapee.

Read the [Concord Monitor editorial](#) on this issue

For more information, visit [Friends of Mount Sunapee](#) or email info@FriendsofMountSunapee.org



WE WANT YOU! TO RUN FOR THE NHSC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Interested in being involved in one of the oldest environmental organizations in America? This March, four of the nine seats on the Sierra Club New Hampshire Chapter's Executive Committee are up for election to a two-year term; two will be vacant without your leadership.

What is the Executive Committee? Governance of the New Hampshire Chapter of the Sierra Club is provided by a nine-member governing board of active Sierra Club members, called the Executive Committee, or ExCom. This board is responsible for managing staff, ensuring that the organization is financially sound, and taking positions on issues affecting our region.

If you're interested in running for the Chapter ExCom, contact us at NHSC603@gmail.com by February 23, 2015. You'll be asked to submit a brief summary of your interest and qualifications. We're looking forward to hearing from you!

ALASKAN NATIVE TO SPEAK IN UPPER VALLEY AREA

David Solomon, a Gwich'in Athabaskan native from Alaska will be visiting the Upper Valley area of New Hampshire and Vermont from Feb 15-22, 2015.

Learn about village life above the Arctic Circle and, his people's history and struggles to protect "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins" – the Coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling. The Gwich'in are the northernmost Indian Nation living in fifteen small villages scattered across a vast area extending from northeast Alaska in the U.S. to the northern Yukon and Northwest Territories in Canada. Sponsored by Alaska Wilderness League and the Upper Valley Sierra Club.



Events are scheduled for Hanover, NH and Norwich, VT on February 15 and 17, respectively, as well as several other Vermont locations throughout the week. [Open the flyer](#) for more information.

VOLUNTEER NIGHT!

Tuesday, February 10 ~ 5:30-7 p.m.
Sierra Club Office, 40 North Main Street, Concord

Get the scoop on legislative bills and the latest news on the PSNH divestiture deal at NHSC's Volunteer Night. We are also looking for help to write letters, make phone calls and attending hearings at the State House. Monthly Volunteer Nights will be scheduled for the second Tuesday of every month.

For information and directions, contact Catherine Corkery, catherine.corkery@sierraclub.org or call (603) 224-8222.

SAVE THE PLANET & SOME GREEN.
JOIN AND ENJOY NEW MEMBER BENEFITS



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