

Mountain State Sierran

Volume 41, Number 4

westvirginia.sierraclub.org

July/August 2015

Sen. Capito attempts to block EPA's Clean Power Plan; Congressman McKinley asks Gov. Tomblin to ignore state responsibilities

Jim Kotcon

ARENA?

WV Senator Shelley Moore Capito last month introduced the "Affordable Reliable Energy Now Act" (ARENA). But the bill has nothing to do with affordability or reliability; it is solely a blatant attack to stop EPA action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

EPA's Clean Power Plan would save thousands of lives, create tens of thousands of clean energy jobs, and reduce electricity bills for Americans, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation by 30 percent nationwide. States would have a great deal of flexibility to design implementation plans tailored to their specific needs and resources. Most importantly, the Clean Power Plan would help lessen the adverse impacts of climate change. These impacts cost nearly \$140 billion in 2012, with most of the burden falling on taxpayers.

But Capito's bill would block EPA air pollution standards for both new and existing power plants, require EPA to develop the implementation plans for each of the 50 different states, and then allows governors of individual states to "opt out" of those standards. It is the most comprehensive rollback of air pollution laws since the Clean Air Act was adopted.

One by one, the major obstacles and arguments against climate action are falling. A recent survey showed that 43 percent of Republicans and 80 percent of Democrats support setting limits on carbon emissions from power plants. A major agreement between the U.S. and China puts that country on a path to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and a major treaty with other nations is expected from meetings in Paris later this year. International oil companies in Europe have acknowledged the need for a cap on fossil fuel emissions (although U.S. firms have not yet seen the light). Costs for renewable energy are now competitive with fossil fuels in much of the U.S., and energy efficiency remains the cheapest, safest, cleanest and fastest approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

McKinley Letter

But the fossil fuel industry still has powerful allies in Congress. Congressman David McKinley (R-WV), following up on an effort by Senate Majority leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), has sent a letter to Governor Earl Ray Tomblin, asking that West Virginia not submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) as would be required under EPA's Clean Power Plan. The letter was co-signed by representatives Alex

Mooney and Evan Jenkins. In the absence of a SIP, EPA would impose a federal implementation plan, but it almost certainly would not offer the flexibility and cost savings of a West Virginia-designed SIP.

It seems almost certain that Gov. Tomblin will continue to oppose the EPA Plan in federal court, but to renege on state responsibilities in a futile attempt to delay action does not serve West Virginia well. Failure to act means delays in energy efficiency projects that save consumers money, lost jobs from new clean energy businesses, and continued health impacts from fossil fuel burning. The WV Chapter urges Gov. Tomblin to move forward with a SIP, even if he objects to the Clean Power Plan, since a SIP is almost certain to be better for West Virginia than a federal plan.

and repair the decades of environmental damage left behind by the coal industry.

Unfortunately, West Virginia's Congressional delegation has not been supportive of these efforts, with some even saying they oppose federal dollars coming to their districts to help transition away from coal!

What Should WV Do?

To comply with the Clean Power Plan, West Virginia will need to develop a SIP that includes improvements at power plants, increased development of renewable energy, and increased emphasis on consumer energy efficiency programs. The WV Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will be responsible for developing a SIP, but some of the components will require leadership and approval from other agencies such as the WV Public Service Commission and the WV Division of Energy. Gov. Tomblin will need to issue directions for these agencies to work together.

Recent actions suggest he is aware of the need to balance the interests of the fossil fuel industry with the needs of consumers, the health of citizens and the protection of the environment. When he signed a bill re-authorizing net metering in West Virginia in March, he indicated that the PSC should consider the benefits of the solar industry for consumers. The PSC in March also issued an Order directing utilities to prepare Integrated Resource Plans, and that the plans consider how the utilities will comply with EPA's Clean Power Plan.

What You Can Do

First, tell Sen. Capito to support the EPA's Clean Power Plan and that you want limits on carbon pollution.

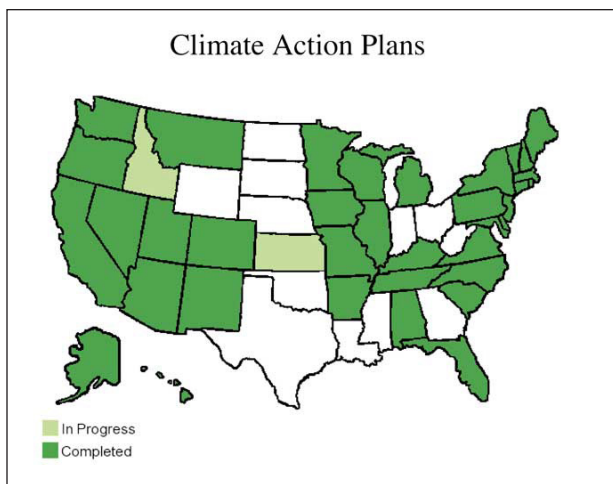
Second, tell your Congressmen that they also need to work on solutions to climate challenges and that mindless obstructionism is not acceptable. It's more important than ever that West Virginia's Congressional representatives hear from you.

Ask Gov. Tomblin to direct DEP and the PSC to develop a SIP that considers the health impacts of the fossil fuel industry on WV citizens as well as impacts to ratepayers.

Ask local political leaders to support the Power Plus Plan and to urge West Virginia's Congressional delegation to support full funding.

Finally, join the Chapter's Climate Action Team. Write letters to the editor, contact local political leaders and come to public meetings and hearings.

For details, contact Jim Kotcon, at jkotcon@gmail.com. Thanks for voicing your concerns on this critical issue.



Source: Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, 2012.

Power Plus Plan to the Rescue

Recognizing that coal communities will bear a disproportionate economic burden for reducing greenhouse gases, president Obama announced the Power Plus Plan earlier this year. The PPP offers \$55 million for job training and economic diversification in communities affected by coal declines. It reinforces federal commitments to miner health care, retirement and pension funds. It allocates \$1 billion for mine land reclamation and provides new incentives for carbon capture technologies. Together, these programs will help to transition coalfield economies



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



With your help we can clean up our water

Sierra Club Water Sentinels are the first line of defense of America's waters. We live on the water planet. However, water is a finite resource with only about 1 % of the world's water actually being available for human consumption. Water pollution & over-use are threatening both the quality & quantity of our water resources at an alarming rate.

Keep our water safe. Join Sierra Club.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club

Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____ Exp. Date ____ / ____

Signature _____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15	N/A
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy & lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine & \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to:
Sierra Club, PO Box 421041
Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041

F94QW 5700 1

or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org



Sportsmen's Heritage Act threatens Wilderness System

Editor's note: At the request of one of our members, this article was extracted from the webpage of Wilderness Watch.

ALERT: Here they go again! Your help is needed now. Two subcommittees of the House Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on May 20 on the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act (SHARE), HR 2406, introduced by Rep. Robert Wittman (R-VA). Similar to bills that passed the House during the last two Congresses, this new bill would effectively repeal the 1964 Wilderness Act and threaten all Wildernesses in the nation.

This Sportsmen's Bill attacks Wilderness in two primary ways. Sec. 603(f) allows virtually unlimited habitat manipulation and development in Wildernesses — including temporary road construction, bulldozer use, etc. — if at all remotely connected to hunting, fishing, shooting or fish and wildlife management. This sweeping authority would include such things as logging, chaining or burning (ostensibly to benefit wildlife or

improve hunting); construction of dams, temporary roads or cabins (if at all connected with fisheries or wildlife management); ATV, truck or helicopter traffic (if used by wildlife or fisheries managers), etc.

This language would, in effect, repeal the Wilderness Act's current prohibitions on these activities. It would also exempt them from environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Thus, the public would not have the opportunity to review or comment on them, nor would their disastrous environmental consequences be studied.

The second major way this bill would seriously weaken Wildernesses is found in Sec. 1301, which would exempt commercial filming from the Act's fundamental prohibition on commercial enterprise in Wilderness. The exemption for commercial filming is being proposed primarily at the behest of the growing hunting-show industry, but other segments of the film industry and some commercial outfitters are promoting the bill, too.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Stopping the so-called Sportsmen's Act has to be at the top of every Wilderness advocate's agenda. Please write to your member of the U.S. House of Representatives as soon as possible, and ask her or him to oppose the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act (SHARE), HR 2406. Mention the wilderness-damaging provisions as the main reason for opposing this bill. Also send your letter (emails or snail mail) to Rep. Raul Grijalva, the lead Democrat on the Natural Resources Committee so he also knows of your opposition.

To email your House member, visit house.gov/representatives/find. Enter your zip code to find your House member, then click on the "Contact Me" link (the "envelope" icon) to take you to your member's email form. To send an email to Rep. Grijalva, use this email form: <http://democrats.naturalresources.house.gov/contact-us>.

Chapter Retreat at Camp Horseshoe, July 31-Aug. 2

The West Virginia Chapter will hold a Chapter Retreat from Friday afternoon, July 31, through Sunday afternoon, Aug. 2, at YMCA Camp Horseshoe, in the Monongahela National Forest near Lead Mine, St. George and Thomas.

The retreat is for leaders and potential leaders, activists and potential activists, members old and new, the curious and others. In short, we think it's for you.

Come learn about your local Sierra Club, help chart future directions on key issues, plan how to engage our members more fully, attend workshops and the Chapter Awards ceremony, and just have fun with others who share your interest and concern for the future of our state.

Lodging and meals at the camp are provided at no charge, as the Chapter is subsidizing those costs. We will meet in a modern building with interior bathrooms and wireless internet. A refrigerator will be available. Sleeping arrangements are dorm style, so you need to bring your own bedding and towel. Meals will be in the camp dining hall, with vegetarian options.

The program is still being developed, but you can register to attend by contacting Liz Wiles, at Liz.Wiles@comcast.net, 304-212-4855, or Sally Wilts, at sallywilts@yahoo.com, 304-379-7567.

WV Interfaith Power and Light responds to climate change

Laura Yokochi

Climbing a very tall ladder to screw LED light bulbs into chandeliers hanging from a vaulted church ceiling can be a profoundly spiritual act. "Small change adds up," says Rose Edington.

Rose and her husband, Mel Hoover, former pastors of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Charleston, believe that small acts such as this foster awareness and "respect for the interdependent web of life." Their church is a member of West Virginia Interfaith Power and Light, one of the newest groups to join the national organization.

Interfaith Power and Light began with a California Episcopal Church in 1998 as a response to global warming, and it has now expanded to 40 states and various religious groups. Its mission is "to be faithful stewards of Creation by responding to global warming through energy conservation, efficiency and renewability."

The West Virginia group (WVIPL) recently partnered with Appalachian Power Company (APCO, a subsidiary of American Electric Power) to offer free home-energy audits to members of nonprofits, as well as religious congregations.

Emmett Pepper, a WVIPL Steering Committee member, said this program was ordered by the Public Service Commission as part of a settlement in the Mitchell Power Plant transfer. For each audit done, the sponsoring congregation or nonprofit will receive a \$10 credit toward energy efficiency upgrades. To make it even more interesting, at the end of the year the group that has completed the most audits will receive a \$10,000 award to complete further energy efficiency measures. The contest begins July 1.

Unfortunately, those served by First Energy and its subsidiaries are not eligible. Perhaps, if more communities of faith join WVIPL, similar programs could be instituted. Pepper said, "We need more people involved." Right now, the majority of active congregations are in the Charleston area, but those in other parts of the state are encouraged to join.

To learn more about WVIPL, visit interfaithpowerandlight.org or go to WVIPL on Facebook.

For information about the APCO energy audits, contact Emmett Pepper, at emmett@eewv.org or 304-346-5891.

Solar Open House in Harrison County

Yes, it is possible to generate solar power in the rural hills of West Virginia! To see a demonstration, the public is invited to an open house showcasing an array of working solar panels, from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, July 12, at 2127 Big Elk Road, in Wallace, WV. Come to learn more about solar power, net metering and energy efficiency.

Info or directions: Autumn Long, 304-796-4677.

DONATE TODAY



Help your Chapter stay strong for the hard work we do to keep West Virginia wild and wonderful. Make a quick and easy donation from the Chapter's home page: westvirginia.sierraclub.org

Book Review

The Monkey's Voyage

by Alan de Queiroz

Review by Richard Mier, Martinsburg

It really began with Darwin's revolutionary notion of how species rise. Before, as long as everyone believed that each species had been placed in its niche by The Almighty, it was easier. But then, after Darwin, the question became, "Well, how did all those species get to be where they ended up?" And in particular, if they ended up in a spot that was difficult to reach, like Hawaii, out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, "How on earth did that happen?"

So begins the story, really a story of a contest of ideas, which Alan de Queiroz tells so well in his new book, "The Monkey's Voyage." The contestants are, on the one hand, those who believe that fragmentation of the range of a single species results in the formation of two species, or maybe more. The classic example of this process, termed vicariance, occurred at the time the supercontinent Gondwana became, eventually, Africa, Antarctica, Australia, India, South America and Zealandia (including New Zealand, New Caledonia and assorted other little places). That process began about 160 million years ago. The time scale here is important, so keep it in mind. When continental drift became accepted as scientific fact, it made these people really happy.

On the other hand were the dispersalists, and Darwin was their captain. Certainly, normal dispersal was accepted as a garden-variety explanation for speciation: Members of a species traipse far and wide, settling in perhaps to a new environmental niche, with mutations, changing enough over time to become a new species. No argument from anyone that this occurs regularly. What the dispersalists sought to explain, however, was long-distance dispersion. How Hawaii's varied biota (more than 8,000 species) got there. Or New Zealand, or the Falklands. And their explanation, one that stuck in the craw of the vicariance team: They swam.

This fight was not a completely polite affair. Those from one team didn't seem to like those from the other. They called each other names, and apparently still do. They were fervent in their beliefs. Zealots.

I won't tell you who won (though it's worth mentioning that most species now endemic to New Zealand are much younger than 160 million years old), but de Queiroz calls the play-by-play here with great panache. He's got a dog in this fight and seems fervent, too, but also fair. The game involves biology but also geography, paleontology, biochemistry and the history of scientific revolutions, and he puts it together seamlessly.

You may have to be a little geeky to like this book because the author doesn't talk — or write — down to you. He expects the reader to be paying attention. It's intended for a general audience, but he goes into some detail.

Sometimes, and I'm not ashamed to admit this, I had to read a paragraph twice. But, once read, you'll know a lot about an important question you perhaps never thought to ask, or at least never thought of as important: How did we all (and I'm speaking in all modesty here about all life on earth) get to be where we are, and why do we like it that way?

A rant that should be published in the *New York Times* or *Washington Post*

Beth Little

Here's my challenge to folks who live in nice urban or suburban neighborhoods: If you had to arrange to deal with your trash, your energy generation and the waste disposal from generating that energy — within your own community — how would you do it?

You see, there are people devising solutions for reusing and recycling waste, not just reducing it — solutions that confine the objectionable odors and appearance so it could happen virtually next door. There are sources of energy available now that do not emit pollutants and can be disbursed within a neighborhood — solar panels on rooftops, new versions of windmills that can also be on rooftops, and ways to reduce consumption through energy efficiency. These localized solutions would be particularly effective for industrial facilities such as factories, shopping centers and skyscrapers.

As it is now, waste dumps are sited in poor neighborhoods or rural areas. Energy production, from fossil fuels through mining and fracking, to power plants, pipelines and other transportation, and finally to disposal of waste, is foisted on rural areas where relatively few people live, or on uninhabited areas. But, though few and spread out, rural residents are still people who don't want to breathe, drink, hear or see waste dumps, coal mines, gas wells, compression stations, pipelines, power plants, sludge ponds or other toxic installations any more than residents of Chevy Chase or Beverly Hills. And the uninhabited areas contain our public lands and wild areas that are gradually being contaminated and sacrificed. Are we going to fill them up completely? How much is enough?

While all this happens out of sight of the majority of the population, it appears that "out of sight" means "out of mind." But it still

affects the planet, so it will eventually affect everyone. And it has a good start. Fossil fuel energy production is contributing to global warming. It is also polluting the soil and water where our food comes from, i.e., rural farming areas, grazing lands and the ocean. Cancer rates are increasing while sperm counts are decreasing. Autism, asthma and other respiratory ailments, and allergies — all conditions linked to environmental toxins — are increasing. All kinds of funding is going into finding cures for these chronic diseases — more drugs and medical procedures — but virtually nothing is going into prevention, into eliminating the cause.

Anybody who is paying attention can see this. You can Google government statistics if you want proof. So why isn't anything being done? Why are our elected officials and government agencies allowing this? Even promoting it?

When you investigate any environmental degradation situation, you find that money is involved. Huge profits are being made, and it is cheaper to pollute than to clean up after yourself — cheaper for the polluter that is, and profitable for the politician receiving large donations. For humanity as a whole, and particularly the people whose health is affected, it is a lot more expensive. For future generations, the ultimate price our children and grandchildren will pay is going to be catastrophic if we continue as we are.

But polluters are concerned with short-term profits. They know that people who live in poor and rural areas do not have the clout to turn the tide. We fight and fight and fight each new threat to our homes and our health, and we win some battles; but until the people who are sending us their waste or getting their energy from our backyards realize that we are all in this together and join us in demanding change, the relentless poisoning of the planet will continue.

Energy Efficiency Campaign organizer reflects on past role, looks to future

Danny Chiotos

I believe in the power of organized people to make change in our communities.

As I look back on my two and a half years under contract with the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign, I find so much evidence to support this simple belief. Organized people in Shepherdstown made a community solar project on their church happen. Organized people in Harrison County made an energy audit of their county commission's buildings happen. Organized people statewide were able to get FirstEnergy to double their energy efficiency goals. Organized people now make up the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club's Energy Efficiency Campaign, and I am proud to have been a part of it.

I am naturally skeptical of "mobilization" style campaigns. While I think it is important to show our numbers, I also believe it is far too easy for decision makers to push aside a stack of letters generated by action alerts unless those letters are backed up

by organized people holding the decision makers accountable.

I think that, all too frequently, big national organizations pride themselves on the size of stacks they deliver and the number of members in their databases. Paid staff can boast of thousands, or hundreds of thousands, of comments, even when they have no organized people-power to speak of. A resident of Anytown, USA, does not build a relationship with a computer screen, and an organization does not build a relationship with a database. I think the power of movements and organizations really comes from the people who dedicate themselves to making change and building organizations.

The pride that I find in my work with the Sierra Club comes from the development of the Energy Efficiency Campaign Team's leadership. It is the growing number of dedicated leaders who are able to tap into the numbers of the Sierra Club, who have the potential to make big change real. Two years ago, the Chapter's Energy Efficiency

Campaign was an idea, and one year ago, the Chapter's Energy Efficiency Campaign was just beginning to attract the much-needed volunteer attention.

Today, the campaign has the leadership of talented volunteers in Jefferson, Berkeley, Preston, Monongalia, Marion, Harrison and Greenbrier counties. These volunteers have filled specific leadership roles in areas from policy to local community to media.

Although the campaign has grown slowly, it is now picking up steam as these volunteers hold one-on-one conversations with others in their communities to "build out" our campaign. New volunteers connecting with their local communities to ensure that energy savings are implemented and in the policy arena to ensure we win better efficiency policies show the greatest promise in the growth of our campaign.

The next step in my career has me starting work with Mosaic, in Frederick, Md. I am excited about it. Mosaic Power is the demand-response company that installs devices on electric hot water heaters to

prevent them from flipping on at times of peak demand.

It's a pretty simple device that, when deployed in mass, can have a big impact on preventing big peaks in power demand and help cut the need to ramp up dirty, polluting power generation. These are the devices that Solar Holler used to finance the solar systems at the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church and the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library.

My job will be to get these devices deployed in mass to apartment, affordable and multi-family housing so more electric water heaters are a part of cutting peak demand for electricity and a part of a smarter grid.

As I transition to a volunteer role with the Energy Efficiency Campaign, I'm excited to work with other volunteers as their peer rather than paid staff. I am excited about my new role in the world and plan to keep up with the West Virginia Chapter.

Chapter Awards Announced To be presented Aug. 1, at Chapter Retreat

Each year, our Chapter Awards Committee selects a few individuals worthy of honoring for their contributions to our efforts of making West Virginia a more sustainable and healthful place to live while also preserving wild places for future generations to enjoy.

Gail Anderson, a local clay artist, has created the unique awards given for the past several years. Each ceramic plate is embellished with the award designation and the awardee's name, which surround the central Sierra Club logo.

In 2014, we created new award designations.



Bill Howley

The **Founders Award** is given to those who have helped the Chapter further its goals of having industry respect the environment and people's health, moving away from fossil fuels and toward green energy, and regulating industries to keep the world and us safe.

For the first time, we are making a posthumous award. **Bill Howley** died an untimely death in an automobile accident this past spring. Bill was a leading consumer advocate on energy issues. He was an organizer of the successful fight against the PATH transmission line, which would have increased electric costs for ratepayers. He founded The Power Line, a widely read online information source about the electricity industry and renewable energy issues. During and after the 2014 water contamination crisis in Charleston, Bill contributed his expertise and strategy skills to help organize citizens demanding reform.

The **Mountain Laurel Award** is for volunteer Chapter members who contribute to the Chapter's success. Although there are many individuals who fit this description, we limited the number of awards to make each more meaningful.

This year we are honoring **Ann Devine-King**, of Morgantown, for her exceptional work as an outings leader for eight years and her leadership of the Adopt-a-Trail project in Coopers Rock State Forest for the past five years.

A second Mountain Laurel Award goes to **Laura Yokochi**, of Salem. Laura is the Leader of the Energy Efficiency Campaign Team and has been effective in getting her county to conduct energy audits of county buildings and in engaging a rural electric cooperative to consider energy efficiency measures for their customers. She continues to lead a large number of volunteers in their efforts to create opportunities for energy efficiency to be implemented throughout the state.



Ann Devine-King



Laura Yokochi

The awards will be presented at a 7 p.m. ceremony on Aug. 1, at the Chapter Retreat at Camp Horseshoe.

The Biggest Week in Birding

As you may have read in my past articles, a few years ago I was bitten by the "birding bug." Yes, bird watching is a highly contagious activity, and its only cure is to go outdoors and go birding.

I mainly do my bird watching in West Virginia and eastern Ohio. Our beautiful state offers some great birding opportunities, especially in the spring and fall. Winter along the Ohio River has also given me many hours of enjoyment watching waterfowl and eagles. It is positively thrilling to observe, firsthand, eagles tending to their young in their massive nests.

Just one state over in Ohio is one of the country's most outstanding meccas for birding. This spring, I had a rare lifetime opportunity to go with several friends in the WV Master Naturalists to observe birds in a major migratory flyway. It was a three-day trip to the "Biggest Week in Birding."

This event takes place each year at Magee Marsh, Metzger Marsh and Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge during the second week of May. These adjoining areas are located along the shore of Lake Erie between Sandusky and Toledo, Ohio. Magee and Metzger are managed by the State of Ohio, and Ottawa, by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Canaan Valley and Mid-Ohio Valley Chapters of the Master Naturalists organized the trip. When I was invited to go, I felt like a baseball player being called up from the minors to play in the World Series. You may ask, why the excitement? Regardless of which poll or list you look at, this area consistently ranks in the top 10 birding spots in the world. Yes, in the world, not just the U.S.

The reason this area ranks so high is because it is right smack dab in the middle of a major migratory flyway for numerous species. "Numerous" seems like an understatement now that I have seen it with my own eyes. This is the last stop before most birds fly across Lake Erie into Canada. They rest in the area for a short time, and then fuel up before making the more than 12-mile flight across the lake. How incredible that such tiny creatures possess the physical capability to accomplish such an amazing feat, not to mention the whole flight there from as far away as South America.

On my first day there, I knew immediately I was in a special place. As we were driving into Magee Marsh, a Bald Eagle flew directly over my truck. It wasn't more than 30 feet overhead. I can't tell you how excited I was. In the three days we were there, we saw more than 20 Bald Eagles. We joked and said we'd seen more Bald Eagles than Turkey Vultures.

As we pulled into the parking area, we saw hundreds of parking spots — more like a parking lot for a sporting event than a nature park. Fortunately, we got there early enough to beat the large crowds that would soon appear.

As we walked the boardwalk, we saw so many different species of warblers, and many were extremely close to us. Some were so close that I didn't need to use binoculars to get awesome looks at them. What was also incredible was that the birds didn't seem the least bit shy either.

Some of the warbler highlights for me were: Bay-breasted, Palm, Prothonotary, Tennessee, Cape May and Blackpoll. Other highlights were the Philadelphia Vireo, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Eastern Screech Owl and Baltimore Orioles. What a spectacular first day!

The second day was concentrated on Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge and Metzger Marsh, which are known for their shore birds, waterfowl, seabirds and raptors. To tour these areas, we drove, stopping along the way at the many pull-off areas to observed large numbers of Great Egrets, Great Blue Herons, Dunlins, Trumpeter Swans, and various species of sandpipers, gulls and terns. We saw an eagle's nest that had been taken over by a family of Great-horned Owls. It was quite a lesson to me that the Bald Eagle isn't the top of the food chain in the raptor world.

As we drove and observed these birds in their wild habitat, it made me appreciate the efforts of the state, federal and volunteer organizations that work tirelessly to keep places such as these protected all over the U.S.

On the third and final day, our group went back to Magee Marsh to walk the boardwalk, see more warblers and reflect on the past days of intense birding. As a group, we saw more than 150 bird species and I personally added 23 birds to my own "life list."

Overall, it was an awesome and exciting trip that I will never forget. In addition to all of the birds and great nature lessons, our group had a lot of fun and a great time just being together. This is definitely an outing I would recommend to any nature lover.

I challenge you to look for ways to enjoy your passion for the outdoors. Please take a look at one of our many outings. They are created for all skill levels, and we offer something for lots of different interest areas (hiking, biking, canoeing, nature walks, workshops, service projects, etc.). The outings are a great way to meet up with old friends, meet new ones and fellowship with like-minded people. Our outings are open to members and non-members, so invite your friends to join you.

If you are interested in participating in an outing or interested in becoming an outings leader, please feel free to contact me or one of our many outstanding outings leaders.

"The mountains are calling, and I must go." — John Muir

Take to the Outdoors!

Please contact the Editor for submission guidelines or advertising rates. Contributions to the newsletter may be sent to the Editor at:

celliot2@comcast.net

414 Tyrone Avery Rd
Morgantown, WV 26508

**Deadline for
September/October issue
August 7**

Opinions expressed in the *Mountain State Sierran* are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Sierra Club. This newsletter is published bimonthly by the WV Chapter of the Sierra Club and distributed to all paid members.



Like us on Facebook to get more up-to-date information about our "doings."

**Sierra Club West Virginia
Mon Group of the WV Sierra Club
WVSC Marcellus Shale Campaign**

Outings — Summer

Sat, Jul 11

Workshops: Wetlands / Aquatic Habitats, Ohio River Islands NWR

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on Wetlands and Aquatic Habitats at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshops are free of charge and open to members and nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader; seating is limited. Bring bag lunch (fridge and microwave available). Workshop is from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Meet at Refuge Headquarters in Williamstown, at 8:30 a.m. Contact the leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@gmail.com

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

Sat, July 11

Adopt-A-Trail Service: Coopers Rock

rated easy — This will be the summer trail clean-up on our "adopted" Intermediate Cross-Country Ski Trail and loop for 1.25 miles at Coopers Rock State Forest. Much of the work will be cutting back vegetation, cleaning out and restoring drainage ditches/culverts and general trail clearing. We'll have time to ID trees along the way. Some moderate-intensity work will be necessary, using shovels, rakes and pruners and moving reasonably sized rocks. Anything requiring power tools or heavy lifting is deferred to the Forest Superintendent. Volunteers should wear sturdy boots and work gloves and carry water and snacks. Contact leader for more details.

Leader: Ann Devine-King, 304-594-2636, atdtking@gmail.com

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: coopersrockstateforest.com; coopersrock.org

Sat, Aug 8

Workshops: Insects & Spiders / Fish, Ohio River Islands NWR

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on Insects & Spiders and Fish at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshops are free of charge and open to members and nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader; seating is limited. Bring bag lunch (fridge and microwave available). Workshop is from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Meet at Refuge Headquarters in Williamstown, at 8:30 a.m. Contact the leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@gmail.com

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

Sat, Sep 12

Workshops: Nature Interpretation, North Bend SP

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on Nature Interpretation and Names/Classification/Dichotomous Keys at North Bend State Park. The workshops are free of charge and open to members and nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader; seating is limited. Meet at the park lodge lobby. Contact the leader for further directions, questions and start times.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@gmail.com

Nearest town: Harrisville, WV

Web info: northbendsp.com

Sat, Oct 10

Workshops: Recording & Sharing Nature / Terrestrial Habitats, Ohio River Islands NWR

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists

for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on Recording & Sharing Nature and Terrestrial Habitats at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshops are free of charge and open to members and nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader; seating is limited. Bring bag lunch (fridge and microwave available). Workshop is from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Meet at Refuge Headquarters in Williamstown, at 8:30 a.m. Contact the leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@gmail.com

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

Abbreviations Used

AMC	Appalachian Mountain Club
AT	Appalachian Trail
GWNF	George Washington National Forest
JNF	Jefferson National Forest
MG	Monongahela Group
MONF	Monongahela National Forest
NPS	National Park Service
NRA	National Recreation Area
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
PFD	Personal Flotation Device (lifejacket)
SF	State Forest
SP	State Park
SNP	Shenandoah National Park

Maryland Chapter Outings

Our neighboring chapter to the east has an active outings program, with many trips coming into West Virginia or western Maryland. These outings, by highly experienced leaders, range from easy to strenuous, and are open to everyone. Join an outing by checking out their calendar at maryland.sierraclub.org

Allegheny Group Outings

Sierra Club members in the Pittsburgh area belong to the Allegheny Group. They have a moderately active outings program as well as links to other local outdoor activities. Visit their website for an outings calendar and more details at

alleghenysc.org

Potomac Region Outings (PRO)

This is an activity section of the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter, with an extensive outings program run by leaders who live in and around the Washington, D.C., area. A calendar of activities, information and updates can be found on their website at

www.sierrapotomac.org

West Virginia Chapter Outings

For updated listings of outings sponsored by the West Virginia Chapter, check our Chapter website at

westvirginia.sierraclub.org

Suggest an Outing

If you would like to see an outing planned for a particular area of the state or if you would like to have more outings of a particular type (e.g., easy walks, birdwatching, family-friendly, etc.), please contact Outings Chair Russ Flowers, at russwvu@gmail.com or 304-482-7919.

Sierra Club Liability Policies For Chapter Outings

Sierra Club outings are open to everyone, members and non-members alike. Each outing is intended to be a wholesome, safe, and enjoyable experience in the outdoors. Participants must have suitable clothing, gear, and stamina, and are encouraged to select activities that match their individual abilities for outdoor adventures.

The Club offers a variety of outings from "easy" to "moderate" to "strenuous" that suit all activity levels. The difficulty of each outing is clearly designated in the announcement. Reservations are generally not required unless noted, but the outing leader may be contacted in advance for questions about the terrain, the difficulty and recommended gear.

Activities are normally held "rain or shine," but may be postponed at the leader's discretion for safety reasons in the event of inclement weather. Participants are reminded that all outdoor activities carry a degree of risk, and some take place in locations where professional emergency medical aid may be two or more hours away. People with health concerns should consult a physician to determine the advisability of participating in these or similar activities. The leader is responsible for the safety of all participants, and has the final authority to decide whether or not an individual may participate on a specific outing. Sierra Club safety policy requires that helmets be worn on bicycling outings, and a personal flotation device (PFD) be worn when using personal watercraft such as kayaks or canoes.

Unless noted in the announcement, Club outings are intended for adults. Children and

dogs are not normally permitted, unless an outing is so designated. Minors (under 18 years of age) must be accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian, or they must have both 1) a signed permission slip, and 2) the leader's prior consent to participate in the Club outing. Sierra Club outings officially begin and end at the trailhead.

Travel to the official starting point and back, even from an advertised meeting place, is the sole responsibility of each participant. While the Club encourages car-pooling, such arrangements are strictly between the riders and the drivers, and are not a part of the outing. Participants assume full responsibility and liability for all risks associated with such travel.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver, which can be viewed on the web at www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms or by calling 415-977-5630.

The Sierra Club does not charge for chapter outings, although payment of park entrance fees, a share of campsite rental costs, permit fees, equipment rental charges, etc. may be required from the participants. The Sierra Club practices "leave-no-trace" trail techniques, including hiking and camping on durable surfaces, minimizing campfire impacts, packing out all trash, respecting wildlife, being considerate of other visitors, and leaving the environment as it was found.

The Sierra Club's California Seller of Travel identification number is CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.



Sally Wilts takes a turn hand-churning ice cream while Jonathan Rosenbaum gives it the thumbs-up, at the annual Mon Group Ice Cream Social at Coopers Rock, on June 11.

The resulting peach ice cream was enjoyed by members and their guests at the Coopers Rock Overlook, an annual summer tradition for more than 25 years.





**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

Sierra Club
West Virginia Chapter
PO Box 4142
Morgantown, WV 26504
www.westvirginia.sierraclub.org

Change Service Requested

July/August 2015



NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 87
Clarksburg WV 26301

West Virginia Sierra Club Chapter Directory

Chapter Executive Committee

Liz Wiles ('16) Chair
304-212-4855, Liz_Wiles@comcast.net

* **Jody Mohr ('16) Vice-chair**
304-782-4019, jodynic7@hughes.net

Gary Nelson ('16)
304-258-6669, glnelson1@frontier.com

Jim Sconyers ('15)
304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com

Jim Kotcon ('15)
304-594-3322, jkotcon@wvu.edu

* Chapter Delegate to National Sierra Club

Monongahela Group ExCom

Brian Bellew ('15) Chair
304-261-2461, bbellew@mix.wvu.edu

* **John Bird ('15)**
304-864-8631, johnbird@frontier.com

Gwen Jones ('15)
304-599-5815, gwenjones23@yahoo.com

Liz Wiles ('16)
304-212-4855, Liz_Wiles@comcast.net

Amanda Stoner ('16)
304-886-3435, amstoner@mix.wvu.edu

* Mon Group Delegate to Chapter ExCom

Other Chapter Leaders

Archives / Chapter History Kathy Gregg
304-473-8124, gregg@wwvc.edu

Conservation Gary Nelson
304-258-6669, glnelson1@frontier.com

Energy Jim Kotcon
304-594-3322, jkotcon@gmail.com

Environmental Education Gwen Jones
304-599-5815, gwenjones23@yahoo.com

Marcellus Campaign Jim Sconyers
304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com, and Jody
Mohr, 304-782-4019, jodynic7@hughes.net

Membership Chuck Conner
304-927-1664, chuckrayconner@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor Candice Elliott
304-594-3322, celliot2@comcast.net

Outings Chair Russ Flowers
304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Political David Sturm
304-363-7160, davidsturm@ymail.com

Secretary Patricia Marroquin
304-838-0832, anttes@msn.com

SSC, WVU Brian Bellew
304-261-2461, bbellew@mix.wvu.edu

Treasurer Sally Wilts
304-379-7567, sallywilts@yahoo.com

Webmaster Paul Wilson
304-725-4360, pjgrunt@gmail.com

Wildlands Karen Yarnell
304-657-0812, karen.yarnell@fairmontstate.edu

Wilderness Coalition Mike Costello
304-645-0949, michael.costello@wwwild.org

To Contact CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATES

The Hon. Joe Manchin
Shelley Moore Capito
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Phone: (202) 224-3954 (JM)
(202) 224-6472 (SMC)

Fax: (202) 228-0002 (JM)
(202) 224-7665 (SMC)

White House Comments Line:
(202) 456-1111 Fax: (202) 456-2461
Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121

The Hon. David McKinley
Alex Mooney
Evan Jenkins
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Phone: (202) 225-4172 (DM)
(202) 225-2711 (AM)
(202) 225-3452 (EJ)

Favx: (202) 225-7564 (DM)
(202) 225-7856 (AM)
(202) 225-9061 (EJ)

To Contact the GOVERNOR

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin
State Capitol
Charleston, WV 25305

Dial-the-Governor:
1-888-438-2731
email: governor@wv.gov

To Contact STATE LEGISLATORS

email to WV Legislature:
cglagola@mail.wvnet.edu
(Put name of recipient under subject)

Messages for legislators can be left at:
1-877-565-3447 or 304-347-4836

Mail address:

Member, WV Senate or
House of Delegates
Bldg 1
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

website: www.legis.state.wv.us
has contact information for all state legislators.

Regional Sierra Club Staff
Environmental Justice/Beyond Coal Bill Price
304-389-8822, bill.price@sierraclub.org



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

A Will is a Way

Make a commitment to the next generation by remembering
Sierra Club in your will. Your support will help
others preserve the intricate balance of nature

Sierra Club
Gift Planning Program
85 Second St, Second Floor • San Francisco, CA 94105
(800) 932-4270 • gift.planning@sierraclub.org

For planned giving in West Virginia, contact Paul Wilson at 304-725-4360

Inside this Issue

1

Sen. Capito attempts to block EPA's Clean Power Plan; Congressman McKinley asks Gov. Tomblin to ignore state responsibilities

2

Sportsmen's Heritage Act threatens Wilderness System • WV Interfaith Power and Light responds to climate change • Solar Open House in Harrison County on July 12 • Chapter Retreat at Camp Horseshoe, July 31-Aug.2 • Membership form

3

Book Review: *The Monkey's Voyage*, by Alan de Queiroz • A rant that should be published in the *New York Times* or *Washington Post* • Energy Efficiency Campaign organizer reflects on past role, looks to future

4

Chapter awards announced: To be presented on Aug. 1 •
Perspectives on Outings: The Biggest Week in Birding

5

OUTINGS: Summer • Liability Policy for Chapter Outings

This newsletter is printed by Arrow Graphics & Printing in Westover, WV, on 100% post-consumer, recycled paper, using vegetable-oil-based inks.