



IROQUOIS MESSENGER

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Sierra Club Iroquois Group and People's Environmental Network of New York (pENNY)
Will Convene a Forum

Wednesday, May 26 from 6:00 to 9 PM

University United Methodist Church
1085 E. Genesee Street, Syracuse

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

When stormwater flows into combined sewers they may become overstressed and discharge sewage and other pollutants to local water bodies severely degrading their quality. One way to tackle this problem is to convey the overflows to regional facilities for treatment. Onondaga County decided to forego this expensive gray infrastructure method in favor of *green infrastructure*, a key component of which is to educate community members about reducing runoff from their property. Our Forum on that topic is a panel discussion, chaired by Samuel Sage, President of Atlantic States Legal Foundation (ASLF) and joined by Alex Sisler (ASLF), Matt Marco (CH2MHill), Meredith Perrault (Onondaga Environmental Institute). Learn how this challenging initiative is progressing and how to get involved.

Forum Schedule

- 5:30 — Doors open for set up by participating groups
- 6:00 — Open to the public for networking and displays
- 7:00 — Panel Discussion, Samuel Sage, Chair
- 8:00 — Question and Answer
- 8:45 — Networking and take down tables
- 9:00 — Clear building

This Environmental Forum is free and open to the public.

We invite environmental groups, individuals and companies to set up information tables, including literature and displays about their activities. Please reply by May 14, to reserve your free space.

Include the following information: Name of Organization, contact person, other persons who will attend, address, phone number, email address, and whether you need a whole table, half table or a free-standing space.

Vicki Baker: vbaker002@twcny.rr.com or 469-5347

Martha Loew: mloew@twcny.rr.com or 492-4745

By US Mail: FORUM — PO Box 182, Jamesville, NY 13078

IROQUOIS GROUP CONTACT INFO

SIERRA CLUB — IROQUOIS GROUP
PO BOX 182
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<http://newyork.sierraclub.org/iroquois>

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SUBMIT ARTICLES BY THE 15TH OF THE
PRECEDING MONTH:
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SUBJECT LINE MUST BEGIN WITH IM

SOLAR BY THE MILLIONS

A new bill seeks to add solar panels to 10 million homes over the next 10 years.

On February 4, Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Representative Steve Cohen (D-TN) announced to the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) their 10 Million Solar Roofs and 10 Million Gallons of Solar Water Heating Act of 2010, modeled on California's Million Solar Roofs initiative. This bill would encourage adding 10 million gallons of solar hot water and installing solar panels on 10 million rooftops nationwide over the next 10 years.

Since 1974 SEIA has worked with companies to make solar energy more mainstream, in part by helping to alleviate market barriers and by educating the public on the benefits of clean solar energy. SEIA President and CEO Rhone Resch said in a release: "Senator Sanders and Congressman Cohen have shown true leadership by setting a bold vision for solar installations. Passing this bill would create the world's largest market for solar energy here in the U.S. and bring with it tens of thousands of manufacturing and installation jobs in all 50 states.

The rebates provided to residential and commercial property owners that install these photovoltaic and solar hot water heating systems would help to offset substantial initial costs, the biggest barrier to widespread adaptation of solar power nationwide.

Source: <http://www.seia.org/>Solar Energy Industries Association

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ERIN SCHNEIDER

WHAT YOU MISSED

CHILI FEST

The Iroquois Annual Chili Fest is touted as, well, a chili fest and a welcome to new members. But it's more of a semi-seminar where we explore current issues about our environment, asking questions that would put the audience to sleep at our larger events. This year hydrofracking dominated our discussions. Although we non-chemists didn't necessarily understand how gas is released through fracking, we learned where to find information and that we must be alert to attempts to evade the permitting process. Search "fracking" on the web.

Thanks to Rhea and Danny for opening their lovely home to Iroquois members.

MOUNTAIN TOP REMOVAL

I was dismayed by the slide show that Dave Cooper and Laura Steepleton presented. Utterly dismayed.

If a religious fanatic flew his plane into a mountain-top on a suicide mission, blowing the top 400 feet off, blowing off trees and animals and poisoning the water, the country would be up in arms. The government would ratchet up the invasion of our privacy. Yet companies blow up the tops of mountains in West Virginia and Kentucky constantly, and government does nothing.

According to Dave, it's very difficult to organize those who suffer from MTR. They get angry with "outsiders" because the industry tells them that if MTR goes, the jobs go. So it was surprising that Dave didn't know how many jobs MTR displaces. Trumpeting that information might get locals to help stop the destruction of their communities.

Answer: MTR mines two and a half times as much coal per hour per worker as underground methods. It kills jobs as well as people and ecosystems. Search "mountain top removal" on the web.

OCC LEADS BY EXAMPLE

If you visit the OCC campus you will notice that lawn mowing has been greatly reduced to allow natural grasses and wildflowers to grow and to create a more sustainable landscape. The Whole Earth Club created two composting bins and competes in a vigorous national recycling competition called Recycle Mania. The Club also is working to eliminate bottled water on campus. Kudos to our neighbor on the hill.

STATE PARKS MAY CLOSE

Closing State Parks greatly concerns families and communities that rely on our great State Parks for recreation and pleasure. The announced possible closings have forced many families to change plans for summer vacations. If the budget passes in April and the closings are included, ironically it will be on the 40th anniversary of the first Earth Day Celebration in 1970. Closings also put a crimp on plans to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the beginning of the State Parks System this year.

BALLOT — EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2010

Vote for up to five: ___ Lisa Daly ___ Martha Loew
 ___ Linda DeStefano ___ Adina Mulliken
 ___ Rhea Jezer ___ Rich Slingerland

_____ Write-in

Mail to Sierra Club — Iroquois Group, PO Box 182, Jamesville, NY 13078, by March 30, 2010.

ExCom members with one year remaining: Tasha Cooper, Rocki Malamud, Jack Ramsden, Jenna Mayotte, Debby Shanahan, Martin Sage.

Cazenovia College presents

Sixth Annual Symposium on Energy in the 21st Century

“The Energy Highway”

Transmission, Collection & Distribution of Energy

April 16, 2010

At The Links at Erie Village, E. Syracuse, N.Y.

Dr. Rhea Jezer, Chair

Register at: www.cazenovia.edu/energy

RECEIVE THE MESSENGER ELECTRONICALLY

By summer 2011, Iroquois Group will join other Sierra Club groups and offer an electronic option for our newsletter. With this option, the Iroquois Messenger will arrive in your IN box as a pdf attached to an email. We hope that you won't print it out.

In order to prepare for electronic distribution, we need to start collecting email addresses now. Here's how to get on the emailing list:

- * Send an email to sierra.deb@verizon.net.
- * Write “Electronic Messenger” (no quotes) as the subject.
- * In the body of the message, write “Yes, I want to receive the Iroquois Messenger by email” (no quotes). Include your email address plus the name and snail mail address that's on your Messenger mailing label.

Although the Messenger doesn't use as much paper as the NY Times, printing and mailing cost money. Our share of membership dues from Sierra National has decreased, which means that we must economize. We appreciate your cooperation.

FROM THE CHAIR

Dear tree huggers,

First, an update on my backyard... The same community of cardinals seems to return each year — 15 in all. One pair nests in my front yard, so they must produce just enough to balance off the picture window and hawk loses. Or they have a size-of-clan rule.

This year the squirrels finally seem content with the leftovers on the ground — one less tree made all the difference. So why does the main feeder still empty up at top speed? The answer: In late afternoon a deer is happily munching on black oil seed! I thought they ate only prized garden plants. One callous friend suggested I invite over deer hunters, as it would make prized grain-fed meat.

Today, I decided to cut its meal short by appearing at the door. Then I noticed it had use of only three legs, so scaring it in this deep snow just did not work for me. Now, the feeder has been cleaned out again and I will have to plow through the drifts to get there. But then, I have use of all my legs.

Back to the birds... my birdhouse is designed for bluebirds but nested by wrens and cleaned out by chickadees (that seemed to be just for the challenge), and is now a winter hideout for a downy woodpecker. Seems as though our feathered friends are better at flocking with diversity than we are?

Hydrofracking news spreads on and on. Around here, there have been uncountable forums, panels, and showing of the film, *Split Estate*, in libraries, churches, theaters, art galleries and more. There have also been many in the Finger Lakes, Binghamton, Cortland, Ithaca areas. It seems like most everybody should now aware of this process and all the problems associated with it.

Check out our program for April 28 for the latest news and information as we continue to learn more about this dangerous practice.

But with all that is going on, take some time to enjoy what we try to protect.

For the earth and all its critters.

Martha Loew



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SEASONAL EVENTS

Sierra Club Indoor and Outdoor events encourage us to Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet. They are free and open to everybody. Parks may charge entry fees.

ExCom meetings — April 14, May 12, June 9 at 7:15 PM at 128 Buffington Rd., Syracuse. *Sierra Iroquois members only*, business and strategy sessions.

INDOOR EVENTS

Indoor programs are held the *fourth* Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM, at University United Methodist Church (UUMC), 1085 E. Genesee St. Park and enter on University Ave.

Updates, cancellations and information at newyork.sierraclub.org/iroquois or 492-4745.

NICOTINE BEES — MARCH 24

Nicotine Bees is a new documentary by **Kevin Hansen** on the plight of honey bees. It's not about cigarette addiction or second-hand smoke. Find out where the nicotine is and how it endangers our food supply.

Janet Allen of Habitat Gardening in CNY will host the film and moderate the question and answer period afterward.

HYDROFRACKING 202 — APRIL 28

If you've learned some basic information about hydrofracking, Jack Ramsden's presentation will help you move beyond the basics and respond to some comments by the industry spokespersons. The approach is akin to a teacher's lesson plan that we hope will stimulate a deeper discussion than at other public programs.

ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM — MAY 26

Green Infrastructure: how to avoid building a sewage treatment plant by using natural systems and citizen involvement. See page 1.

OUTDOOR EVENTS

Outdoor programs are usually on **Sundays at 2 PM** at various interesting locations. Field guides for birds, plants and trees will be available. *No RSVP necessary.*

URBAN LANDSCAPE — MARCH 14

Meet at Manley Fieldhouse at 12:45PM to take the 1:02PM Connective Corridor bus (543) downtown.

Rediscover the urban landscape of Syracuse. Instead of heading for the hills this spring, let's check out what downtown has to offer. Exact route and tour guide(s) to be announced. This will be a great opportunity to talk as we walk about some of the environmental issues facing Syracuse: I-81, urban decay, redevelopment and deconstruction... *Info: Jenna 315-299-7175.*

ERIE CANAL PARK — APRIL 11

Meet at 2:00PM in Camillus Erie Canal Park. There are over 10 miles of scenic wooded paths and walkways at this town park, nestled between Nine Mile Creek and a wooded hillside near Camillus. To learn about the aqueduct restoration project check out <http://www.eriecanal.org/9MileCreek.html>.

From Syracuse, take I-690 west to I-695 south, exit to NY-5 west. To meet at the parking lot at Sim's Store Museum, 5750 Devoe Road take Canal Park exit.

Contact Remo: 635-2508.

BEACH CLEANUP — MAY 22

On Saturday, 10 AM, we meet for the annual clean-up of Southwick Beach on the eastern shore of Lake Ontario. **Rain date, May 23.** Contact Rich: 298-3130.

From Syracuse: Take I-81 N to Pulaski exit 36. Follow Rte 13 into Pulaski. After 4 miles turn right onto Rte 3. Travel 15 miles to Southwick Beach. Turn left into the park.

Tell the gate attendant you are there for cleanup. No charge. Drive straight ahead toward the concession stand. Put the concession stand on your right and turn left down a dirt road that goes to camping sites, parallel to the shore. Park in the center of the cul-de-sac, at the end of the road. The ranger will meet us with plastic bags and instructions. Bring gloves and lunch.

HIGHLAND FOREST — JUNE 6

We'll meet at 9:45AM in Highland Forest to hike the Main Trail (8.7 miles). We'll hike for 4.5-5 hours, at a comfortable pace. This county park contains more than six square miles of rugged forest terrain. Trail information and a map: <http://onondagacountyparks.com>.

Directions from Syracuse: Take I-81 S to Exit 14. Make a left off the ramp, then left onto Route 80. Drive about 12 miles. Highland Forest entrance is on the right. Follow signs to Skyline Lodge and meet in front.

CORPORATE CHALLENGE — JUNE 22

This annual race and social event at Onondaga Lake Park is the setting of a major community service project for Iroquois Group. We collect beverage containers from boxes placed in convenient locations in the park, and prepare them for recycling. If you'd like to help out this year, please contact Lisa Daly 428-1384 by June 14.