



**SIERRA
CLUB**
Prince George's County Group
2022 Year in Review

LEADERSHIP TEAM



[Goals for 2022](#) were ambitious. Recognizing the need for more diverse perspectives, and wider community engagement, we reached out to a broader population through outreach events and social media, with some success.

The leadership team met monthly and had two additional interim meetings. Most meetings were virtual. Three meetings were hybrid. We invested in purchase of a meeting owl to improve the hybrid experience.

The Prince George's County Sierra Club leadership team for 2022 is listed below. The nine voting members of the Executive Committee are indicated in bold.

- **Janet Gingold**, Chair; Conservation Chair; Outings Chair; Climate Action Team Co-lead; Communications team; Political Committee
- **Barbara Sollner-Webb**, Vice Chair
- **Lily Fountain**, Delegate to Chapter Executive Committee; Natural Places Team Lead; Outings Leader

- **James Lawson**, Alternate Delegate to Chapter Executive Committee, Nominations Committee Chair, Discussion leader
- **Joseph Jakuta**, Climate Parents, Communications Team (Social Media)
- **David Brosch**, Climate Action Team Co-lead
- **Na'ilah Dawkins**, Membership Chair; Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Team Lead
- **Valencia Campbell**, Political Committee, Nominations Committee, Natural Places Team, events planning
- **Antoine Thompson**, Transportation team; Outreach
- Nancy Hammond, Treasurer
- Elisabeth Herschbach, Secretary
- Martha Ainsworth, Zero Waste Team Lead
- Nick Orrick, Political Committee Chair; Transportation Team Lead
- Janis Oppelt, Communications Team Lead, Zero Waste Team, Nominations Committee
- John Straub, Webmaster

Additional SuperVolunteers

- Anne Riley, Emerita
- Sarah Gingold, note-taker, graphics support, stewardship, outings support
- Richard Winston, outings support, events support
- Pat Jackman, Climate Action Team, Event planning
- Christine Fraser, Climate Action Team, Event planning
- Jennifer Ridgway Climate Action Team, facilitation consultant
- Jack Kangas, stewardship
- Maureen Fine, Climate Action Team, natural places champion

CLIMATE ACTION TEAM

Prince George's County Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Team started 2022 with the chief goals of seeing the County's Climate Action Plan adopted and implemented. They met monthly to discuss advocacy strategies and plan activities. They communicated directly with county leaders through letters and oral testimony and engaged the general community to urge adoption of the plan through email communications, an AddUp campaign and social media. On May 6, 2022, the County



Executive issued [Executive Order #5-2022](#), a directive for all county agencies and county funded operations to initiate and support immediate action to implement climate solutions for Prince George's County. The Climate Action Plan was adopted by the County Council on July 12, 2022 through [CR-032-2022](#). At least one council member, in explaining her vote for the resolution to adopt, described receiving the postcards created at one of outreach events in her district. Unfortunately, the resolution to adopt the plan included a sunset clause, with expiration on December 31, 2023

unless the Council acts. Additional legislation will be required to implement the plan. While we can expect the incoming council with a progressive majority to act decisively to implement the plan, the work is just beginning.

Climate Action in Prince George's County Schools

In 2022 the campaign for sustainable schools led by ExCom member Joseph Jakuta continued to see success through:

- Co-chairing the focus workgroup developing a Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) for Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS).
- Seeing through unanimous adoption of the recommendation in the CCAP by the Prince George's County Board of Education, which was formally adopted on April 28, 2022.
- Stories were published in the Washington Post and Hyattsville Life and Times concerning adoption of the CCAP.
- Advocating for adoption of a Sustainability (Energy Use) Policy that allows PGCPS to comply with HB 630 from the 2021 session and implements numerous key recommendations from the CCAP. The policy was adopted by the Board of Education on October 27, 2022.
- Advocating for new schools constructed through the Blueprint program to follow the recommendations in the CCAP.

Community Engagement for Climate Action

Once the Climate Action Plan was adopted, the PGSC Climate Action team shifted its focus to promoting community engagement in climate solutions. To reach parts of the population not usually reached through Sierra Club activities, PGSC partnered with the Prince George's County School system in planning an Eco-art contest to engage students and their families in thinking about climate change solutions. Artworks will be submitted in January 2023. PGSC will provide prizes to increase participation. Artworks will be displayed at county facilities (parks and libraries) in a travelling art show.



In hopes of increasing community-wide engagement in climate action, building relationships in the broader community, and learning more about perceptions of barriers to climate action in different areas of the county, the Climate Action team applied for and was approved for a \$3000 Equity Cohort Grant. Funds were used for two events in Fall 2022. On Oct. 22, PGSC hosted a booth and a



workshop at the County's [Green Summit](#) at Kentland Community Center in Landover. The workshop used a game-show format to engage diverse teams in discussing answers to questions about climate solutions. The booth provided an interactive survey, as well as print information about reduction of single use plastics, electrification, energy efficiency, and transition to renewable energy.

On November 5, PGSC partnered with the City of District Heights for a special community forum, Environmental Justice and You: Energy and Equity at the District Heights Municipal Building. The forum included opening remarks by Antoine Thompson (PGSC and Cleaner Cities Coalition) and Xander Harcourt (Vice-Mayor of District Heights) and a keynote address by Yinka Bode-George (Sharing the Power Foundation), followed by facilitated discussions in small groups. Print flyers about the Inflation Reduction Act, transition to renewables, electrification, and other climate solutions were provided. Sandwiches, salad and cookies got great reviews. Including registrants who attended remotely, 58 people participated. Spanish interpretation was provided through the ALTA agency.



Participants at Environmental Justice and You: Energy and Equity at District Heights Municipal Center, Nov. 5, 2022.

ZERO WASTE TEAM

Organizational Goals

- Monthly meetings the first or second Saturday. Seventeen different participants attended with median attendance of 9. Chair and a volunteer note taker.
- Kept PGSC Zero Waste [website](#) up-to-date



- Organized tours of the Materials Recycling Facility (8/19/2022, 27 participants), and the Organics Composting Facility (11/4/2022, 16 participants).
- Four Group-wide newsletters on Zero Waste: “Waste Reduction Special” (1/20/2022), Action Alert on CB-14-2022 (3/17/2022), “Zero Waste Edition” (8/29/2022); “Zero Waste Updates” (11/17/2022)
- Participated in outreach activities through tabling in Bowie (Bowifest, 6/4/2022); Forest Heights (8/16/2022); Laurel (9/10/2022); Green Summit (10/22/2022) with displays on the impact of public policies on carryout bag use and the impact of Laurel’s plastic bag ban.
- Maintained a listserv for PGSC zero waste team (47 members). They received 16 group-specific emails (county ZW news, action alerts, invitations) and 13 statewide listserv emails with news, webinars, announcements, and articles of interest.

Conservation Goals

1. Reduce single-use plastic

- Promoted carryout bag ordinances (ban on plastic carryout bags, minimum 10-cent charge for paper and other bags, retained by the retailer) to College Park, Hyattsville, Greenbelt, New Carrollton, Bowie, Berwyn Heights, and Laurel.
- Shopper surveys – resurveyed Laurel grocery stores & Lanham Wegmans after policy change (ban on plastic bags in Laurel; ban on plastic bags and 5-cent charge on paper at the Wegmans). Supported expanded shopper surveys of retailers in College Park and Greenbelt, to promote a municipal ordinance. (Target, MOM’s, Seven-Eleven, Greenbelt Co-op, etc.)
- Passage of CB-14-2022, food ware accessories on request. The campaign involved identifying a sponsor (Councilwoman Glaros), proposing the bill (using DC’s bill as an example), testimony, action alerts, outreach to municipalities for support (Greenbelt, Bowie, Hyattsville, College Park).
- Got reduction of single-use plastic into the Climate Action Plan’s recommendations.
- Briefings on the effectiveness of carryout bag policies and proposed legislation to the Hyattsville Environment Committee, Greenbelt Green ACES, College Park for a Better Environment, Greenbelt City Council, and Four Cities group (Greenbelt, College Park, New Carrollton, Berwyn Heights).



Supported College Park and Greenbelt activists in conducting additional

shopper surveys of retailers, development of fact sheets on the bill, and FAQs. Article in the weekly *Greenbelt News Review*, Nov. 24 2022, p. 13 [“Council Hears Presentation on Plastic Bag Proliferation”](#).

- Support to Michele Blair, Laurel Sustainability Coordinator, Laurel, on amending their plastic bag ban to include a minimum 10-cent charge for paper bags.

2. Promote expansion of food scrap composting

- Fended off a return to twice-a-week trash collection!
- Universal access to curbside food scrap collection in unincorporated areas by end 2023, something the team has long been lobbying for, helped by the Climate Action Plan recommendations to which we also contributed.
- Webinar on “Municipal Food Scrap Collection: Experience in Prince George’s County,” May 11, 2022. There were 39 attendees, including officials from 14 municipalities.¹ Speakers included: Leslie Riddle (DPW, Hyattsville), Mickey Beall (DPW, University Park), Ashleigh Diaz (Sustainability office, Bowie). Cosponsored with Sustainable Maryland.



POLITICAL COMMITTEE

The year 2022 was an election year for state and local offices and so it was a busy year for the Political Committee.

Preparations begin in 2021. Rules and policies were reviewed. It was decided to tighten the standards for endorsement, especially early endorsement of incumbents. Questionnaires we're composed, and lists of candidates put together.



The primary focus this year in Prince George's County was on the county council races since that was where the greatest opportunity to make a big impact presented itself. We were

¹ Berwyn Heights, Bowie, College Park, Colmar Manor, District Heights, Edmonston, Forest Heights, Greenbelt, Hyattsville, Landover Hills, Laurel, New Carrollton, University Park, and Upper Marlboro.

fortunate to have an unusually large crop of talented, experienced, hard-working, quality candidates for county council, dedicated to public service rather than promoting real estate development with little concern about consequences beyond profits. Out of thirty-six candidates for eleven seats, we received questionnaires and interviewed seventeen, ultimately endorsing nine, of which six were successful. Thus, the county council flipped to a majority of environmentally friendly members.

For state legislature, except in District 23, the election was dominated by incumbents. We added only a few new candidates to the early-endorsed incumbents. Two new endorsed candidates were elected to add to sixteen incumbents.

Four candidates were interviewed for the open Congressional seat in District 4. It appeared that the race between the two front-runners would turn into a slugfest between PAC's. We could see little to be gained and much potential hazard in endorsing one of them over the other, and thus we decided to stay out of the fray.

For the primary election, we concentrated our campaign efforts on the few races where we felt that efforts could swing a close election.

Since local candidates faced almost no opposition in the general election, campaigning focused on comptroller and the other state-wide races.

NATURAL PLACES AND FOREST CONSERVATION

[Save Marlton Forest campaign](#) included an op-ed published in the [Washington Post](#), emails to members and supporters, an [AddUp campaign](#) that gathered 1100+ signatures, and an outing to visit the forest, and several letters to corporate leadership at Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital. We provided testimony to the Prince George's County Council regarding Adelphi Road-UMGC-UMD-Purple Line Station Area Sector Plan. We provided ongoing advocacy for the [Guilford Woods campaign](#) through action alert updates and strategy advice to the local team. The project was put on hold indefinitely.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The nominations committee recruited 8 candidates for 6 seats, including three highly qualified new candidates and five incumbents, for the Executive Committee election in the fall.

OUTINGS

Outings provided our first opportunity to come together in person as pandemic restrictions eased. Our Prince George's Sierra Club Outings team certified two new outings leaders, Lily Fountain and Laurel Imlay.

Together, the team hosted 15 guided walks and 4 service outings. The Growing Green with Pride team on April 23 earned a cash award from the County for picking up 18 bags of litter at Oak Creek West; the money will be used for future stewardship events. City



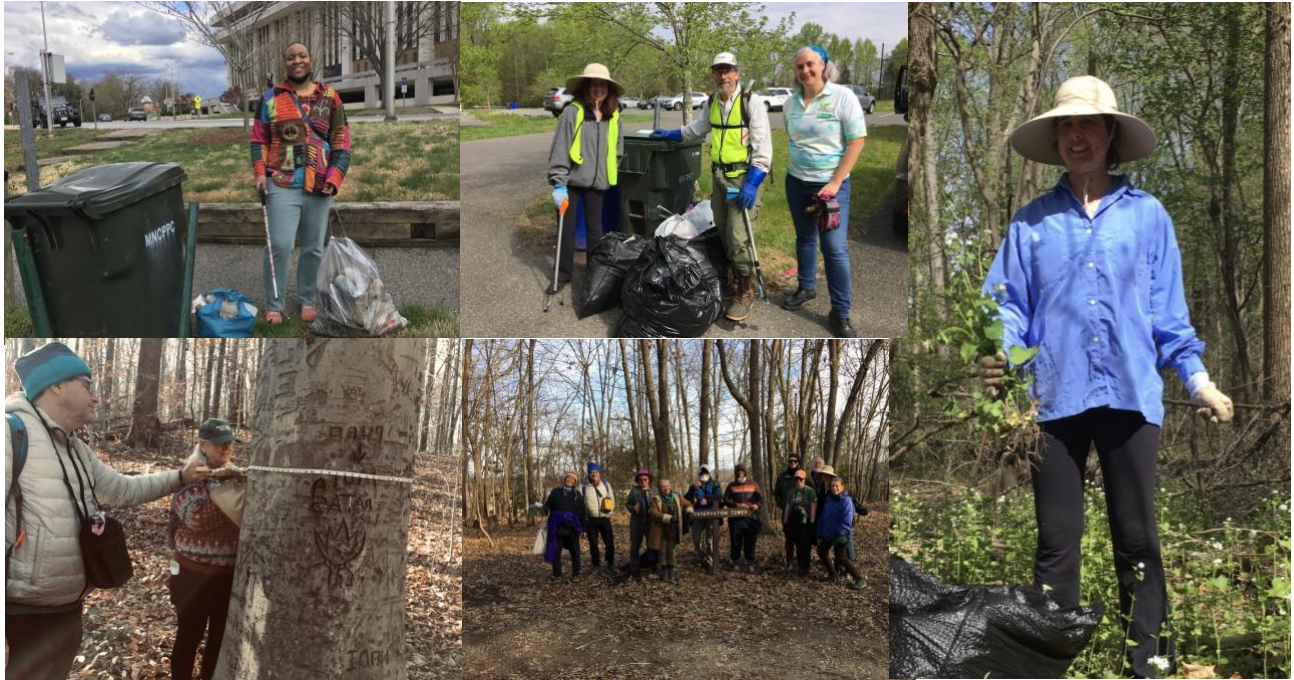
Nature Challenge virtual workshops and in-the-field observation sessions introduced new enthusiasts to iNaturalist, a citizen science tool for learning about nature and collecting data for conservation. The Claggett Trail walk introduced advocates to the Marlton Forest. Nature walks provided participants opportunities to connect with local natural places.

Hikes and Nature Walks

Date	TITLE	ATTENDED
1/1/22	Enjoying the First Day at Greenbelt National Park	5
2/5/22	First Saturday Hike at Greenbelt National Park	6
2/26/22	Winter Walk at Merkle Wildlife Management Area	11
3/4/22	Explore, enjoy and protect mini urban woods & wetlands at Driskell Park	9
3/9/22	Spring amble along the Mattawoman Creek	5
3/20/22	Spring flowers at Watkins Park	13
4/29/22	City Nature Challenge - Nature Finds at Watkins Park	5
4/30/22	Discover Greenbelt Park with the City Nature Challenge	3
5/29/22	Springtime Walk at Jug Bay Natural Area	17
7/9/22	Walk in the Wet Woods at Cosca Regional Park	3
8/20/22	Summer Flowers at Glendening Nature Preserve	16
9/17/22	Nature walk through old growth forest on Wye Island	12
9/25/22	Claggett Trail Walk and the History of Croome	16
11/19/22	Cosca Nature Walk Among Some of Prince George's Largest and Oldest Trees	13
12/11/22	Hollies of Watkins Park	

Service

4/5/22	Litter pickup at Schoolhouse Pond	2
4/19/22	Stewardship at Watkins Park: Let's get that garlic mustard	5
4/23/22	Growing Green with Pride – Oak Creek West Community Park	5
10/15/22	Growing Green with Pride – Oak Creek West Community Park	3



Winter Get-together

In 2022, our Winter Get-Together was held virtually on February 12, 4-6 PM. Following introduction of the 2022 leadership team and a visit with Director of the Department of the Environment, Andrea Crooms, we had a panel discussion about the Environmental Human Rights Amendment with Stacey Hartwell, Robinne Gray, and Luca Grifo-Hahn. Breakout sessions for letter-writing tips and door prizes followed.

Summer Picnic and Maloney Award

By summer, COVID restrictions eased, permitting indoor as well as outdoor in-person gatherings. We planned a picnic at Cosca Regional Park to celebrate the presentation of the



Maloney Environmental Service Award to Mary Abe. As staff for the County's Climate Action Commission, Ms. Abe worked tirelessly on the Climate Action Plan, bringing together the ideas of diverse Commissioners, consultants, colleagues, and county residents to develop a comprehensive plan for decreasing greenhouse gases and increasing climate resilience. Prior to joining the Department of the Environment to work on the Climate Action Plan, her local work on

storm water management projects and ecosystem restoration showed her

commitment to taking a nature-based approach to addressing environmental challenges. The 2022 Maloney Environmental Service Award honors Mary for her persistent efforts to decrease climate impacts on our communities and make Prince George's County more resilient as climate change unfolds around us. Dawn Hawkins-Nixon, Chair of the Climate Action Commission, recommended Mary for the award and joined the celebration. Due to heavy rain, the festivities, including an animal show, were held indoors at the Clearwater Nature Center. The rain cleared in time for a walk in the wet woods.



OUTREACH EVENTS

In addition to the Fall Equity Cohort Grant events, Prince George's Sierra Club participated by tabling at the following in-person community outreach events

- Spring into Health at National Harbor March 27
- BowieFest June 4
- University Park Meadow Day June 25
- Forest Heights International Celebration August 6
- Laurel Sustainable Saturday September 10



Virtual advocacy and education events

Lobby night, February 3 and 7

Marlton Forest: Advocating for Forest Conservation, August 11

Big Ideas Discussion: The Power of Big Oil, May 19

Big Ideas Discussion: In Praise of Walking, January 21

ExCom member Joseph Jakuta participated in a state chapter event using materials developed for the Winter Get Together to conduct online line communal letter writing to legislators in support of the Environmental Human Rights Amendment on March 1, 2022.

TESTIMONIES and ADVOCACY STATEMENTS

Details on testimonies provided on behalf of the Prince George's Sierra Club can be found [here](#), including

- Comments on County Budget – April 26, 2022
- Opposition to development at Suffrage Point – April 26, 2022
- Comments on School System Budget –
- Support of Environmental Human Rights Amendment March 16, 2-22
- Comments on M-NCPPC budget
- Support for CR-032-2022 Resolution to Adopt the Climate Action Plan – June 8, 2022;
- Oppose sunset clause for CR-032-2022 July 7, 2022
- Support for PGPS Climate Change Action Plan – April 6, 2022
- Opposition to developing National Capital Business Park
- Opposition to rezoning Freeway Airport – Sept.16, 2022
- Opposition to development of NASA area 400 – Jan. 18, 2022
- Support for CB-026-2022 Building Energy Performance Standards – July 23, 2022
- Support for CB-014-2022 On-request plastic serviceware
- Support CB-015-2022 EV charging infrastructure – April 5, 2022
- Communications with Girl Scout Council of Nation's Capital and county leaders about Marlton Forest, July-Sept 2022
- Support for District Heights Tree Planting Grant – Sept. 19, 2022
- Support for Hyattsville Ban on gasoline leaf blowers
- Comments on appointment of the Executive Director for Ethics and Accountability – Oct 23, 2022
- Comments at community meeting about permit for Chalk Point powerplant, October 4, 2022
- Comment letter to the Prince George's County County Council concerning improvements to the Adelphi Sector Plan - January 14, 2022

- Signed on with Waterkeepers Chesapeake to request that Secretary McCord reinstate Patuxent Riverkeeper Fred Tutman to the Patuxent River Commission - January 28, 2022
- Letter to County Executive Alsbrooks asking that the Budget for FY2023 provide resources needed to implement the priority recommendations in the Climate Action Plan - February 1, 2022
- Wrote testimony in opposition of SB 233 An Act Concerning Sunday Deer Hunting in Prince George's County - February 17, 2022
- Comment letter to the Prince George's County County Council in support of CB015-2022 concerning Electric Charging Infrastructure - April 5, 2022
- Letter to the Prince George's County Board of Education in support of adoption of the Climate Change Action Plan - April 6, 2022
- Letter to Prince George's County Council Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee in opposition of CB-69-2022, a bill that would enable properties that were formerly in the Mixed-Use Transit-Oriented (M-X-T) zone to elect to conform to the requirements of the Commercial, General and Office (CGO) zone - September 6, 2022
- Letter to Prince George's County Council Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee in opposition of CB-77-2022, a bill that would change the transitional provisions of the Zoning Ordinance - September 6, 2022
- Letter to Prince George's County Council Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee in opposition of CB-92-2022, a bill that would eliminate the power of District Council Members to elect to review certain zoning cases - September 12, 2022
- Letter to Prince George's County Council Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee in opposition of CB-91-2022, a bill that would change the voting requirements for legislative text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, requiring a supermajority - September 12, 2022
- Letter to Prince George's County Council Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee in support of CB-60-2022, a bill that would enable interested county residents to receive electronic informational mailings about development projects from prospective development applicants and the M-NCPPC - September 14, 2022
- Letter to Prince George's District Council in opposition of the building of a new gas station at 1821 East West Highway, Hyattsville, 20783 - October 16, 2022
- Comment letter to the Prince George's County Council concerning improvements to the West Hyattsville/Queens Chapel Sector Plan - October 26, 2022
- Remarks about Climate Action Plan implementation during conversation with grassroots activities and incoming council members – Nov. 27, 2022

COMMUNICATIONS

Emails

Emails were sent to members and supporters 2-3 times monthly. In all, --- emails were sent to an average of ---- recipients. Topics included upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, the County Climate Action Plan, curbside composting, reducing plastic waste, local land conservation issues (especially Marlton Forest), endorsed candidates, getting out the vote, and others.

Social Media

Posting on Facebook/Twitter/Instagram continued during 2022. Some of the post highlights were:

- Posted graphics announcing endorsements in County Council races and promoted state chapter posts on other candidates.
- Specific primary election promotion beginning with pictures of the local voting guide juxtaposed with objects that show activities Sierra Club members might enjoy (e.g., bird guides and binoculars) followed by graphics showing Sierra Club members as voters as the primary election got closer.
- Regular promotion of hikes, cleanups, workgroup meetings (e.g., Zero Waste Group), and other activities.
- The regularly scheduled #FloraFaunaFriday with a picture of an animal or plant taken in Prince George's began again in early 2022 and continued fairly regularly throughout the year.
- Promoted state chapter posts, as well as select posts from partner organizations.

Posts are coordinated between all three accounts and images for events and advocacy opportunities are made using Adobe Photoshop Mix for iOS and pictures made available by members of the Prince George's Group or creative commons licensed pictures.

NOTE: More information on social media stats is forthcoming.