

# Susquehanna *SIERRAN* December 2022



Founded 1892

– *Election Edition* –

EXPLORE, ENJOY, PROTECT THE PLANET

## November Election—Our Endorsements – Scott Lauffer

The Susquehanna Group Political Committee interviewed and obtained completed questionnaires from numerous candidates. The Committee forwarded to the Atlantic Chapter its recommendations for endorsements—those in the 2022 election that we felt would best protect the environment. The Chapter approved our endorsements. These candidates were then able to use the Club's endorsement in their election campaigns.



### Several endorsed candidates won:

Lea Webb	NYS Senate District 52
Donna Lupardo	NYS Assembly District 123
Kim Myers	Broome County District 4 (Town of Vestal)
Jason Shaw	Broome County District 8 (Town of Union)
Suzy Ryan	Broome County District 11 (City of Binghamton, T/Union, Village of Johnson City)
Mary Kaminsky	Broome County District 14 (City of Binghamton)

### These lost:

Josh Riley	NY 19th Congressional District
Matt Wahila	Broome County District 7
Karen Beebe	Broome County District 12
Lori Wahila	Town of Union Supervisor
Heather Staley	Town of Union Council

Proposition 1, NYS's Environmental Bond Act, passed.

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## Plastic Trash 101 – Douglas Gausman

Did you know that only about 6% of plastic gets recycled? A very disappointing number. One easily sees plastic trash every day while simply walking or driving. We absolutely need to do better! Don't throw it away. Recycle what you can and educate others to do the same.

Plastics are relatively easy to make into both packaging and products. Millions of tons of plastic are used once then thrown away. Plastic recycling is a great idea and we should all be doing it. We should also understand the problems recyclers experience with plastic in the waste stream. It comes in many colors and formulations requiring specific handling including hand sorting. Contaminated plastic waste cannot be used routinely and goes to landfills. Let's encourage recycling, and also encourage producer responsibility for recycling and reuse.

At Susquehanna Group's General Meeting (Zoom) on December 20 Josh Enderle (Recycling and Compost Educator for Cornell Cooperative Extension) will update members on Broome County's recycling program. See Coming Events, p2. Plan to attend and learn more about handling and processing plastic waste.

# Executive Committee Annual Election

Group bylaws require annual elections to the Executive Committee, which has 9 members serving 2-year terms. This year we elect 4. Statements by candidates appear below. **Complete the ballot on page 3 and mail it by January 15, 2023 to:**

**Susquehanna Group, PO Box 572, Endicott, NY 13760**

## Candidate Statements

### Karen Boba

My interest in the environment started when I was a kid: hiking, camping, exploring on my own. As a parent I tried to instill a love of the environment and an understanding of our responsibilities to it in my kids with visits to Waterman, Roger's Environmental Center, national parks, zoos, etc. Now I have grandkids and I think one of the best organizations to help protect their future is the Sierra Club. I'm honored to be a member of the Susquehanna Group ExCom and have been recording secretary for several years. Thank you for your consideration.

### Scott Lauffer

I have been on the Susquehanna Group executive committee for over 12 years. I have also been involved with the NY Water Sentinels and currently serve as Political Chair and Vice Chair of the Susquehanna Group. I am invested in the efforts of the Group and the Sierra Club in general. I'm aware that there are always threats to the environment and our health. Action at the local level is what we can be most effective at. I also believe that New York's renewables energy goals are worthy. There will be many difficulties and opposition in transitioning to renewable energy, but we need to do it. I hope to be part of the work of the Susquehanna Group, and urge involvement from more members as well.

### Joann Lettis

I have served on the Executive Committee of the Susquehanna Group of the Sierra Club for the past four years in the position of Treasurer. This is a very challenging time in our world and I think this group makes a real difference in our community. I would like the opportunity to serve again for the next two years.

### Laura Pangallozzi

I am a Binghamton resident and faculty member in the BU Geography Department. I hold a PhD (geography) and MPhil (planning), both from Rutgers. I lecture and teach environmental and water resources planning, and about natural hazards. I also teach about Sierra Club's history in environmental planning and national park establishment. Through the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies I supervised a student report about invasive aquatic species in the Catskills. My water resources planning course covers the ongoing situation with the Binghamton-Johnson City joint sewage treatment plant, and the local history of flooding. Busing in the local area is a topic of interest. I would be most happy to participate in an organization with a storied history and national presence.

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## COMING EVENTS

December 20, 7:30pm General Membership Meeting, Zoom 475 123 3928 **Josh Enderle** (Recycling and Composting Educator, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County) will present "Composting and Recycling in Broome County" covering:

- Accepted recyclable materials and County programs;
- State recycling regulations and initiatives;
- Current landscape/lack of large-scale composting in Broome County;
- Local composting programs.

January 17, 2023, 7:30pm General Membership Meeting, Zoom 475 123 3928 **Dr Stanley Whittingham** (SUNY Distinguished Professor, 2019 Nobel Laureate, Member National Academy of Engineering, Director NECCES at Binghamton) will discuss lithium-ion battery advancements at the NorthEast Center for Chemical Energy Storage, and at iM3NY (Endicott-based Li-ion battery manufacturer).

## Susquehanna Group

All of Broome & Sullivan, & most of Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, & Tioga Counties

Chair	*Valdi Weiderpass
Vice Chair	*Scott Lauffer
Secretary	*Karen Boba
Treasurer	*Joann Lettis
Conservation Co-Chairs	*Douglas Gausman
	*Mary Cronk
Political Chair	*Scott Lauffer
Chapter Delegate	*Jim Taft
Alt. Chapter Delegate	*Joann Lettis
Newsletter Editor	*Jim Taft
Membership Chair	*Chris Harasta
Outings Chair	*Chris Harasta
Webmaster	*Chris Harasta

\* Member Executive Committee

**To become a candidate for the  
Susquehanna Group's Executive  
Committee, mail by November 22, 2023  
a candidate statement of 150 words or  
less to:**

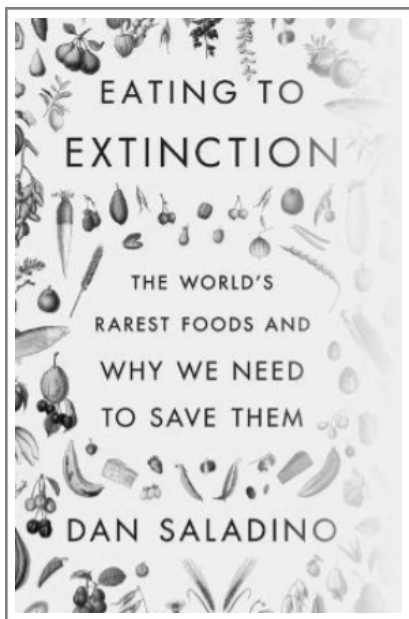
**Susquehanna Group  
PO Box 572  
Endicott NY 13760**

**The Nominating Committee will create  
a slate of candidates, and ballots will be  
mailed with the December 2023  
Sierran.**

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### Book Review – Colleen Wolpert

*Eating to Extinction* by Dan Saladino (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2022)



Saladino explores how our choices, and climate change, threaten extinction for many of our foods. The vulnerability of coffee and tea indicates what seems to be happening on our planet. I can't imagine not having my daily coffee and a banana or apple. And I want to try perry (pear cider) and new-to-me handcrafted cheeses. Fruit monocultures were created for bulk domestic and international trade. The precariousness of our Cavendish banana is a warning against monocultures and for increasing genetic diversity in all of our crops. Despite incredibly dedicated seed savers, and America's apple collection in Geneva NY, the warming climate means pests and diseases are becoming poorly managed by natural means (e.g., cold winters).

The Green Revolution of the 1950s and 1960s produced high-yielding crops via fossil-fuel-derived fertilizers. It led to monocultures of genetically identical plants which provided cheap calories, but a heavy

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### ***BALLOT for ExCom Members***

Indicate your **4** votes and mail this ballot to Susquehanna Group, PO Box 572, Endicott NY 13760 by 1/15/2023

\_\_\_\_ Karen Boba      \_\_\_\_ Scott Lauffer      \_\_\_\_ Joann Lettis      \_\_\_\_ Laura Pangallozzi

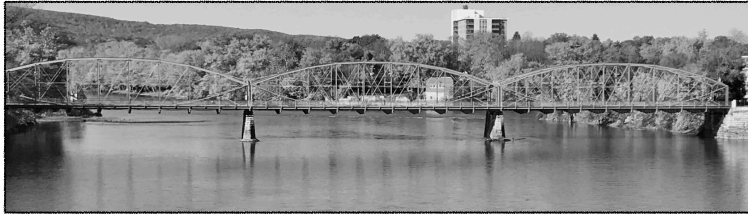
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blow to diversity. Before the Green Revolution transformed wheat, plant breeding revolutionized maize; America's 'Corn Belt' boomed. In its train came sweeteners, plentiful fast foods, and the migration north to the US of Mexican farmers forced to leave their land. A soy boom also lessened biodiversity and led to loss of virgin forests. We can transform our food systems.

Saladino recounts the histories of domesticated animals, and losses of 'keystone' animals such as bison. He tells the remarkable story of the bison's rescue from extinction. Understanding how aquaculture reduces diversity in the oceans may lead to possible solutions. However, as suggested by the Covid-19 outbreak, barriers between wild and domestic animals are breaking down due to destroyed habitats.

We fear microbes. Yet, we can't have beer or cheese without them. Luckily, there is a company collecting and preserving diverse microbes. And humans are starting to understand their own gut ecology. We have lost diversity in our microbiomes, impacting our health and functioning.

Research published by WWF provides evidence that biodiversity is being lost at an unprecedented rate, thus impacting all species on planet Earth. Can we become stewards, rather than the destroyers of ecosystems? There are ways to maintain the diversity necessary for food survival. This book is thought provoking and inspiring about what to do now.



Washington Street Bridge (constructed 1886) at confluence of Chenango and Susquehanna Rivers. Bridge was closed to traffic 1969 and is now part of an extensive and growing system of recreational trails.



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Endicott NY 13760

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