



Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet.

## Wanted: Environmental Champions!

For the last quarter century, Sierra Club members have worked to elect leaders who will take action to ensure that this and future generations have clean air, clean water, safe and healthy neighborhoods as well as wild lands and open spaces for people and wildlife. Our members support candidates who will move our nation swiftly along a path to 100% clean energy by reducing greenhouse gas pollution, advancing clean energy technologies in ways that also advance equity and justice, and who will double the size of our parks as we work to protect 30% of America's lands by 2030.

Today more than ever, our nation needs strong leaders to restore and strengthen bedrock environmental and public health protections and to ensure that America steps up its commitments in the fight against climate change. The science is irrefutable – the threats and impact on our planet is real and getting worse. We can address the climate and biodiversity crises, but only if America's elected leaders take the bold action required to put the country on a path to meet or exceed the carbon reductions of 50% by 2030. We must meet the urgency of the moment with the scale of ambition required to address the climate crisis.

In the 117th Congress, we achieved historic wins by securing passage of a suite of broad-reaching and ambitious legislation including the IRA, IIJA, CHIPS and others. The implementation of these historic bills will make a real difference in people's daily lives. Key programs will slash pollution, drive climate action, boost community resilience, advance racial equity, support family-sustaining jobs, and bolster economic security. **In the closely divided, highly-polarized 118th Congress, our legislative work is a mix of both offense and defense.** Today, with the looming threat of climate disruption, our members are looking to support candidates who will exhibit strong leadership in the multi-front fight against climate disruption.

### The Challenge for Our Federal Champions

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and carbon pollution and make an equitable and just transition to 100% clean renewable energy.
- Advance clean energy investments, incentives, and infrastructure both here and abroad to create climate resilience, provide access to clean and affordable transportation choices for all, and boost family-sustaining jobs.
- Hold fossil fuel companies accountable for their pollution and keep dirty fuels in the ground. 1

- Work to double the size of our parks as part of the campaign to protect 30% of wild spaces by 2030 and 50% by 2050 to ensure the enhanced conservation of intact ecosystems biodiversity and climate resilience. Support policies that guarantee that all communities have access to public lands and every child in the United States can benefit from a direct connection to the natural world.
- Defend our IRA wins and block efforts to rescind or redirect climate/justice investments including: Protecting \$20 billion climate smart agriculture from the IRA (conservation, food security, and organics), defeating riders that target IRA programs, personnel, and implementation, and supporting funding levels for key agencies that carry out our public health and conservation priorities.
- Defeat attacks to bedrock environmental laws under the guise of permitting reform.
- Advance fair trade that puts the interests of communities, workers, and the environment before the interest of multinational corporations.
- Protect and expand the rights of voters and limit the power of big money in politics.
- Advance equity and justice for all, regardless of race, gender, or economic status.

Voters across the country – regardless of demographics or political persuasion – share these values. They believe we do not have to choose between a clean environment and a strong economy. Voters expect their elected representatives to provide leadership that will secure good jobs for America’s workers **and** a healthy environment with clean air, clean water, and wild places for this and future generations.

Sierra Club uses the power of its voice and our volunteers on behalf of its 3.8 million members and supporters, on behalf of the candidates it endorses. If you are interested in Sierra Club’s endorsement, complete the attached Sierra Club 2023-2024 Federal Candidate Questionnaire. In addition to your response to the specific questions, share your views, vision, and priorities on these and other environmental challenges on this questionnaire or pages you attach.

Please return the completed copy to both your local Chapter (**Illinois Chapter, [caroline.wooten@sierraclub.org](mailto:caroline.wooten@sierraclub.org)**) and the National Political Team, ([political.desk@sierraclub.org](mailto:political.desk@sierraclub.org)).

***If you have additional comments on any of the issues discussed below please include them in the questionnaire or attach a separate document.***

## Sierra Club 2023-2024 Federal Candidate Questionnaire

*Please provide the information requested below.*

**Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_

**U.S. Senate:** \_\_\_\_\_ **U.S. House:** \_\_\_\_\_  
State State / District

**Party:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Campaign Committee Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City / State / Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Website:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Campaign Office #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Campaign Manager:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Finance Director:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**General Campaign Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell#:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

The questions below are representative of some of the diverse environmental issues that the members

and supporters of the Sierra Club consider a priority. Your responses to the following questions will be considered confidential, will NOT be posted online or released to the public, and will only be seen by Sierra Club volunteers and staff who are assigned to review the questionnaires. For any additional information on the issues raised below please feel free to reference Sierra Club's website, [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org).

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## QUESTIONS

### ***Advancing Bold Climate Leadership***

Climate change is the greatest environmental challenge of this century. Science demands that we take bold action to reduce carbon pollution by at least 50% of 2005 levels by 2030.

**1)** If elected, will you work to defend and expand upon the progress we made to address the challenge of climate change and support additional action to put the country on a path to meet or exceed carbon reductions of 50% of 2005 levels by 2030 and net-zero economy-wide by 2050?

YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

### ***Protecting Communities***

Communities should be safe, healthy places to live and raise children – with clean air and water, free from the dangers of toxic pollution. This can be achieved by defending, upholding, and fully funding the enforcement of environmental laws that require all polluters to meet stringent standards to reduce carbon, soot, smog, sulfur, mercury, and other air and water pollution. These laws and regulations must also be strengthened to align with what scientific and public health data demand.

Air and water pollution and the impacts of climate change disproportionately impact our nation's poorest families, working-class communities, and communities of color who are more likely to live in areas where air and water pollution exceed national standards. We must ensure that as we hold polluters accountable and pursue action to address climate change, the solutions are just and fully address the needs of these communities.

The EPA has promulgated numerous standards to protect public health and to regulate pollution, including carbon pollution. These standards are critical for protecting public health and the environment and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

**2)** Will you support full funding for the Environmental Protection Agency and affirm its authority to promulgate, monitor, and enforce strong standards that hold polluting industries accountable for meeting the requirements of the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and other longstanding safeguards to public health, safety, and the environment?

YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

**3) Will you support policies and legislation that drive the cleanup of air and water pollution while prioritizing high-impact areas and analyzing environmental justice, air and water pollution, and cumulative impacts faced communities that have been disadvantaged or marginalized or which bear disproportionate effects of pollution?**

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

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***Advancing a Clean Energy, Climate-Smart Economy***

Our planet, our people, our security, and our economy depend on elected leaders supporting the transition to a 100% clean energy future. In accomplishing those objectives, our elected leaders must do so in ways that leave no community behind. Elected leaders must consistently choose clean energy over the dirty fuels of the past. Elected leaders must say no to new investments and commitments to dirty fossil fuel infrastructure. Elected leaders must ensure that existing coal, oil, and gas meet the strictest pollution standards. And finally, we must use all energy as efficiently as possible. Our nation's continued reliance on dirty fossil fuel energy not only contributes to climate change but also directly threatens our health and well-being.

Today the fossil fuel industry – coal, oil, and gas – benefits from numerous direct and indirect subsidies and loopholes that allow them to avoid complying with laws to protect our air and water. Congress must end these subsidies and close these loopholes.

**4) Will you support and promote legislation to help our country transition away from fossil fuel subsidies and financing to move us towards a 100% clean energy economy by 2050? For example, will you support ending fossil fuel subsidies? And will you support restrictions on public financing for international high-carbon projects?**

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

**5) Will you support proposals to close loopholes that allow the fossil fuel industry to be exempt from drilling and pollution standards for fracking and support basic environmental protections provided by laws such as the Clean Water Act or Safe Drinking Water Act?**

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

**6) Will you oppose efforts to short-circuit the permitting approval process or weaken NEPA, a bedrock environmental law, for new fossil fuel infrastructure or fossil fuel exports?**

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

**Climate Smart Investments**

Sierra Club supports bold public investments to simultaneously tackle the climate crisis and pollution, create high-paying jobs, and reduce inequity, as outlined in visionary proposals such as President Biden’s signature climate law, the Inflation Reduction Act. The historic investments from both the IRA and the IJIA are already enabling states and communities to develop resilient and climate-smart infrastructure and transportation systems; as well as spurring the growth in clean manufacturing, energy-efficient

buildings, healthy ecosystems, and more sustainable agriculture. As a result, low-income workers, communities of color, and other frontline communities will benefit from cleaner air and water, higher-paying jobs, lower costs, increased climate resilience, and a more stable climate.

**7) Will you vote against attempts to rescind Inflation Reduction Act Investments or redirect those funds?**

YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

**8) Will you vote to extend and expand tax incentives for clean energy technologies and support additional public investments in infrastructure, renewable energy, manufacturing, supply chains, smart ag that help our country tackle the climate crisis and pollution, create high-paying jobs, and reduce inequity?**

YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

A 21st-century climate-smart infrastructure plan will prioritize renewable energy projects, grid modernization, advanced energy efficiency projects, updates to critical water infrastructure, the electrification of transportation systems, and advanced energy resiliency. An accompanying clean manufacturing plan will spur growth in the manufacturing of the goods needed for a clean energy economy while slashing manufacturing-related pollution. The necessary national transition to electric vehicles must support a unionized workforce. Elected leaders have the opportunity to build a transportation system that relies on electric cars, trucks, and buses, powered by clean electricity. They should also support smart growth, which emphasizes clean, convenient, and affordable transportation choices such as public transit and safe infrastructure for biking and walking. Elected leaders must pursue performance-based transportation funding, driven by national goals, including a goal to significantly reduce our oil consumption. They must support smart, integrated land use and invest in repairing our existing infrastructure before building new roads – fix it first!

**9) Will you support a safe, affordable, equitable, and accessible 21st-century transportation system that reduces oil use and cuts vehicle pollution? And will you support strong federal clean vehicle standards as well as increased federal investment in electric vehicles, charging**

infrastructure, expanded public transit, and fleet electrification?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

### ***Defending our Democracy***

Coal, oil, and gas special interests are corrupting our government by trying to buy elections and influence policy making to put corporate profits above the interests of the people and our communities. The fossil fuel industry is spending unprecedented money to influence elections – leveraging this money to drown out the voices of everyday Americans. The communities hit hardest by the climate crisis are some of the most disproportionately impacted by this attack on free and fair elections: low-income, Indigenous, and communities of color. Over the last few years, the American

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public has voiced their increasing concern and frustration about the growing influence of money in politics.

**10)** Will you support legislative actions that protect and strengthen free and fair elections like campaign finance reform, voter protections, and the policies laid out in legislation such as the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

### ***Protecting Our Public Lands from Fossil Fuel Development***

Keeping dirty fuels in the ground is critical to meeting carbon reduction goals to address climate change and has the added benefit of protecting some of the most wild and spectacular public lands in the nation. America is rich with parks, monuments, forests, wilderness, and wildlife; but today, a rush to mine, drill, and frack for coal, oil, and gas threatens the natural, recreational, health, and cultural values of special places from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to our public lands and forests across the country and our coasts.

Right now, nearly 25 percent of America’s greenhouse gas emissions come from mining or drilling on public lands. These dirty fuels and extraction operations cause irreparable harm to the environment, damage valuable wildlife habitats, foul our waters, harm indigenous communities, and hurt local economies. Our lands should be part of the climate solution, not the problem. Instead of allowing corporations to mine or drill on our public lands, we should permanently protect our lands, waters, and habitats for future generations to enjoy and explore. Doing so would help us fight climate change by keeping dirty fuels in the ground, and ensure that we set aside habitats and landscapes critical to dealing with the climate crisis.

**11)** Do you oppose any new leasing or drilling on federal lands, and will you support legislation to repeal drilling mandates in the Arctic Refuge, public lands in the west, and in the Gulf of Mexico?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

***Ensuring a Lasting Legacy of Wildlands and Open Spaces for the Public***

The Sierra Club has adopted a public policy objective to double the size of our parks as part of our campaign to protect 30% of our lands and waters by 2030 in the United States. Attainment of that objective will help to ensure the conservation of intact ecosystems, biodiversity, and climate resilience. Attainment of that objective will also help achieve an important social policy adopted by the Sierra Club: citizens, especially in low-income communities, have little to no access to public recreational lands designed to bring them closer to nature. Additionally, far too few communities have safe access to our network of protected parks and public lands, with low-income families the least likely to benefit from a direct connection to nature. All kids and communities deserve access to nature, which supports mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Lawmakers should build on efforts to ensure every child in America

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has an opportunity to visit our parks and public lands, and all communities are able to access nature close to home.

**12)** To protect our public lands from drilling and the impacts of climate change, do you support protecting 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

**13)** Will you support legislation that expands access to nature for all communities, including our children?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

***Ensuring Trade Deals are Good for Workers and the Environment***

Past U.S. free trade agreements have undermined the ability of governments to protect the environment and address the climate crisis. For example, NAFTA helped corporations dodge hard-fought environmental policies by outsourcing pollution and jobs to countries with weaker environmental standards. In addition, such deals included handouts to corporate polluters that foster fossil fuel dependency while empowering corporations to challenge environmental protections. Unfortunately, the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement’s (USMCA) lack of strong environmental protections and zero mention of climate change encourages continued outsourcing of pollution and jobs. We need to move beyond the past and develop a new, climate-friendly trade model that curbs damage to our air, water, climate, and communities. That includes establishing a carbon dumping fee on imports made with high climate pollution and revising existing trade agreements to replace handouts to corporate polluters with binding environmental protections.

**14)** Will you support the development of a new, climate-friendly trade model—including the establishment of a carbon dumping fee on polluting imports—and the revision of trade



agreements to add binding climate, environmental, labor, and human rights standards so that countries and corporations are incentivized to invest in a rapid transition that serves workers, frontline communities, and the planet?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

***Illinois Specific Questions***

In late 2020, Indigenous organizers and environmental advocates [won the first-ever shut down order](#) on an operating pipeline, when Governor Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan notified Enbridge it must permanently stop operating the Line 5 pipeline within 180 days due to the risk the pipeline poses to the Great Lakes. The Line 5 pipeline is 70 years old, and pumps 23 million gallons of oil daily under the Straits of Mackinac. A spill from this aging pipeline would be disastrous for the Great Lakes ecosystem, and the drinking water of 30 million people, including millions in Illinois. Enbridge, the

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largest crude oil company in the world, has refused to comply with this shutdown order, so Federal enforcement is needed.

**15)** Will you encourage the Biden administration to revoke the presidential permit for Line 5 and take other actions that would lead to the decommissioning of Line 5?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

The Illinois Land Conservation Act of 1996 created the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie on the former Joliet Arsenal in Will County, based on a local consensus land use plan agreed under the leadership of the late U.S. Rep. George Sangmeister. This plan called for the Joliet Training Area (JTA) owned by the U.S. Army, containing high quality natural areas, to eventually be transferred for inclusion in the Midewin.

**16)** Would you support legislation to enact the consensus plan for the Midewin through the transfer of the Joliet Training Area property to the U.S. Forest Service for inclusion in the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

***Environmental Leadership***

Please describe leadership you've shown in support of the environment and/or justice, fairness, and equity in the natural and human environments in any elected office you've held, or outside of elected office. If you've introduced legislation please describe the success or failure of that legislation. Please address this below or attach a separate document.

