

Sierra Club Moshannon Group

March 2024

Issue 1



The Banff Centre for the Arts abutting Banff National Park in Alberta

In This Issue:

Updates on the Old Crow Wetland and Benner Township Warehouse

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

Book Review: *Water Always Wins*

Results of December Excom Election

Moshannon Group Announces Film Lineup for Banff Mountain Film Festival April 5 & 6

By Kelly Forest and Ellen Foreman

Travel to remote vistas, explore topical environmental issues, and get up-close and personal with adrenaline-packed action sports! The 2023/2024 Banff Centre Mountain Film Festival World Tour is an exhilarating and provocative exploration of the mountain world and is happening Friday, April 5th and Saturday, April 6th at 7 p.m. the State Theatre in State College, PA.

The Banff World Tour celebrates amazing achievements in outdoor storytelling and filmmaking Worldwide. It has been the

Sierra Club Moshannon Group's only fundraising for two decades. This year's films range from skiing in Greenland rock climbing in Southern France and base jumping in Pakistan. Have a look and choose one night (\$25 per ticket) or both nights (\$40)! Tickets are available through the State Theatre Box Office:

<https://thestatetheatre.org/events/banff-centre-mountain-film-festival-world-tour/>

Hope to see you there!



Friday Night Films



How Did We Get Here?

This is a film highlighting the ski crew the Blondes—three women who thrive on their friendship and adventures in skiing and in life.

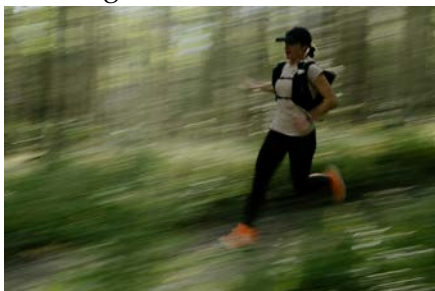
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Banff Cont'd



Still Alive

Doctors gave him until the age 25 to live and now, 10 years after his expiration date he is still climbing. Despite having Cystic Fibrosis, Klaas Willems has bolted hundreds of routes in Sardinia, Italy and dedicated his life to climbing.



Sea to the Sky Trail Series: Progression

The trail running community is constantly evolving. Lately runners have progressed, drawing from the world of alpinism, rock climbing, and running and tackling technical terrain in a way we've never seen. Watch as Emma Cook-Clarke and Jesse McAuley dig deep on the west peak of Ch'ich'iyúy Elxwíkn an iconic Sea to Sky Trail.



Slides on the Mountain

Two young brothers from the Lil'wat Nation set out to ski the sacred mountain they were raised beneath, pushing both themselves and their culture to evolve.



Leaving a Tread

Mountain Biker Israel Carrillo shows us his hometown of Guanajuato, Mexico, and the difficulties and differences of being a mountain biker in Mexico.



Eternal Flame

After having climbed the Eternal Flame route on Nameless Tower in Pakistan (6200m), French BASE jumpers Eric Jamet and Antoine Pecher combine the ascent with one of the most beautiful BASE jumps imaginable. Following in the footsteps of pioneer jumpers from 1990, the duo of friends devour adventure and all it offers.



After You've Gone

Rachel Finn, a female fishing guide in the Adirondacks, grapples with life after loss. While taking a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Argentina, she navigates moving forward in an unapologetically true-to-self way, that brings a smile to everyone who crosses her path.



Pioneers: Tandem XC Skiing

After winning the American Birkebeiner, the largest cross country ski race in North America, Joe Dubay was disqualified for wearing the wrong bib. Now, 11 years later, Joe and his former roommate who lent him the bib - Chris - document their return to the Birkebeiner to pioneer a new sport: tandem cross country skiing.

Continued on Page 3

Banff Cont'd

Saturday Night Films



No Way

Jean-Baptiste Chandelier takes his unique low-flying, ground-skimming art combining paragliding and filmmaking to a whole new level.



The Ascension Series: Morag Skelton

Morag Skelton doesn't let anything stand in the way of her love of nature. As a deaf climber, she is constantly pushing the limits of what is possible on the mountainside.



School of Fish

Indigenous people and salmon

have been intertwined for thousands of years in Bristol Bay, Alaska. For the last century, corporations have sought to extract the wealth of this rich region and now Pebble Mine threatens to pollute its pristine headwaters. Can the next generation step up to defend the most prolific salmon run left on earth?



Chronoception

Thomas Delfino, Léa Klaue and Aurélien Lardy seek to ski the Kokshaal-Too Range in Kyrgyzstan. This team, accompanied by renowned guides Hélias Millerieux and Jean-Yves Fredriksen, finds itself propelled into a space where time seems to have suddenly come to a halt.



To Be Frank

Frank Paine is a 73-year-old South Bay icon and humble local legend whose life orbits around a two-block stretch of beach. His magnetic spirit and unwavering passion keep the Hermosa Beach surf community connected and whole.



Going Greenland

What happens when you combine a renewable energy sailboat with an arctic ski expedition in Greenland for the first time ever? Rachael Burks and Jessica Baker endure a both harrowing and inspiring journey along Greenland's West coast fjords and towering mountains.



Well Worn Life with Dani Reyes-Acosta

Meet Dani Reyes-Acosta: a mountain athlete, land cultivator, and storyteller whose path consistently seeks the limits of her possibility.



Reel Rock: DNA

French sport climber Seb Bouin has been quietly working his way through elite grades, culminating in his attempt to establish a long pitch through an overhanging cave in the Verdon Gorge of France.

Will Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Grow Fast Enough to Encourage Widespread EV Adoption?

By Rick McCorkle

Following passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the Clean Investment Monitor (CIM) was set up by Rhodium Group and MIT's Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research to monitor public and private investments in the manufacture and deployment of clean energy, clean vehicle, building electrification and carbon management technology in the US. The three main sectors tracked by the CIM are Retail, Energy and Industry, and Manufacturing.

According to a recent CIM report, electric vehicle sales in 2023 were at the high end of the range of post-IRA projections and dramatically exceeded projections from a few years ago, but over the past several months news stories suggest the US is experiencing a slow-down in EV sales. The CIM report goes on to say that EV sales growth will fall in 2024 from the more than 50% growth experienced in 2023.

As an EV driver for the past two years, I wish I could say that I am able to meet all of my charging needs with the level 2 charger in my garage, but I have had to make many long-distance trips to help out family, necessitating the use of public fast chargers (level 3, DC). Tesla fast charging stations are fairly ubiquitous, but I don't drive a Tesla and my Tesla adapter doesn't work at fast chargers. I have been using Electrify America (EA) charging stations when I make long trips. EA charging stations sprouted from Volkswagen's "Diesel Gate" settlement. The last thing I want to do is discourage other folks from purchasing an EV, but the charging infrastructure is not keeping pace with EV sales growth. More charging stations are in the works, but it is my opinion that the failure of charging infrastructure to keep up with EV sales is one of the reasons those sales are leveling off.

When I first started doing public charging in 2022, it was rare for me to have to wait for an available charger. These days it is the charging in

2022, it was rare for me to have to wait for an available charger. These days it is the charging session that doesn't involve some wait time that is the rarity. Even if all chargers at a station are in working order, there aren't enough of them. I estimate that it currently takes, on average, about five times as long to charge an EV as it does to fill a tank with gasoline or diesel. Therefore, there should be 20 to 30 chargers per station. But a typical Electrify America station has only 4 to 6 chargers per station here in the eastern US. EA did recently debut its first "Indoor Flagship Station" in San Francisco, featuring 20 hyper-fast chargers (level 3 DC, up to 350 kilowatts/hour charging rate). The station includes a temperature-controlled lounge area with food and beverage vending options, complimentary high-speed Wi-Fi, restrooms, 24/7 access, and round-the-clock monitoring and security. EA plans to build more flagship stations in other metro areas.



Electric vehicles wait in line to get a charge.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides states with \$7.5 billion to help make EV charging more accessible to all Americans for local and long-distance trips. This funding includes \$5 billion for the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program, . Over the five years of the NEVI Formula Program, Pennsylvania will receive \$171.5 million in dedicated formula funding. The initial focus of this funding is for states to strategically

Electric Vehicles Cont'd

deploy Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) stations along their designated Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs) to help build out the national EV AFC network.

PennDOT's Round 1A NEVI Funding Opportunity closed on January 26, 2024, and they received a total of 86 proposals from which they will select projects for conditional awards, which will be announced in April. I reviewed the criteria that must be met by proposals, and was a bit discouraged to see that only a minimum of 4 chargers is required per proposal. I reached out to PennDOT regarding the program criteria. The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Coordinator for PennDOT responded by explaining that the Federal Highway Administration has promulgated regulations 23 CFR 680, which govern the use of NEVI program funds. Included is a requirement that every charging station have at least four charging ports. While many more chargers will eventually be required as EV adoption increases, the primary purpose of the NEVI program is to deploy the initial critical infrastructure needed for EV mobility and range confidence of EV drivers. As EV adoption increases, subsequently increasing charging demand, the private industry should become more willing to pay for the upfront capital investment of new charging stations.

The PennDOT representative went on to say that, given PennDOT's formula allocation of NEVI funds, they estimate over 40% of their funds will be spent before they achieve the required "fully built-out" requirement for their Alternative Fuel Corridors (largely the interstate highway system). They therefore would not have sufficient funds to install significantly more chargers at each location. Additionally, a requirement for many more chargers at each location would decrease the number of viable site host properties and decrease private business interest in applying for funds as many locations may not yet have the local demand to justify more chargers.

Based on my experience, I don't know if I buy that last point about local demand, but hopefully the charging infrastructure will catch up with the



Electrify America chargers in a parking garage.

demand in the near future, encouraging more drivers to purchase EVs. Larger stations like the one in San Francisco would be nice, too, and the addition of solar canopies to charging stations would be a nice bonus. Not that solar panels could provide the needed electricity for the chargers, but they could at least power a climate-controlled lounge with restrooms and other amenities. Regarding the carbon footprint associated with public charging, Electrify America claims that their EV charging infrastructure is now backed by 100% renewable energy via renewable energy certificates, and they also recently announced the commencement of operation of their first solar farm in southern California.

To encourage more widespread EV adoption, the charging infrastructure still needs to be expanded and improved. Thanks to the BIL, there is some encouraging progress being made toward that end, but we still have a long way to go.

Moshannon Group welcomes two new members to its Excom

In December 2023, members of the Moshannon Group elected two new members to join the Group's executive committee. The first is Rick McCorkle, a former vice-president of the Delaware Plant Society who holds degrees in wildlife management and ocean biodiversity. The second is Claire Holzner, who is president of the Coalition to Save Old Crow Wetland in Huntingdon County. Welcome, Rick and Claire. Long-time Excom member and current newsletter editor Steve Lachman was re-elected.

Environmental Update

#1:

Old Crow Wetland

By Claire Holzner

On January 31 DEP issued an Individual NPDES Permit to Rutter's for stormwater at their planned truck stop next to the wetland in Smithfield township, Huntingdon county. (at the intersection of routes 22 and 26). Members of the Coalition to Save Old Crow Wetland have written arguments for the appeal of the permit. Our lawyer will file our appeal with the Environmental Hearing Board by the deadline, March 1. Then the coalition should have some months to develop the case before the hearing.

Rutters' plan also has to be approved by the Smithfield township supervisors. It will probably go first to the Huntingdon County Planning Commission and then to the Smithfield Planning Commission, which meets on the last Tuesday of the month, so February 27. However, the Smithfield planning commission now has only two members and won't take any action until a third member is appointed. So they might consider the Rutters plan on Tuesday, March 26. After the planning commissions, the Smithfield supervisors will vote on it. If they approve it, we can appeal that. We'll send an email when we know of meetings when Rutters plans will be considered, and we encourage you to attend those.

Please let people know that this issue is not yet decided and we need to speak up to the Smithfield supervisors. Rutters is planning a large, disruptive truck stop, not a convenience store as some think. Old Crow and its birds, plants, and animals need us to defend them, and we don't have to accept the burden that Rutters is trying to put on our community.

On Friday March 29 at 8:00 pm there will be an Amphibian Walk at Old Crow. We'll walk to the vernal pools to find some amphibians. Tree-planting, bird walks, and other events are coming up this spring.

Join our Facebook group: [Coalition to Save Old Crow wetland \(Huntingdon PA\)](#) | [Facebook](#)

The coalition will need to hire experts and legal advice for the appeal. Donations are greatly appreciated. [Legal Funds to Save Old Crow Wetland by Coalition to Save Old Crow Wetland \(fundrazr.com\)](#) or send a check written to Coalition to Save Old Crow Wetland to: P.O. Box 7, Huntingdon PA 16652.



A turtle at the Old Crow Wetland

Update #2:

Benner Twp. Warehouse

By Dave Roberts

The Moshannon Group and other environmental organizations have concerns about stormwater from mega-warehouses being developed along major highways and river valleys. The stormwater temperature and sediments can have a significant impact on surface waters, streams, and groundwaters. Other concerns are increased truck traffic and air pollution impacts on local communities.

In 2022 plans for the Bellefonte Warehouse 1,080,000 square foot fulfillment center were submitted by a developer. The proposed mega-warehouse site is located between the Benner Pike development zone and the Logan Branch tributary of Spring Creek.

The Bellefonte Warehouse plans have now been submitted twice and withdrawn twice. The initial plans were withdrawn the day after Moshannon Group called attention to the potential for stormwater to enter a sinkhole/quarry area on the development site. Moshannon Group penned several letters to local municipal and state offices to voice concerns that there is a strong potential for stormwater discharge to enter karst sinkhole features in the proposed stormwater discharge area POI-2.

A few months after the first withdrawal the plans were quietly resubmitted. This second withdraw of plans followed a detailed letter from Moshannon Group to the developer and Benner Township officials with a critique of the stormwater plans.

Continued on Page 7

Warehouse *Cont'd*

The letter asked for enforcement of local codes requiring special action to prevent stormwater pollution to enter sinkholes.

We cannot say that our letters stopped this misplaced mega-warehouse development. The developer has not provided reasons for the plan withdrawals.

The broader concern is how a mega-warehouse would be considered at all on the site which is "closed depression" prone to sinkhole development. Plans for the million plus square foot mega-warehouse had proceeded through County, State, and local approvals with no consideration of the sinkhole problem. Hopefully the Moshannon Group actions will help officials be more cognizant of environmental impacts during planning and zoning considerations.

Moshannon Group Lunch and Learn Series Continues

Join Kelly Forest for part three of our Lunch and Learn series--this time featuring electric cars and reducing carbon emissions through your choice of transportation. She will describe her own experiences with her electric vehicle and describe incentives for purchasing a new or used vehicle.

Where: Schlow Library's community room, State College

When: Wednesday, March 13

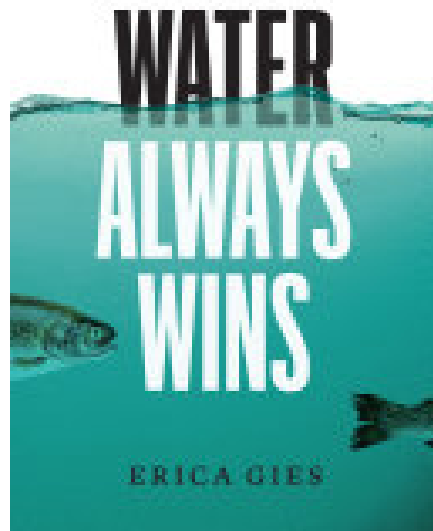
Time: Noon - 1:30

BOOK REVIEW

Water Always Wins

Review by Doug Mason

THRIVING IN AN AGE OF
DROUGHT AND DELUGE



Water Always Wins introduces us to global innovators in what the author calls the Slow Water Movement, who start by asking a revolutionary question: what does water want? Slow Water approaches are bespoke: they work with local landscapes, climates, and cultures rather than try to control or change them. Slow Water seeks to call out the ways in which speeding water off the land causes problems.

Water's true nature is to flex with the rhythms of the earth: the slow that phases absorb floods, store water for droughts, and feed natural systems. Figuring out what water wants - and accommodating its desires within our human landscapes - is now a crucial survival strategy.

Ironically, we're making water extremes worse by trying to solve flooding and drought. Our water management systems cause a myriad of unintended

consequences. Levees and seawalls, for example, protect one community but push higher water onto communities downstream or down coast. Levees also increase the scale of flood risk for the "protected" community by encouraging people to move into harm's way and by narrowing the floodplain, raising water levels. And by cutting off slow water from the land, they reduce storage underground, contributing to water scarcity.

The book visits innovators deemed "water detectives" in the USA, Peru, Iraq, Kenya, the UK, Vietnam and India to demonstrate what is possible in various circumstances. One case study is Philadelphia, which is reclaiming land along the banks of local creeks and rivers as parks to absorb excessive rainfall and flood when necessary. The book highlights other ecological practices being instituted by the City of Brotherly Love, and as of June 2021, it had installed more than 3,000 green stormwater systems at more than 850 sites, reducing combined sewer overflow volume by more than 2 billion gallons annually.

The water detectives visited in this book are ahead of this curve. In championing Slow Water, they are advocating for a fundamental shift in how we think about ourselves, our systems, and our world. They endeavor to understand water and accept it for what it is instead of trying to shape it into what we wish it to be. In so doing, they build a partnership with water based on respect, meeting as equals.

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