

A Trip of a Lifetime to Our National Parks

By Kristina Woodard • Mid-Atlantic Deputy Regional Field Director

Note: Kristina Woodard is our Chapter staff liaison to Sierra Club National. She took a road trip with family recently to see national parks the Sierra Club has been instrumental in protecting since it was founded in 1892.

As it turns out, cheering loudly about the beauty of natural wonders while traversing America's public lands is a surefire way to get your 10-year-old son rolling his eyes. All the same, it's true! We live on a fantastic continent.

I recently returned from an Epic Spring Break Road Trip with my husband and son, covering nearly 2,000 miles across public lands in Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. What we found took my breath away on multiple occasions, left me slack-jawed in wonder numerous times, and sparked cheers of joy that I couldn't help but shout out loud (much to my son's embarrassment—though he had his own moments of being overwhelmed with joy).

We are so incredibly lucky to have experienced these lands, set aside in all their glory for all Americans to enjoy, and protected and preserved for future generations—at least for now. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to explore and enjoy six national parks and two national monuments while they still exist. With Congress and our current federal administration repeatedly attempting to downsize federally protected areas, I don't take for granted that these lands will always be there.

Our journey began in Denver, where we picked up our rental car and drove off into the Rocky Mountains, following the Colorado River as it meandered south and west. The snow-covered peaks gradually gave way to redder rocks and the forests became shrubs, and the air shifted from cold and wet to hot and dry as the miles passed.

Colorado National Monument was the first place we got to flash our



The author at Horseshoe Bend at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area in Arizona with her husband, Jason, and son, John-Luke. Below left, Bryce Canyon National Park in Utah.



America the Beautiful pass to gain entrance. Not far from the Utah border, its towering rock formations and panoramic views provided a wonderful welcome to the world of cliffs and canyons. We also got to see our first big-horn sheep up close!

Continuing to follow the Colorado River, we wound our way into Utah, enjoying the Bureau of Land Management public access areas that allowed us to get right down into the river canyon as we drove along the scenic byway toward Moab, Utah.

We spent three days in Moab, in the red-rock moonshadow of the La Sal Mountains, which proved a perfect launching point to explore the jaw-dropping, soul-lifting views of Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park, and Dead Horse Point State Park. We also took some time to

follow the Colorado River westward along the incredibly scenic Potash Road. Dinosaur tracks, ancient petroglyphs, and delicious ice cream rounded out three happy days in this sun-soaked desert oasis.

Next up was an instant family favorite, Goblin Valley State Park, with its strange and otherworldly features, followed by an exploration of the rugged cliffs, domes, petroglyphs, arches, gorges, and orchards of Capitol Reef National Park. From there we drove

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Regulate Data Centers Now!

By Anjuli Ramos-Busot • Director, New Jersey Chapter, Sierra Club

Editor's note: This is an Op-Ed that appeared on NJ Spotlight News

They're doing more than straining the grid, and they stick us with bad water and dirty air if we fail to site them appropriately.

Data centers are rapidly reshaping New Jersey's landscape, and not for the better. As massive, energy-hungry facilities spread at unprecedented scale, Trenton has been unable to keep up. The result: rising energy costs, strained water supplies, loss of farmland, and communities left in the dark while billion-dollar corporations move forward with little oversight and sweetheart tax deals.

Look no further than former Gov. Phil Murphy's \$250 million tax deal with CoreWeave in 2025, and Nebius' five-year property tax exemption with the city of Vineland, each effectively shifting the burden to taxpayers. Nebius will host Microsoft operations at the site.

The Vineland project is a 2.4 million-square foot, 300 megawatt AI hy-

perscale cloud computing provider that is under construction, although it lacks final Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) air and water permits, meaningful public transparency, or an independent environmental impact statement. The location for this project, named "DataOne," is entirely inappropriate, as it will jeopardize adjacent commercial farmland, a wellhead protection area, the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer, and nearby overburdened South Jersey communities.

At the same time, about 30 miles north in East Greenwich, American Tower Corp. is trying to use zoning loopholes to build a data center. The site is just 50 feet from some homes. We need legislation that will protect communities from life-altering noise and heat island impacts due to server temperatures and extremely hot wastewater, as well as the air pollution from natural gas engines and backup diesel generators.

It is 2026, and yet New Jersey is allowing extremely polluting facilities to

be built in incorrect places, severely impacting marginalized communities, and sensitive ecosystems. We cannot allow the mistakes of the past to be repeated. We need strong data center regulation—now—to hold corporations accountable and mitigate impacts on ratepayers and the environment.

What we have instead is a dangerous regulatory vacuum, and New Jersey communities are paying the price. How can we fill this vacuum and ensure that these data centers are appropriately sited and developed?

Before facilities are approved, local governments should require a thorough analysis of the impacts to agricultural land, local water supply, and communities from increased noise, heat and air pollution. In particular, we need to understand the danger of depleting aquifers, such as the 17



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Keyport Contamination Raises Fresh Concerns

By Greg Remaud • Executive Director, NY/NJ Baykeeper



A recent NJ.com story citing a large number of cancer cases among residents near the Aeromarine landfill (officially, Keyport Sanitary Landfill) renewed focus on risks posed by toxins leaching from it. While alarming, we await investigations by the appropriate agencies to determine if there are any links between local cancer rates and this site.

What is not in question is the long-standing ooze of contamination from the landfill into Raritan Bay and the authorities' failure to stop it.

"For over 50 years, this community has lived in the shadow of an improperly sealed toxic dump that continues to leach carcinogens into the soil, groundwater, and our precious local waterways. Keyport residents have waited decades for environmental justice. We can no longer allow corporate negligence to compromise the health of this community and the Raritan Bay," said Taylor McFarland, conservation program manager for the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club. McFarland is a resident of Keyport. Sierra Club is working with NY/NJ Baykeeper to address this issue.

The site was originally home to the Aeromarine Plane & Boat Company. That company disappeared and the site became a municipal and industrial dump, from about the 1940s to the 1970s. It later became the Aeromarine Industrial Park, which is no longer in operation.

Unsealed Toxic Dump

For decades the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Borough of Keyport, Monmouth County Health Department, and other authorities have known that the landfill, owned by Bay Ridge Realty, was never properly sealed and that toxic substances have seeped into Raritan

Bay and potentially into nearby neighborhoods. Monitoring wells and soil borings on site confirm elevated levels of hazardous contaminants, including heavy metals, benzene, vinyl chloride, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)—all substances with well-documented health risks.

Despite this knowledge, daily life has proceeded as if nothing were wrong. People catch and eat fish and crabs and wade in waters adjacent to the site—there are no warning signs. Worse, there have been no studies to determine how far contamination has spread along the shoreline or into residential areas. Basic public-health responsibilities have been simply ignored.

In 2024, Baykeeper documented and reported multiple environmental violations at the former Aeromarine property. Subsequent investigation by the DEP revealed elevated levels of arsenic consistent with slag and other industrial byproduct material. This drew major media attention.

However, this did not elicit widespread concern, but it did enter us into discussions with the DEP. The agency's longstanding lack of enforcement of violations at this landfill, and many others, is shameful. It stems from personnel reductions, regulatory loopholes that limit the monitoring of unclosed landfills, and a shift away from natural resource protection to business efficiency.

To their credit, then DEP commissioner Shawn LaTourette and chief of enforcement Kim Cahall responded swiftly and directly to address the problem.

An initial, paltry \$15,000 fine levied on Bay Ridge Realty in 2021 was followed by subsequent fines that now amount to \$891,000, and these got the owner to talk with DEP about solutions. Bay Ridge Realty has challenged the fines in court. The next step is for the town to present a viable plan for the property.

Understanding how the situation



Keyport has a problem landfill lurking along its shoreline. Photo: Taylor McFarland

developed is essential to avoiding past mistakes and achieving a positive outcome.

In the early 2000s, the town of Keyport secured a brownfield redevelopment designation to facilitate cleanup and site redevelopment. However, over time all developers withdrew when confronted with the true cost of remediation and rebuilding there.

The landfill continued leaking. So, in 2021, then mayor Collette Kennedy led the borough to sue Bay Ridge Realty to force the proper landfill closure. But courts held that DEP had primary authority to address the problem. Understandably, the town drew back.

That's when Baykeeper intensified its legal activity and field investigations of the Aeromarine property to expose violations and have them resolved.

It should not have required years of pressure—or the specter of a possible cancer cluster—to prompt action, but there is now a chance to finally close the landfill properly so Keyport res-



Source: Google Maps

idents and all who fish Raritan Bay finally receive the protection they deserve.

What is needed is a transparent, unified effort by the borough council to create a plan that is technically feasible, financially viable, and safe from political cycles.

If not, the alternative is decades more toxic exposure, continued health risks, and damage to fish and marine life and the reputation of Keyport.

If past lessons are heeded and a thoughtful, cohesive plan comes forth, it could, and should, result in a fully capped landfill, remediated industrial land, a waterfront park, and tax ratables for the town in the quickest possible way.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Renew the Electric School Bus Grant Program!

By Bill Beren • Transportation Committee Chair, Beren1@verizon.net

There was a lot of activity related to clean transportation in New Jersey in the first quarter of 2026.

Electric School Buses

Peg Hanna, director of climate change mitigation and monitoring for the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, has announced that she is retiring after a 35-year career with the DEP. She has been a staunch advocate for electrifying New Jersey's school bus fleet for the past seven years, starting with the first grant program using the Volkswagen settlement money in 2018. For years, Sierra Club has had a very close and productive working relationship with Peg as we advocated for school bus electrification. Peg was featured in our first school bus video "Electric School Buses Are the Future," which can be seen on our website. We will miss her and look forward to continuing our work with Melissa Evango, who is expected to be the new head for vehicle electrification.

Melissa's responsibilities will include the oversight of the remaining two years of the NJ Electric School Bus Grant Program. A priority for the Club will be drafting and lobbying for a

bill to extend the program for another three years. Oregon and Minnesota have pioneered a unique tax of 25-50 cents on home deliveries by companies such as Amazon to fund vehicle electrification grants. Given the tight budget facing New Jersey, this could be a fairly painless option for our state to adopt.

The federal Clean School Bus Program is expected to begin accepting new grant applications this summer after a one-year hiatus—the Trump Administration is attempting to redirect the grant money away from electric battery buses toward buses powered by such fuels as compressed natural gas, propane, hydrogen, and biomass, which generally have lower emissions than diesel but are not as clean as all-electric.

It is not clear if school districts will be interested in applying for grants to purchase buses that will run on these alternate fuels. For instance, First Student, the largest provider of school bus transportation in the country, wrote to the Environmental Protection Agency that they will continue to request funding for electric school buses, given the costs and safety concerns with propane and compressed natural gas (CNG).

Problems cited by First Student with propane include the fact that it is 1) 33% less efficient than diesel, 2) propane buses need to be emptied of propane before they can be maintained in indoor garages, and 3) Occupational Safety and Health Administration records show that severe injuries and sometimes death can occur during these fuel transfers. They also claimed that infrastructure costs for propane and CNG can equal the costs of electrical charging infrastructure. In addition, these alternate fuels are still fossil-fuel based and continue to emit greenhouse gases, further contributing to climate change.

Another barrier to using alternate fuels is that the big four school bus manufacturers do not produce buses designed to run on these fuels, with the exception that Blue Bird makes propane-powered buses.

Vehicle Electrification

Our Chapter is working with legislators to implement our recommendation to replace the current punitive registration fees assessed on EVs with a per kWh tax on EV charging that would act very much like the current gas tax.

For more information, please refer to the [report](#) we wrote on this topic.

New Brunswick-based warehousing and distribution trucking company Herman Total Distribution Service, took delivery of 15 electric tractor trailers last October. In March, the company was awarded another \$3 million grant to purchase additional electric semi cabs, further expanding the largest electric fleet of tractor trailers in New Jersey. This is an important milestone in the transition to sustainable warehouse operations, which hopefully will serve as an example for other large logistics companies.

NJ Turnpike Expansion Downsized

Gov. Mikie Sherrill's administration has scaled back the size of the new Turnpike Bridge over Newark Bay from four lanes in each direction to two, in keeping with the carrying capacity of the existing bridge. The Sierra Club supported the need to replace the existing Casciano Bridge because of its age and

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Rumors He Was Wrong May Have Been Premature

By Tony Hagen • editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Sierrans come in all shapes and sizes. One such was Paul R. Ehrlich, who passed away recently at the age of 93.

Somehow Ehrlich managed to get his spurs lodged in the side of certain conservatives during his lifetime, such that they practically celebrated his death.

Headlines saying, essentially, “He got it wrong!” virtually littered the conservative press. Why such jubilation?

Ehrlich was the author of *The Population Bomb*, a treatise on the imminent downfall of man owing to his rampant consumption and the supposed limitations of our global food supply.

Ehrlich wrote the book in 1968, at which time the world population was 3.5 billion. It’s now well over 8 billion, so we got over any hiccups in sustainability that Ehrlich thought would trip us up.

What got people so uptight was that Ehrlich’s arguments were a compelling indictment against the capitalist system of produce and consume. It flew in the face of the corporate mantra, which is build markets everywhere.

I was curious about this post-humous reaction to Ehrlich, so I went out and bought a copy of his book. It cost me \$15 on Amazon and was billed as a used book and the last one in stock, presumably to get me to buy it, although it was clear upon receipt that it was run off an on-demand printer at very low quality and nobody had ever creased its pages.

Rivers on Fire

Ehrlich was actually encouraged to write the book by Sierra Club, because in the sixties everybody was looking at everything from roadside trash to rivers on fire with chemical pollution and wondering whether the sky was really falling. We didn’t have the Environmental Protection Agency or the Clean Air Act back then.

People like Ehrlich got Richard M. Nixon to pay attention and do something, and it pulled industry up short like a mad dog reaching the end of its chain. No wonder there was so much lingering resentment.

Ehrlich’s book is not an easy read. I just think that technically it’s not a marvel of literary accomplishment (although who am I to talk?). It piles environmental horror upon environmental

horror until you are somewhat traumatized and ready for a Lake Tahoe spa—if you can afford it. (I went to Starbucks for a latte.)

But in his day people read it and then carried the football another fifty yards. Charlton Heston starred in a movie about people eating chips made of recycled people. China passed its one-child-per-family policy, which spurred its own horror stories, and India tried forced sterilization.

Yes, Ehrlich was partly held to blame for these things. He condoned and recommended such policies in his book.

But the world was a mess in those days, and Ehrlich seemed to want to be as blunt as dropping billions of pounds of bombs on Cambodia.



Looking back, we want to ask whether he overreacted to the sustainability issue. We didn’t have genetically modified crops in those days. Improvements in mechanization, pest control, and fertilizer input changed the game for agriculture, and a large part of the Amazon rainforest had yet

to be converted to beef production. Industry found ways through science to feed all those five billion extra mouths, and those advances, should you choose to call them that, had not been foreseen in Ehrlich’s day.

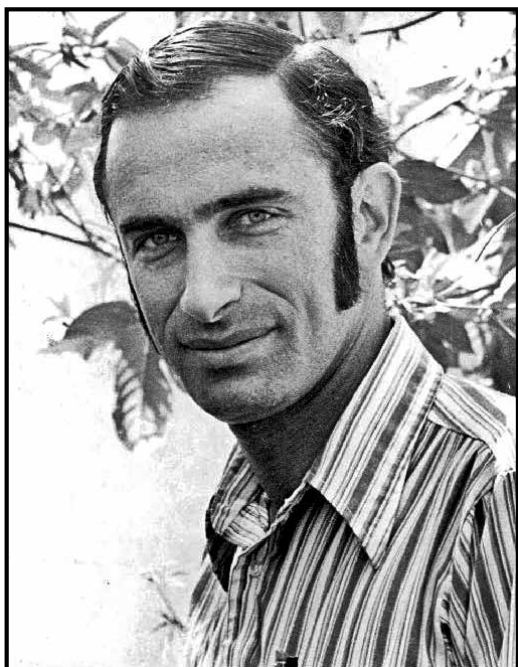
Some people think science can continue to solve all of our problems. Others see an image of Phileas Fogg tearing the boat to pieces and throwing it bit by bit into the boiler to get more steam, as he rushes to get back to England to win a bet and save his fortune.

We’ve paid a heavy price to feed those five billion extra people. How many more can we feed?

Ehrlich sang like a canary in the mine. He did help to reset the doomsday clock by advocating for environmental clean-up. People overlook his unflinching efforts in that regard. We do owe him better than the headlines he got.

By the way, I’m done with *The Population Bomb*. If anybody else wants to read it, just send me a note and the postage.

It’s our modern Helen of Troy, the book that launched a thousand, well, different things.



Paul R. Ehrlich. Credit: Ilka Hartmann

This Column Was Not Written by AI

By Joe Testa • chapter.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

When you have a column to write on deadline, on occasion writer’s block sets in and the columnist drifts toward a state of panic. These days, there is an easy out: “Claude, write a 750-word article for me on the impacts of AI data center energy consumption in New Jersey.” Thirty seconds later, presto! We would have a very nice article. But at what price?

According to a rough estimate provided by Google (ironically, generated by AI—nobody’s perfect), the amount of electricity used by a typical AI model for this little task, up to 5 watt-hours, is roughly the same as the amount needed to power a standard LED light bulb for 10 minutes.

This is of course a small example, but AI from providers such as ChatGPT, Claude, Microsoft Copilot, and Gemini is increasingly popular for online searches, writing assignments, and professional work tasks (including mine as a software engineer), and those light-bulb-level energy expenditures add up. Market research estimates vary, but by 2030—

just four years from now—data center energy consumption could amount to as much as 20% of all US energy consumption, up from 4% in 2023. PJM Interconnection, the regional energy pool for 13 states including New Jersey, projects a general usage increase of 32 gigawatts (GW) by 2030—with 30 GW of that coming from increases in data center electricity consumption!

New data centers to process AI tasks are proliferating in New Jersey and across the country, resulting in increased demand on our electric supply, transmission infrastructure, and in many cases water usage to cool these facilities. As reported recently in *South Jersey Climate News*, we have more than 80 data centers in New Jersey, many clustered along the NJ Turnpike corridor and in the New York City metropolitan area. Yet more are planned, including a proposed enormous 300 MW project in Vineland. (It could be worse: Some of the largest data centers in the country, as large as 1.2 GW, use as much electricity as Newark, and even larger projects are on the drawing board!)

Soaring Energy Costs

Add this new data-driven demand to our increasing summertime use of air conditioning as we deal with the warming trend of climate change, and we have a recipe for spiraling electricity costs in the near future. These costs will be borne by the people of New Jersey who will be essentially subsidizing the data center investors who will profit from the data center boom. According to Bloomberg, electricity in areas located near significant data center activity now costs as much as 267% more for a single month than it did five years ago, compared with an average 27% increase across the country during that same period. To meet this demand, we will backslide on our clean energy generation goals; the Trump

Administration cites increasing energy needs to justify rolling back restrictions on dirty coal power plants.

Five years ago, who would have thought that an environmental organization would have to deal with data center expansion triggered by AI?

• The huge energy needs of data centers put a strain on power transmission infrastructure, and the burden of paying for this falls on all ratepayers, not just data center developers.

• Non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) between data center developers and municipalities often obscure details such as estimated water usage and the resulting impact on local water supplies.

• Data centers are increasingly being sited on our disappearing farmland and open space.

The New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club is taking a leading role in taking on this issue right here where we live:

- Our Data Center and Warehouse Committee keeps a watch on the sprawling expansion of these projects.
- Our Legislative Committee monitors legislation in Trenton that deals with regulation of data center siting and energy generation policy.
- We hold biweekly cross-team planning sessions to formulate strategies for monitoring and combating irresponsible expansion projects.
- Our staff develops and presents informational webinars open to all Sierra Club members.
- We do outreach and share information with communities affected by these expansion projects.

Large Load Tariffs

One regulatory proposal we support would limit irresponsible infrastructure buildout through assessing “large load tariffs,” which would require big electricity users—such as data center developers—to pay upfront for the grid upgrades they need, rather than shifting those costs onto everyone else. This would weed out speculative projects by real estate developers that have no real data center customers lined up but are essentially adding to the energy price inflation and the pressure to build potentially wasteful electricity infrastructure.

Is data center sprawl an issue that you are interested in digging into? A great deal of the work by our Chapter, including membership on the committees listed above, is done by volunteer members. We’d love to hear from you if you want to get involved! Send us an email at info@newjersey.sierraclub.org and someone will contact you to discuss where you can fit in.

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The Sierra Club has pivoted, both on the national level and in New Jersey, to tackle some of the specific environmental and economic threats posed by the rapid expansion of data center power demand and land use:

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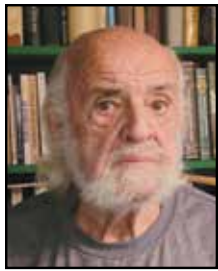
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

The New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club is seeking a volunteer **vice treasurer**. Assist our Chapter treasurer in tracking donations, disbursements, and grant funding. Experience managing financial records of a business or nonprofit organization and knowledge of NetSuite accounting software are a big plus. For further information, contact Chapter Treasurer Paul Sanderson at treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Did you know you can do wilderness vacations with The Sierra Club? Visit: <https://shorturl.at/iJ7qJ>

Trials and Tribulations of Our Mistreated Milk Cows

By George Moffatt • Education Chair, Jersey Shore Group



A recent ad in a very national magazine stated that milk cows eat a variety of healthy foods. It listed citrus and beet pulp, brewer's grains, but also candy and unsold bakery goods (cows reportedly love chocolate).

Good PR, certainly. But just try to sell this food utopia fantasy to the cows.

Surprisingly, the magazine ad avoided the industry's usually bucolic illustrations of cows grazing peacefully on lush, grassy fields, with the sun shining down benevolently upon them. Instead, the ad revealed one of the milk industry's little embarrassing secrets. It had a photo of cows lined up inside a long dark wooden shed, their heads stretched out of very narrow windows, apparently trying to dine on the weeds outside. Or, just as probable, seeking sunshine and fresh air.

The tragic fact is that milk cows are "forced" into an industrial, non-stop, brutally imposed breeding process to

increase their output of milk. A cow's yearly output is about 7,000 pounds by traditional farming, but today's industrially imposed output is about 19,000 pounds,

This corporately induced "efficiency" comes at a gut-wrenching cost to today's female "breeders"—the industry's term for milk cows. They usually start calving at around 2 and produce milk industrially for just 3 to 4 years. A cow's normal lifespan is 15-20 years. At the end of their abbreviated life span, cows are depleted of calcium, and their bodies and their legs are so weakened that they can no longer give birth. At this point, the industry labels the milk cows, euphemistically, as "culled" or "spent," and they are typically sent to slaughter.

By then, they can be suffering from a variety of disorders, such as emaciation, lameness, sole ulceration, laminitis, and hoof rot. They also suffer from painful internal disorders, such as twisted stomachs, torn udder ligaments, and acute or painful bacterial infections.

The dairy companies remove these

cows to make room for the next unfortunate group of females.

Not surprisingly, the magazine ad skipped over another problem—what could be labeled the cows' retribution—the air pollution that cows, both healthy and sick, waft up daily into our already polluted skies. Giggly children call them "farts"; demure adults prefer "wind"; and scientists, "carbon dioxide" or "CO₂."

Most livestock, especially ruminants such as cattle, produce methane (CH₄) as part of their normal digestive processes. This process, called enteric fermentation, represents over a quarter of the greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture.

Another issue is cow waste, also called "manure" or "poop" (your choice). Hopefully, the manure is spread responsibly as fertilizer on farmland. Unfortunately, it sometimes is untreated and just piled high, where it may pollute underground and above-ground water supplies.

In fairness, we can't blame the cows' evacuations as deliberate "revenge," although given their treatment by the

factory farms, they certainly would be justified. After all, the nation's calves' and bulls' journeys to Nirvana are quick and presumably painless. Only the female milk cows must pass through Hades first.

In their heyday, most Jersey dairies sold their milk locally under their brand names and even delivered door-to-door. But today, most of their milk is sold to processors for resale.

The Garden State has about 40 dairies remaining, down from about 200 in 2000. In the early 1900s, dairy farms were an important business in the state. In 1935 there were 6,000 dairy farms with 130,000 cows. Today, because New Jersey's dairies are competing with the factory farms, they generate roughly 84 million pounds of milk per year. Although that sounds like a lot, New Jersey ranks about 44th in US milk production.

Resources

Milk ad: <https://shorturl.at/8jGF5>

NJ Dairy Farms: <https://shorturl.at/oDWxZ>

Milk stats: <https://shorturl.at/sD2c5>

MONEY MATTERS

Monthly Donations Help!

By Jim Andreano • Fundraising Committee Chair, Jimandreano@gmail.com



We have completed our March fundraising appeal, and our summer appeal will begin soon. As always, every donation is appreciated and every donor is cherished.

If you are or have been a donor, we humbly invite you to take the next step. Make it monthly! Sign up for a monthly donation at whatever level feels right for you.

Why donate monthly?

- Ease and convenience. Once you are signed up, the rest happens automatically. No more mailing checks. Just set it and forget it.

- Facilitates budgeting. From a family budgeting standpoint, many donors prefer spreading out their annual donations in regular predictable amounts throughout the year. Some find that by donating on a monthly basis, they can afford to donate more than a single, lump sum.

- Financial flexibility. You can adjust your monthly donation amount at any

time, as your personal situation may allow.

- Benefits to the Chapter. Your monthly donations create a predictable, steady income flow which enables us to meet our ongoing obligations as well as emerging needs.

Our director is a proud monthly donor, as am I. If you wish to join us, please visit our website at www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey, click on the red "Donate" button at the top right, and click "Yes, Count Me In!" to make your gift monthly. Or simply contact me at JimAndreano@gmail.com

If you are not ready to take this step, we, of course, will gratefully accept all one-time donations of any amount. Please be on the lookout for our summer appeal letter, which most of you will receive by US mail. Or visit our website.

And lastly, if you are still reading this (and you are!), you may have a special affinity for fundraising. If so, you may wish to consider joining our new Fundraising Committee. Please contact me for more information.

Thank you for supporting The Sierra Club!

ExCom Meeting Highlights

April: The Chapter has rolled out a volunteer survey form that will enable staff and volunteers to follow up with new members and help them become involved in our activities and advocacy. Visit: <https://shorturl.at/qxo3O>

Staff held two webinars in April and May on data centers and how they threaten communities and the environment through power and water consumption and CO₂ generation. The Chapter is working with legislators to advance legislation to better regulate this development.

Chapter members are working to support NJ PACT REAL rules for development in areas prone to flood damage. These rules are opposed by the building and business lobbies.

In the monthly Roundtable, attendees discussed the chapter budget.

March: Laura Lynch was appointed Legislative Committee chair, replacing Bill Brazell who resigned. The Chapter expressed appreciation for his time and effort. The committee's standing rules were updated.

The following endorsements were approved: Rep. Antwan McClellan Conaway, D-3; Rep. Nellie Pou, D-9; Rep. LaMonica McIver, D-10.

ExCom approved a resolution in support of the Inland Route 29 realignment proposal in Trenton. This would facilitate recreation and access to the waterfront.

A central email address was established for information about the Chapter and to reach Chapter staff: info@newjersey.sierraclub.org

An Owl hybrid meeting device was purchased and received its first trial at the May Chapter ExCom meeting. This enables participation at meetings from home and in person.

Tony Hagen will become chair of the Group Leadership meetings to be held monthly.

Staff in March conducted a Legislative Breakfast at the Hamilton headquarters to brief legislators on Sierra Club advocacy for 2026.

The Conservation Committee is collaborating with the Edelman Foster Museum and its Science Program. The West Group will sponsor a backpack that can be checked out to assist with environmental monitoring and record keeping. The backpack will contain everything needed for species identification and information gathering. Contact Gina Corola at ginaceee@verizon.net for more information.

February: Chapter Conservation Program Manager Taylor McFarland is working to establish an endangered species committee and is developing a mission statement. Contact her at info@newjersey.sierraclub.org if you would like to participate.

Chapter Executive Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot announced the Chapter has secured a \$150,000 grant to aid in advocacy for data center legislation.

Building and Electrification Committee Co-Chair Steve Miller announced the group's January 15 webinar on the impact of data centers had a record 169 registrants and 80 attendees.

The Warehouse Committee name was changed to the Data Center and Warehouse Committee to reflect its expanded role to address data center impacts.

ExCom approved a resolution to cover volunteer member tabling expenses up to \$200 yearly per tabling entity, provided receipts are submitted to Chapter treasurer Paul Sanderson.

In the Roundtable, ExCom, staff and volunteers discussed improving communication among Chapter entities.

Fundraising Committee Chair Jim Andreano reported a 2025 fundraising total of \$102,316 and a 14% expense ratio.

ELECTRIC BUS

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similarity to Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge, which collapsed in 2024 when it was hit by a freighter that lost power. As part of the new plan, the governor has announced that work will also begin on a redesign of the Turnpike terminus leading into the Holland Tunnel.

NJ Transit Subsidies

Gov. Sherrill's budget proposal included a 26% increase in operating subsidies for NJ Transit, bringing the annual allocation for NJ Transit to over \$1 billion. This increase is partly supported by newly dedicated revenue from the Corporate Transit Fee imposed during Gov. Phil Murphy's final term in office. The additional funds will cover an expected 11% increase in operating costs for the agency while the budget assumes that revenue from bus

and rail fares will remain flat.

In February, NJ Transit announced the reintroduction of its popular FlexPass: 20 one-way tickets between specific rail stations or bus stops for a 15% discount. This option had been halted in 2024 as part of the agency's cost-cutting efforts and fare hikes but was popular with commuters who did not commute five days a week. FlexPass tickets must be purchased using the NJ Transit mobile app, are valid for 30 days from the date of purchase, and are non-refundable.

Resources

Electric School Buses: <https://shorturl.at/CJich>

EV fees: <https://shorturl.at/EkaVY>

Herman Grant: <https://shorturl.at/WriwK>

"I have always befriended animals and have said many a good word for them. Even to the least-loved mosquitoes I gave many a meal, and told them to go in peace."

~ John Muir

CELEBRATING Earth Day 2026

Sierra Club members from all over New Jersey fanned out for Earth Day events, distributing Club information and promoting clean energy.



Pat and Steve Miller at a table stacked with handouts at an April Sierra Club Shore Group event at Brookdale Community College.



Left to right, Pat Miller; a visitor to the table; and Ellen Goldberg, Tinton Falls Environmental Commission and organizer of the Tinton Falls fair.



Above and right, the Hunterdon-Warren Group celebrated Earth Day with a tabling event at the Hunterdon County Earth Day festival. Seated behind the table is Group Vice Chair and Secretary Karen Becker.



West Group members Howard Stein and Denise Brush staffed a table at the Edelman Fossil Park museum, in Sewell, New Jersey.



At the Hudson County Earth Day event, Steve Krinsky and Pat Hilliard handed out brochures and copies of *The Jersey Sierran* to a large number of visitors.



Above and right, at Earth Day Earth Fest in Montclair, Chapter Transportation Chair Bill Beren took these photos of his wife JoAnn Katzban working the Sierra Club table and David Kim, of Hillsboro, displaying his Hyundai Ioniq5 with portable solar panels that can help charge the battery and run accessories.



Legislation Can Protect Us From Data Centers

By Pat Miller • Co-Chair, Building Electrification Committee



Some people say we need a moratorium on new data centers because of the problems they are causing, such as rising energy costs, as described in the companion piece on

data centers by Pat Hilliard on page 7 of this issue of *The Jersey Sierran*. In the 2024 PJM Interconnection power auction, utilities in the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest (PJM Interconnection) were forced to pay significantly more to secure electricity supplies. “Data centers were responsible for 63%” of those price increases,” according to a [January 2026 paper](#) on New Jersey’s energy crisis.

Whether or not we need a moratorium on data centers, we certainly need some rules and regulations in place around them. And fast! Or we can expect similarly steep cost increases in future.

In a [document](#) available on our website, the Sierra Club has summarized a number of policy options being implemented in states across the country that can help reduce the collateral cost of data centers for communities, ensure that clean energy objectives are met, improve transparency of data center development deals, protect air quality, and help in many other ways. These policies encompass four main categories of guardrails:

- Protect Residential Customers, by having data centers pay their fair share, such as with special tariffs on large-load users, separate rate classes for heavy users, and avoidance of

shifting the cost burden to residential consumers (aka, “cross subsidies”).

- Clean Energy Comes First, meaning each data center must supply its own renewable energy in compliance with New Jersey’s Renewable Portfolio Standard. They could accomplish this by installing renewable power onsite or elsewhere or by buying renewable energy credits.

- Fair Rules for All, which means not offering data centers subsidies on local or state taxes or utility rates.

- Protect Public Health, which means considering the cumulative impact on regional air pollution that a data center would cause, or requiring on-site battery backup to avoid the need for dirty, onsite diesel generators during times of grid outages or other supply shortfalls.

In addition to introducing laws and regulations to mitigate data center impacts, New Jersey and all other PJM states are trying to ramp up our clean energy supply and modernize our grid. These measures are desperately needed to meet current and future levels of electricity demand by data centers and to throttle down the price increases for all customers. The loss of our anticipated installations of offshore wind has been a terrible blow to our needed grid supply and reliability. To make it worse, many applications to interconnect new renewable energy projects have been sidetracked by PJM in favor of more fossil fuel (primarily gas)

electricity generation, which will take years longer to create and bring online.

We and other groups who want sensible data center development are advocating on many fronts. Adequate supplies of renewable energy can help ensure that data centers have a smaller CO2 footprint, and the Sierra Club is tracking the many legal actions across the country to reverse the federal administration’s roadblocks to renewable energy.

“...New Jersey and all other PJM states are trying to ramp up our clean energy supply and modernize our grid.”

In January 2026, the 13 PJM state governors signed an agreement with the Federal Secretaries of Energy and Interior to 1) accelerate the speed at which new power comes online, 2) ensure data centers cover their share of the costs of any new resources, and 3) stem the increase in auction prices to bring affordability to the PJM region.

Also in January, NJ Gov. Mikie Sherrill issued Executive Orders 1 and 2 that stipulate many steps (with deadlines) the NJ Board of Public Utilities and other state agencies must take to generate more grid-scale solar energy, residential (“community”) solar, and grid-scale battery storage. The orders also require them to develop systems to monitor usage and enable energy supplied to the grid by potentially millions of individual sources, such as home solar, electric vehicle batteries, and other devices used by residential and business consumers.

These systems are known as Demand Response and Distributed Energy Resources Management; managed effectively, they would collectively add up to “virtual power plants” that could significantly help with New Jersey’s

energy needs. These systems would increase grid capacity while making it more flexible and reliable.

Planning and project awards are underway for the various actions ordered by Gov. Sherrill and are already producing results. Furthermore, grid expansion will also provide the supply needed for the transition to energy saving heat pumps and electric vehicles. The incorporation of virtual power plants will add significantly more renewable energy to the grid than we have now and help us to achieve our clean energy goals in New Jersey.

On the legislative front, there are several bills under consideration to manage data centers:

- [S680/A1170](#) would require data centers to bring their own clean energy, prioritizing onsite generation.

- [S731/A796](#) would require special large load tariffs with front-loaded costs for data centers.

- [S3379/A4096](#) would provide for transparency and reporting of electricity and water use.

- [S1857/A177](#) would stipulate that data centers be built well away from homes, make efficient use of water, and not be situated in protected areas such as wetlands, forests, or farms.

More legislation is needed. We still need to rein in runaway tax incentives, as has already been done in Michigan, Minnesota, and Illinois. We also need noise and cumulative emissions mitigation. We are fighting the good-but-challenging fight.

Resources

Data Center Paper: <https://shorturl.at/ShBsA>

Policy Document: <https://shorturl.at/sYvn7>

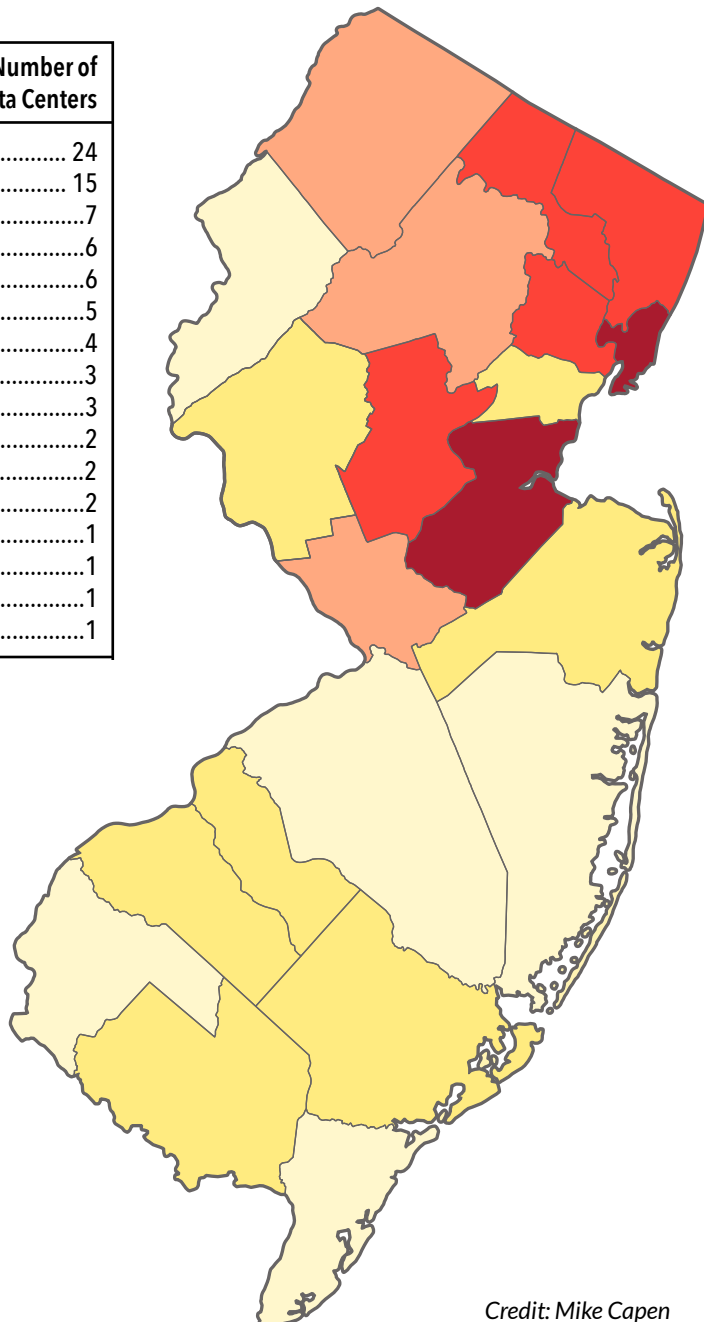
Governors’ Letter: <https://shorturl.at/POhNI>

Data Center Proliferation

There are at least 83 data centers in operation, under construction, or planned in New Jersey.

Source: NJ Spotlight

County	Number of Data Centers
Hudson	24
Middlesex	15
Essex	7
Bergen	6
Somerset.....	6
Passaic	5
Morris	4
Mercer	3
Sussex.....	3
Atlantic.....	2
Gloucester.....	2
Monmouth.....	2
Camden	1
Cumberland.....	1
Hunterdon	1
Union.....	1



Credit: Mike Capen

DATA CENTERS

continued from page 1

trillion-gallon [Kirkwood-Cohansey](#), which we rely upon for drinking water and for farmland irrigation.

We need legislation such as [S3379/A4096](#), to require facilities to report water and energy use, and [A3966](#), to study the long-term impacts of data center water consumption. Without this essential information, communities and farmers like those in Vineland are left guessing about risks to their drinking water and livelihoods, and the state’s ability to plan becomes an impossible task, especially during droughts.

New Jersey’s data center situation is unique, given our already overdeveloped, highly populated landscape, where smaller data centers exist among farmland and communities, and next to parks and schools. Often, we find smaller, adjacent data centers growing into large conglomerates or campuses that complicate air and water regulation and amplify impacts.

When multiple data centers pull millions of gallons of water from shared resources and simultaneously run natural gas engines or diesel backup generators, the environmental impacts add up regardless of separate minor source or equipment permits with the DEP. These impacts are felt by communities cumulatively and all at once.

When data centers are built in environmental justice communities,

they should be triggering New Jersey-related rules regardless of whether they are “small facilities.” Hospitals, schools and colleges are all governed by environmental justice regulations, whereas data centers have become an egregious omission. Their buildout is like erecting small power plants without adequate oversight.

In place of fossil fuels, cleaner and cheaper energy alternatives exist. Battery storage can replace diesel backup systems, and legislation such as [S680/A1170](#), requiring 100% clean electricity for data centers, has the potential to improve our grid and bring down costs for families.

Data centers strain our grid and should be paying their fair share, not less, as outlined in [S731/A796](#). Tax incentives must be removed unless tied to clean energy, affordability, or community benefits.

We cannot afford to let this industry grow without accountability.

We urgently need laws and rulemaking to establish clear and strong standards for siting, energy and water use and community impact. Anything less risks locking New Jersey into a future of higher energy costs, degraded natural resources, more unhealthy high-ozone days, and less government transparency, with more decisions made behind closed doors.

“We cannot afford to let this industry grow without accountability.”

NJ's Freshwater and Ecosystems Under Threat

By Sonja Hegel • Visitor Experience Guide, Edelman Fossil Park & Museum



South Jersey's beloved Pine Barrens National Reserve and Shore towns rely heavily on one of our lesser-known great treasures, the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer. Seventeen trillion gallons in scope, the aquifer is surficial, meaning it is a shallow groundwater system that sustains the region's wetlands and waterways.

The waterways the aquifer supports are home to many unique species that have evolved to the Pinelands' acidic, nutrient-poor conditions. The aquifer also supplies thousands of New Jersey homes with freshwater, including roughly 200,000 acres of farmland. The aquifer's freshwater is essential for supporting the health of local bays, too. Yet, this aquifer and, subsequently, the nature that relies on it, are under massive threat from rising sea levels and other extreme weather that result from climate change and human activity.

Water Scarcity

Firstly, both public and private wells extract water from the aquifer, and rainwater and snowmelt are the primary ways it gets replenished. However, New Jersey has been experiencing more frequent and prolonged droughts, not only preventing the aquifer from replenishing, but also causing waterways to lower or disappear entirely.

For example, vernal pools—which are temporary, seasonal wetlands that offer a safe breeding ground for native amphibians—are forming less, or if they appear at all, are drying up rapidly in the drought conditions. Without these pools, species, such as the endangered pine barrens treefrog, become more vulnerable to predators and face further population decline.

Small-scale, localized burns are beneficial to the Pinelands ecosystem, since native species such as the pitch pine have evolved to survive in its fire-

prone conditions. However, more frequent and stronger droughts are creating drier landscapes—literally creating more fuel for the fire—and sparking more expansive and destructive wildfires. Prolonged droughts compound the likelihood of severe wildfires that incinerate new-growth forests.

The aquifer and South Jersey's landscapes are at further risk of drying out because of saltwater intrusion. Typically, freshwater flows out toward the sea, but since freshwater levels are so low from drought conditions and excessive pumping, while climbing global temperatures are causing sea levels to rise, salt water has begun to seep into freshwater reserves.

This saltwater contaminates the water supply and renders wells unsuitable for use. Chemical interventions in wells to combat saltwater intrusion and artificial recharge of aquifers are possible and are increasingly necessary, but they are costly and do not resolve the other impacts of salt stress, such as habitat loss and soil salinization.

Saltwater intrusion also is drying out native forests and farmland. Rising salty tides kill off any young growth and allow more salt-tolerant species to take over, typically bringing invasive species along with them. The result is encroaching marshland littered with dead pines and cedars and invasive grasses, dubbed ghost forests, and is a striking example of how climate change is causing ecosystem loss.

Human development is one of the greatest threats to the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer and the Pinelands ecosystem. Besides habitat loss, increasing human development places more demand on the already-threatened aquifer, increasing the risk of saltwater



The Pine Barrens sits atop a critical-but-limited water resource that is vital for residents of New Jersey and also for the many wondrous creatures that inhabit this wilderness area. Credit: Seth Kantor

intrusion. Recently, across the region, plans to build data centers—which demand substantial quantities of water—have caused widespread concern in New Jersey

All combined, these human and environmental forces are putting immense stress on the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer and, thereby, threatening the survival of South Jersey's landscapes and the nature and human life they support. Individual and society-wide interventions are urgently needed to sustain the freshwater supply and bolster surrounding ecosystems.

So, how can you help protect the aquifer and the Pinelands? Help scientists track emerging ghost for-

ests by documenting ones you see and submitting the data to SciStarter here: <https://scistarter.org/ghosts-of-the-coast>. Another way to support the health of waterways and wetlands is to avoid using fertilizers and chemical pesticides on your lawns. Rainwater carries these harmful chemicals from lawns to local waterways. Lastly, join the Pinelands Alliance's Save the Source campaign to stay informed on emerging threats and more ways you can get involved.

Resources

Safer insecticides: <https://shorturl.at/OIov6>

Saltwater intrusion: <https://shorturl.at/BVueY>

Join Our Water Committee

New Jersey has a lot of water problems that need to be confronted: lead pipes in school water fountains, superfund site pollution, water-guzzling data centers, and ocean saltwater in our wells. We need your help! If you have specialized skills or knowledge, or if you just want to help, contact Chapter Chair Joe Testa at chapter.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org. Be a part of our Water Committee. Let's improve New Jersey's waterways.

A New Kind of Big Box Sprawl Takes Over

By Patricia Hilliard • Hudson County Group



You may have seen them as you drive along major highways in New Jersey: big box warehouses that sprawl across the land. They seem to be popping up on

farmland, but more of them exist in Camden, Essex, and Hudson County where there is access to major railroads and shipping ports. These big warehouses can be filled with groceries and electronics, but increasingly more of these buildings are huge computer centers that are flashing and buzzing with data.

There are various counts, because data center proliferation in New Jersey is not well tracked, but the consensus indicates our state has more than 80 data centers either built or well along in planning. Data centers like to be nestled close to big cities like Wilmington, Philadelphia, and New York. That puts New Jersey right in the path of development.

Ever since the 1970s computer revolution, data centers have been built to process information for banks, insur-

ance companies and government. But with the increased use of online information and digital cloud services, the big boxes are humming with crypto investments, computer game playing, a universe of websites, digital photo storage, online shopping, and AI. They are getting larger, too:

A 300-megawatt (MW) data center is planned for Vineland, NJ.

Data centers use lots of electricity, and they often need lots of water to cool the computers. "A typical 100 MW data center uses approximately 300,000 gallons of water per day for cooling—equivalent to the daily consumption of 2,600 households," according to Tech Insider.

The DataOne data center under construction in Vineland would include "six 220,000-square-foot buildings to house servers and computing equipment," making it one of the largest data centers in New Jersey, according to Wolf Commercial Real Estate.

Even if these data centers provide their own power for operation and cooling, they are still likely to churn out

CO₂, directly or indirectly, and create other problems for communities. If they use gas, it may be fracked, causing contamination of air and water where the gas is tapped and along its pipeline. The DataOne power source is not yet settled, but it will likely involve use of natural gas.

Elizabeth, Newark, Jersey City, Bayonne, and Secaucus are other sites that already have data center activity and are targeted for new data centers. Part of the problem is that towns that get these data centers often don't know the full picture of what they're allowing in. Data center developers find ways to conceal information through:

- Incremental building phases that don't trigger broad review thresholds
- Claims of proprietary information for technical designs and cooling methods
- Limited disclosures during local planning board review
- Use of flexible zoning categories such as "light industrial" that don't trigger full reviews

- Separate utility reviews for power consumption
- Shell entities that obscure the identity of the real developer

Data centers that guzzle water from lakes and aquifers could imperil water availability for surrounding towns and farms, especially during dry spells. Poor stormwater management design around these mammoth buildings could worsen flooding during a downpour.

There's also the issue of the huge amounts of electricity the data centers will consume. Unless they bring their own electricity, they compete for grid-available supplies.

We all know that when something is in short supply, the price will go up. Data centers with a high demand for water and electricity are already sending prices climbing. It was a major factor in our state's 20% electricity rate increase last year.

If you feel that prices are already giving you the squeeze, join Sierra Club and help "box-in" the big boxes so they don't overwhelm our communities. Obviously, this industry needs to be regulated. A balance needs to be kept between fulfilling community needs and industry expansion.

"Data centers use lots of electricity, and they often need lots of water to cool the computers."

How to Lower Your Electric Bill and Support the Grid

By Betsy Longendorfer • Building Electrification Committee



Across the country, consumers have seen a dramatic rise in electricity prices driven by increased power demand, mostly from data centers. Data centers increase energy use but more importantly, they increase peak demand on very hot days. One solution being developed by states, including the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU), is allowing customers or aggregated groups of customers to flexibly manage their energy usage and even sell power back to the grid. This is called a “virtual power plant” (VPP).

When she took office this year, Gov. Mikie Sherrill ordered the BPU to develop rules for power purchase between utilities and third-party aggregators of customers by July. Senate Bill [S3399](#) complements this groundwork by requiring utilities to create a VPP program to reduce peak demand.

VPPs and Why We Need Them

For New Jersey, electricity costs are determined by periodic auctions, where suppliers offer energy at different prices and regional transmission organizations (PJM Interconnection for NJ customers) purchase energy from cheapest to most expensive until demand is met.

If energy use can be lowered during

peak demand—when costs are highest—the most expensive energy does not need to be purchased. Peak usage usually occurs for only a few hours in the mid-afternoon to early evening. VPPs can reduce peak costs by supplying energy during these periods and lowering demand, as more customers generate their own power. They can also reduce the need for costly upgrades to power lines and substations.

Managing energy supply and demand is increasingly necessary. More than 140 million people in 40 states faced calls to conserve power in 2022. VPPs have been proven to work—distributed solar from homes, schools, and businesses reduced peak load in New England by almost 1.5 GW, the equivalent of a large power plant.

How Do VPPs Work?

For many years, utilities offered programs that gave participants reduced rates in exchange for allowing utilities to control their equipment to reduce energy demand. Now, smarter technologies have enabled two-way communication between customers and utilities.

There has also been growth in customers generating their own power with solar and batteries. They may have EVs or home batteries whose power can be shared with the grid, or whose charging can be delayed until

off-peak hours. These customers act as distributed power sources that the grid can use when needed. When coordinated for use as a single resource, these become a VPP.

In the past, energy management programs focused mainly on large users reducing demand or centralized plants generating more energy. Today, homeowners, businesses, and institutions can reduce load, use energy flexibly, and supply power.

VPPs offer advantages for both utilities and customers. Customers can reduce costs and potentially earn revenue by selling to the grid. Utilities can rely more on distributed resources and avoid building centralized infrastructure, which often takes years to permit and construct. Distributed energy sources can be deployed more quickly.

Legislation/Policies for VPPs

As of last year, 34 states had programs using smart devices, batteries, EV chargers, and energy management systems to enable VPPs. Several states, including New Jersey and Pennsylvania, are considering legislation to expand them.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Order 2222 (September 17, 2020) created a foundation for this by requiring small energy resources to participate in wholesale markets through aggregation. Rising energy prices have increased the urgency of implementation.

The Business of Aggregation

Participants in distributed power do not need to be from the same community. The residential solar and battery company Sunrun is actively pursuing aggregation, as a company spokesman, Thad Culley, recently told the Building Electrification Committee of the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club. Tesla is also working in this area.

VPPs being developed by companies like Sunrun and Tesla can supply power reliably while allowing customers to opt out when needed. Culley noted that customers are more likely to participate when they are paid for supplying energy at times of real grid need.

There have been notable successes. In California, more than 70,000 customers generated enough extra power (670 MW) to match a centralized power plant. Aggregators also helped prevent rolling blackouts in Puerto Rico.

Lastly

VPPs and demand reduction programs can reduce strain on the grid and help control rising costs. They provide both private and public benefits, can be built quickly, and offer flexibility. Participate in a VPP if you are able and become an energy entrepreneur yourself.

Resources

Energy Auctions:

<https://shorturl.at/kLumx>

Individual States:

<https://shorturl.at/uHOB5>

War Results in Environmental Harm

By Joanne Pannone • Central Jersey Group

These conflicts in Iran and Ukraine aren't good for the health of our planet. What happens to our environmental cleanup progress when we have a war? Our ability to limit climate pollution that harms our health and our economy unravels with every boom. As I write this, Russian oil refineries are ablaze and sending toxic smoke into cities and an oil slick into the Black Sea. For four years Russia has been attacking Ukraine. And now there is the war in the Persian Gulf.

The United States not only attacked Iran but brought havoc on trans people, the Kennedy Center, diversity and equity, education, wind turbines, and free speech, just to name a few. China is seizing the moment to supply the world with clean technologies. “China is leaving America in the dust... since the United States has abandoned

leadership on the energy transition,” Steve Curwood, host and executive producer of “Living on Earth,” said in February.

All over the world, birds are disappearing by the billions and our access to a clean healthy sustainable environment as a universal human right also is moving out of sight (and costing billions in cleanup and health problems).

The '70s brought about the landmark Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. Now, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is under attack by its own administrator, Lee Zeldin. The EPA mission isn't his priority.

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative was inaugurated in 2005 as a cooperative effort to reduce power sector CO2 emissions while creating a fund for environmental sustainability. How will mega data centers affect energy af-

fordability, public health, and the environment? This is a new battle.

Widespread conflict in the Gulf is destroying infrastructure that may not be rebuilt with a focus on renewable energy and sustainable practices. Pollution from war is adding to the destruction of our biosphere. However, our continued dependence on fossil fuels is causing the larger share of problems. Agriculture and fishing are challenged. Whether these problems are from droughts, rising temperatures, drone attacks, tornadoes, hurricanes, PFAS, or bombs, we see the potential for a humanitarian crisis.

We are losing species—possibly daily. It should be our goal to align with nature. Government cuts are robbing us of the scientific-discovery workforce that is needed to protect people's health and to preserve our natural world.

With every conflict we lose biotic and abiotic (conditions for life) components in air, water, and land. These ecosystems are vital for life, health, and economic well-being.

We need to stop the bombs and protect the planet. We Sierra Club members, as defenders of clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment, need to be loud enough to be heard above all the distractions (such as the ballroom). We must organize and encourage our members to vote in November for candidates who share our vision for a healthy planet. If we allow this unprecedented pressure on our world to continue, there may be no future.



TRIP OF A LIFETIME

continued from page 1

through Dixie National Forest and capped off our day with a ride through Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, where my whoops of joy at the rugged beauty evoked intense eye rolls (but no disagreement) from the 10-year-old. We spent the night in Escalante, where we enjoyed some surprisingly delicious pizza, before heading on down the road.

Day six of our Epic Spring Break Road Trip brought the jaw-dropping, eye-popping canyon views of Bryce Canyon National Park, with its colorful hoodoos (tall, thin spires of rock) and natural bridges. The beautiful colors and wild, rugged, unique land features were so incredibly beautiful that I truly found myself with my mouth hanging open multiple times. Bryce Canyon topped our family's “go back” list. Looking at photos, the grins we

all had at Bryce Canyon were certainly unmatched.

Zion National Park did its best to unseat Bryce at the top of our list and certainly earned its reputation as a “must see” park, with truly magnificent scenery. In addition to the towering mountain peaks and flowing river views, we saw some very cool cacti, lots of strange flowers, butterflies, and birds, and even a bighorn sheep who gave me a long “bruuuhhhh” when I took its photo. Our favorite experience was finding a slot canyon (narrow, deep gorge) to explore right at the peak of the afternoon heat.

From Zion, the last of the Utah “Mighty 5” national parks, we wound our way southward through Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, stopping to check out Lake Pow-

ell, Glen Canyon Dam, and the infamous Horseshoe Bend as we crossed into Arizona. In stark contrast to the great natural richness of the surrounding landscape, the poverty of the people living on Navajo Nation lands as we got closer to Grand Canyon National Park was as humbling as the immense canyon itself.

While it may not top our “go back”

list, catching the sunset and sunrise over the Grand Canyon brought me to tears. I am so grateful that we got to explore the American Southwest, and our work at Sierra Club to protect and preserve more nature has never felt more purposeful. I encourage anyone with the opportunity to head out and explore these incredible public lands, which belong to all of us!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

The New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club is seeking a volunteer **election law compliance officer**. Advise those involved in the Chapter's political program about how to conduct political activities to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local election law, as well as Sierra Club policies and restrictions. This requires specialized knowledge of election law and regulations, including New Jersey ELEC rules, and a willingness to become familiar with the Club's internal political compliance policies. For further information, contact Chapter Chair Joe Testa at chapter.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Don't Roll Up Your Pants, Support NJ PACT REAL

New Jersey has a lot of buildable land remaining, but in the future sea level rise is more than likely to claim a portion of that buildable area.

Currently, you can build at the high-water mark of the anticipated "100-year flood." What that means is, each year there is a 1% chance the flood waters will lap at the foot of your building or go higher.

It makes sense to build on higher ground. Lately, violent storms and intense rainfall have increased, and global warming and ice melting are causing the oceans to swell, which means as the years go by, there is potential for the 100-year flood goal posts to move to higher ground.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection responded this year by adopting a revised set of flood plain building rules (NJ PACT REAL) that require new buildings to be built at least 4 feet above the current 100-year flood plain elevation.

The NJ PACT REAL rules are slated to go into effect on July 20, 2026, and they make a good deal of sense, considering that New Jersey already suffers as much flood damage (in dollars) each year as most other states in the union. Why shouldn't builders choose higher ground to protect property and building occupants? It means less damage during floods and fewer claims on the insurance industry, and potentially lower rates for policy holders.

However, the New Jersey Builders Association and New Jersey Business and Industry Association have filed notice of suit to block the NJ PACT REAL rules.

NJ PACT REAL considers the very real potential for increased flooding in New Jersey. It doesn't require people to move or tear down older buildings; it simply requires better standards for new ones.

"We must move forward with the NJ PACT REAL rules in their strongest form in order to be resilient and best prepare the next generation," said Sierra Club New Jersey Chapter Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot at a State House lobbying event April 22, 2026. "These rules do not curb development but ensure we are building smarter and for the long-term."

"The NJ Sierra Club urges the legislature to move forward with full implementation of the rules," Ramos-Busot said.

New Jersey residents are urged to [contact their legislators](#) ASAP and tell them how important these flood rules are and why they need to be implemented. Many places in New Jersey are still well above flood level that are suitable for building and development, and New Jersey can still prosper and move forward while at the same time protecting its communities from risky building practices.



NJ PACT REAL advocates lobbied recently in Trenton. From left to right: Sierra Club NJ Chapter Executive Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot, NJ League of Conservation Voters Interim Executive Director Allison McLeod, Watershed Institute Executive Director Jim Waltman, Pinelands Alliance Director of Governmental Relations Michael Klein, Eastern Environmental Law Center Senior Staff Attorney Daniel Greenhouse, American Littoral Society Delaware Bayshore Program Director Lucia Osborne, and Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions Organizational Development Consultant and Project Director Nandini Checko.

Bag This Pipeline, Now!

Hey Scotland! NESE, that now-you-see-it, now-you-don't monster, is over here. Please take it back and put it under loch and key.

The Northeast Supply Enhancement pipeline project got a very unwelcome approval for a utility license from the NJ Tidelands Resource Council, which governs potential polluting industrial development in sensitive New Jersey wetlands areas.

It is widely held that NESE will traverse much of New Jersey while yielding little in benefits, with its pipeline content of natural gas being funneled into the New York Bay region.

Allowing huge fossil fuel projects like this to roll forward while rolling back clean energy development does little to mitigate the dangers of climate change.

"We are disappointed by the decision made today by the Tidelands Council to grant Williams Transco its utility license to tear through our wetlands, tidelands, and the Raritan Bay," said Taylor McFarland, conservation program manager for the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club.

"This is the same project that both New York and New Jersey denied multiple times. Nothing has changed; the route and the impacts are the same," she said.

State Backs Away From Offshore Wind

Against a backdrop of rising energy prices and zero support for offshore wind by the federal government, New Jersey State officials decided in April to terminate or significantly scale back all interconnection work designed to facilitate electricity transmission from offshore wind projects to the land-based PJM interconnection energy grid.

The project to assist in developing infrastructure was established by way of a 2020 agreement with PJM called the State Agreement Approach. Such a mechanism is available to all states in the PJM region, but New Jersey was the first state to make use of it.

The agreement led to engineering studies, grid modeling, environmental review, and transmission planning analysis, among other preliminary work. The more costly construction phase, including substations, offshore power collector platforms, and new transmission lines, had not yet substantially begun.

The total estimated investment was in the region of \$1 billion. New Jersey electricity consumers would have borne most of the cost. The decision to scale down the process was made in April by the State Board of Public Utilities with the backing of Gov. Mikie Sherrill. Offshore wind farm cancellations meant that the cost to electricity customers could no longer be justified.

Cleaning up Metal Scrapyards

Two bills designed to tighten regulation of metal scrapyards in New Jersey are moving forward. Residents of New Jersey have suffered the harms of toxins escaping from these sites for too long. Fires suspected of being started by lithium batteries discarded at these waste sites have also fouled the air and raised the specter of long-term harm to people's health.

The bill A2406 would place scrap metal facilities under state Department of Environmental Protection oversight. Scrap processing facilities would be reclassified as recycling centers and as such would be subject to much higher standards for safe operation. The bill was moved to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on March 16.

The other bill, A2401, would require auditing of scrapyard records and would ensure that prohibited items are not on the premises. It would require the employment of people who are trained in fire suppression and would require installation of fire suppression systems capable of being remotely operated.

A2401 was approved by the full NJ Assembly by a 55-17 vote on March 23 and has moved to the Senate for review. Assemblyman William Moen Jr. is the primary sponsor of both bills.

High-profile scrapyard fires in Camden have increased the sense of urgency and desire for action.

Renée Pollard, chair of the Environmental and Social Justice Committee for the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club, said the legislation offers hope for stronger regulation of these facilities, which she said have residents "living in fear of catastrophic fires and explosions. It has been a struggle just to get state agencies, manufacturers and legislators to recognize and acknowledge that there is a problem with how scrap metal recycling facilities operate," she said.

West Orange Rejects Housing Plan

In a victory for conservation, the West Orange Planning Board has voted down a 496-housing-unit plan for a 120-acre forested plot that is vital for drainage and clean air.

The board reached its determination following years of debate and lobbying by concerned citizens supported by the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club.

The forested land on the Watchung Mountain Ridge is considered one of Essex County's last large forested areas, a critical green space in what is a highly developed part of New Jersey. It provides essential room for wildlife.

The West Orange Planning Board voted 4-4 on the development application by Minnesota Vikings co-owner Zygmunt Wilf. There were not enough votes for approval, although the door remains open to an appeal and the developer's intentions at this point are unclear.



Birding enthusiasts add to the list of their sightings at Amico Island recently. Credit: Leona Fluck

Upgrades and High Demand Push Up Water Rates

By Kathleen (Kip) P. Cherry, PP, AICP • Conservation Chair, Central Jersey Group



Much has been said about the sharp rise in electricity and gas rates, but water rates are also going up, and it is important to understand what's causing this. Essential water utility upgrades and higher water demand are the chief drivers.

Many water utilities in the New Jersey–Pennsylvania area can no longer postpone needed expenditures for maintenance and to comply with new environmental regulations. In Bucks County, for instance, where utilities have expanded aggressively, as in other areas of suburban Philadelphia and New Jersey, there has been considerable press coverage of efforts by larger water utilities to purchase smaller utilities. These smaller utilities are being required to make costly investments to conform with new water regulations. Some have agreed to be purchased by a larger utility because they don't have the capital or personnel to handle this.

Among new water-related regulations are those meant to control PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), a class of toxins known as “forever” chemicals. Many water utilities have announced that they are preparing to add PFAS removal as part of their treatment. This would include removal of PFOS (perfluorooctane sulfonate), a type of PFAS used in firefighting foams and water/stain repellants. These chemicals are widely used in industry, but they are increasingly proving to be a danger to human health.

At the same time, local water au-

thorities may be subject to Environmental Protection Agency standards for the taste, smell, and appearance of the water they supply.

The PFAS/PFOS treatment process uses advanced technologies such as granular activated carbon (GAC) and ion exchange resins that remove PFAS from water. The PFAS molecules basically stick to carbon and ion exchange resins. Membrane systems (reverse osmosis) are also used. These are highly effective in filtering out PFAS.

New Jersey American Water, the largest purveyor of drinking water in Central New Jersey, had outdated water filters at its Raritan–Millstone Treatment Plant and has undertaken a pilot project to install PFAS filters at the plant to conform to new EPA regulations. Such treatment upgrades are costly and there are additional operating costs, which include disposing of the spent carbon, potentially at a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act hazardous waste site depending on toxin severity. New Jersey American Water in January filed a rate increase request with the state Board of Public Utilities to support \$1.4 billion in water and wastewater service investments.

Increased water consumption is also a cause of rate increases. Data centers are a new major challenge. The computation equipment in data centers creates massive amounts of heat that must be dispersed with air or water cooling. Data centers that use water require large amounts of water, putting pressure on local water systems. Proposals for recycling water have potential, but because of evaporation a considerable amount of water is unrecoverable. Up to 70% to 80% of water in evaporative cooling systems can be lost to the atmosphere.

Large data centers can consume up to 5 million gallons a day, according to the Environmental and Energy Study Institute.

Further, the Potomac–Raritan–Magothy (PRM) aquifer system, which extends across New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia, is a critically stressed, heavily pumped water source. In the NJ Coastal Plain PRM is facing significant declines in water levels and rising risks of saltwater intrusion. Continued development is increasing demand, leading to long-term sustainability concerns. Regional groundwater levels have dropped significantly, moreso in places where water is being removed most vigorously. These “cones of depression” extend 100–200 feet below sea level in some areas.

Data indicate that more than 50% of wells sampled in this aquifer system had iron concentrations exceeding “secondary” drinking-water limits, meaning not a health threat but concerning nonetheless. Meanwhile, volatile organic compounds and pesticides were detected, especially in the upper and middle aquifers closer to ground level.

The US Geological Survey and state Department of Environmental Protection are actively studying the system to evaluate sustainability. Exces-

sive pumping from this aquifer system could lead to further environmental damage and a diminished water supply.

As of early May 2026, New Jersey was under a drought warning, due to below-average rainfall in late March and early April. Residents were advised to use water sparingly. According to the Rutgers NJ Weather and Climate Network, while precipitation deficits did not significantly worsen in early April, the state was still struggling with long-term, below-normal precipitation, making consistent, statewide rainfall necessary to improve conditions. Key water reservoirs were below long-term averages and were not adequately replenished by winter snowfall.

In conclusion, large water-consuming projects before planning boards should be carefully evaluated against the water resource goals of the master plan. Similarly, designated Areawide Planning Agencies (APAs) are required by law to consider a project's impact on the applicable Water Quality Management Plan as part of the approval process. New Jersey has APAs covering the entire state. These regional and county-level agencies were formally designated in the 1990s during the Whitman administration to implement Clean Water Act planning requirements and strengthen water resource protection.



Harbor seals in their element off Sandy Hook as seen during a Raritan Valley Group “Photo Safari.” Credit: John Miraglia



Chapter Outings Chair: Leona Fluck
pineypaddlers@gmail.com, (609) 259-3734
Skylands: Dave Alcock, dwhoob@hotmail.com
Hunterdon Warren: Open Position!
North Jersey: Co-Chairs: Open Position!
and Rebecca Wilkin, rebeccawilkin@gmail.com
Gateway: Co-Chairs: Steven Yafet, syafet@gmail.com
and Ron Pate, Ronpate31@verizon.net
Hudson Co.: Steve Krinsky, stevekrinsky@comcast.net
Loantaka: Kevin O'Brien, kobob@aol.com
Central Jersey: Leona and George Fluck
Leona@pineypaddlers.com

Raritan Valley: John Miraglia, johnworks3@aol.com
S. Pasricha, spjersey@gmail.com;
Bernadette Maher

Jersey Shore: Open Position!

Ocean County: Terrance Brown,
Terrybrown@comcast.net

West Jersey: Open Position!

South Jersey: Tom Boghosian,
tfboghosian44@gmail.com

Singles Section: Ron Pate, ronpate31@verizon.net
Jimi Oleksiak, The_Hikist@mac.com

LGBTQ+ Section: Wanda Ashbrook,
pridegrlnj@gmail.com

Inspiring Connections Outdoors: Oscar Nazar
chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com

River Touring: Fred Tocce, (908) 453-2205 (H)
RD-1, Box 277, Washington 07882

Outing Leaders and Group Outings Coordinators:
Please send write-ups for October–December 2026

to your group outings coordinator (or, if you don't associate yourself with a single group, directly to pineypaddlers@gmail.com) before August 1, 2026. Outings for early January 2027 can be included.

NOTES ON OUTINGS: Outings are generally open to Club members, guests, and anyone interested. Unless otherwise specified, the events are free. All participants in Sierra Club outings must sign liability waivers. Please check with the leader before bringing small children on an outing. A parent or other responsible adult must accompany persons under 18. Participants may bring pets on outings only if the event description specifically says pets are allowed.

Sierra Club outings are arranged and conducted by volunteer leaders who are responsible for the safety, welfare, and enjoyment of all participants. Leaders determine qualifications to participate, adequacy of equipment, routes to be followed, and special precautions to be taken. Please arrive adequately prepared and equipped. If you have any allergies, please remember to bring your medication. The leader has the final word in the conduct of the trip. Your cooperation will help ensure a safe and pleasant outing.

Please arrive early at the meeting place so the outing can start on time. For day hikes, lunch, water (at least a liter), extra clothing, rain gear, and emergency equipment should be carried in a small daypack. For all except easy hikes, sturdy over-the-ankle shoes or boots should be worn. For most trips, you are expected to have your own equipment. In some cases, it may be rented from outdoor/camping suppliers—call or message the trip leader for more information. If the weather is questionable on the date of the outing, you may assume that it will take place, unless the hike description indicates otherwise.



Nineteen ornithology fans turned out for the Liberty State Park Birds & Beer joint outing with the Montclair Bird Club. In the distance is the Verrazano Bridge. Credit: Bill Beren



NEW JERSEY: where beautiful places can be protected forever by gifts in wills

Are you thinking about creating an estate plan?

The New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club offers *Giving Docs*, a simple, secure way to create your will and other estate planning documents online. It's **free** for Sierra Club supporters, and it only takes a few minutes!

You can also use *Giving Docs* to leave a lasting legacy by naming the New Jersey Chapter as a beneficiary of your estate. Gifts of any size make a difference and are greatly appreciated!



Scan the QR code or get in touch to learn more

julia.curtis@sierraclub.org
(800) 932-4270
myplan.sierraclub.org

Unless registration is required, or if you have a question, it is not necessary to contact the leader before the trip. However, as these outings are planned many months in advance, we do advise that you contact the trip leader one to two days before the outing to make sure it is not canceled.

If you are a Sierra Club member interested in becoming an outing leader or have suggestions for new outings, contact your group outings chair or the Chapter outings chair for assistance and further

information. The Chapter group or section leading each outing is given at the end of the write-up, as follows:

Atlantic Chapter, ACOC; Central Jersey, C; Gateway, G; Hudson, H; Hunterdon Warren (HW); Jersey Shore, JS; LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, Queer, Plus); Loantaka, L; NJ Chapter, NJ; North Jersey, N; Raritan Valley, RV; Ocean, O; River Touring, RT; Singles Section SS; Skylands, Sk; South Jersey, SJ; West Jersey, W.

JULY

Jul 1 (Wed): Empty Nester's Walk at Smith's Woods and Smithville Park (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 2-3 miles, easy pace. Join us on a walk to get outdoors, breathe and connect with nature! Smith's Woods and Smithville Park feature a diverse collection of habitats as well as views of Rancocas Creek. Meet at the Smith's Woods access parking lot, 39 East Railroad Ave, Eastampton. Look for the Sierra Club banner on our car. Restrooms are available. Bring insect repellent, water, snacks, and hiking poles (if you use them). Leashed dogs are welcome. Wear a broad-brimmed hat, light clothing, and pants tucked into socks. Rain cancels. Option: late lunch at the Vincentown Diner. Leaders: George and Leona F., pineypaddlers@gmail.com Registration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey (W)

Jul 11 (Sat): Hike and Swim Blue Mountain Lake in the Delaware Water Gap NRA, Sandyston (Sussex Co.) 10 a.m. Arrive by 9:40 a.m. Hike starts 10 a.m. Six miles in 5 hours including swim time; moderately hilly terrain. Features: Blue Mountain Lake, Hemlock Lake, Crater Lake, The Appalachian Trail. There is a restroom with a sink and faucet in the parking lot. No pets. Wear hiking boots and bring a day-pack with water and lunch. If you are swimming, bring a swimsuit and towel. Registration required at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar>. Click on the "Hike & Swim at Blue Mountain Lake," then click on RSVP. Directions will be sent via email to members who register. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak, The_Hikist@mac.com and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

Jul 11 (Sat): Summer Bird Walk at Amico Island State Park (Burlington Co.) 8 a.m., 2-3 miles, easy pace. Our 8th birding walk at Amico Island will again be guided by experienced birder, Susan Matson. Resident bird life is quite active through the summer. Look for **Yellow Warbler**, **Warbling Vireo** and other wet woods species. **Baltimore orioles** are abundant and easy to spot in the cottonwood trees. **Butterflies** such as **tiger swallowtail**, **question mark**, **variegated fritillary**, **viceroy**, and **zabulon skipper** are frequent visitors. **Dragonflies** can be seen over the meadows and along the pond shores. Breezes from the river alleviate the summer heat. Bring water and snacks. Broad-brimmed hat and sunscreen recommended. Meet us at 81 Norman Ave, Riverside. There is a portable toilet at the parking lot. Please, no dogs. Rain cancels. Leaders: George and Leona F., pineypaddlers@gmail.com Registration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey (W)

Jul 19 (Sun): Sunday Stroll and Blueberry Music Jam at Whitesbog Village (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 2-3 miles, easy walk in woods and on sandy trails around the bogs. After our walk we'll stop by the acoustic Blueberry Music Jam at the Barrel Factory. All are welcome, come to play or to listen. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Picnic tables are available. Broad-brimmed hat and sunscreen recommended. Leashed dogs are welcome. Meet at the parking lot, 120 Whites Bog Rd, Browns Mills. Look for the Sierra Club banner on our car. Rain cancels the walk. Leaders: George & Leona F., pineypaddlers@gmail.com Registration required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey (W)

Jul 18 (Sat): Ramapo Valley County Reservation Hike (Bergen Co.) 8 a.m., 4-5 miles, moderate pace. The Ramapo Valley County Reservation offers over 4,000 acres of diverse terrain, featuring waterfalls, scenic vistas, and the serene MacMillan Reservoir. The trails wind through lush forests and offer panoramic views of the surrounding highlands. Meet at the main parking area, [608 Ramapo Valley Rd. Mahwah](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar). Bring water, snacks and lunch. Sturdy hiking shoes and poles recommended. Rain cancels. Facilities are available near the parking lot. No dogs please. Leaders: Rebecca, rebeccalwilkin@gmail.com and Kathy. Register at www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar (N)

Jul 25 (Sat): Hike at Shark River Park (Monmouth Co.) 10 a.m., 3 miles, moderate pace. Shark River Park is the first park in Monmouth County for recreation and nature appreciation. Walk on mostly flat trails with some inclines along the Shark River and through the center of the park. Recommend hiking shoes and poles (if you use them). Bring insect repellent in tick season, water, and snacks. There are facilities. No charge for the hike. Rain cancels. Leader will provide meeting location and directions after participants register. Leader: Sandra gohikenow@icloud.com Registration required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-shore (JS)

Jul 31 (Fri): Summer Walk at Duke Island Park (Somerset Co.) 10 a.m., 3 miles, easy pace. In July, Duke Island Park features mid-summer blooms, including various native wildflowers, daylilies and flowering shrubs alongside lush, green, mature trees along the Raritan River. The park is characterized by its open, grassy areas and wooded, riparian, or riverbank scenery during the summer months. Enjoy a relaxing walk on a shaded path along the Raritan River to the Headgates Dam. Bring binoculars; in April one of our members saw a **bald eagle** perched on a tree branch! Meet at the visitors center Lot B, main parking area, 191 Old York Rd, Bridgewater Township. There are restrooms. Bring water, snacks and lunch. Broad-brimmed hat and sunscreen recommended. Rain cancels. Leashed dogs are welcome. Co-leaders: John Miraglia, johnworks3@aol.com and Leona F., pineypaddlers@gmail.com Registration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley (RV)

AUGUST

Aug 8 (Sat): Hike and Swim Camp Mohican, Delaware Water Gap NRA, Blairstown (Warren Co.) 10 a.m. Arrive by 9:40 a.m. Hike starts at 10 a.m. The hike will cover 6 miles in 3 to 4 hours, in hilly terrain. The water of Catfish Pond is really clean and warm for swimming. Features: Catfish Pond and a beach, camp store with food, the Appalachian Trail. There are restrooms with running water, including indoor changing rooms with showers, and a new modern privy near the beach and other sites. Wear hiking boots and bring a day-pack with water and lunch. If you are swimming, bring a swimsuit and towel. No pets. RSVP Required at www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar. Scroll down to "Hike and Swim Camp Mohican" and click on it. Click on the RSVP (in red background) then fill it out. Directions will be sent via email to those who RSVP. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak, The_Hikist@mac.com and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

Aug 14 (Fri): Hike at Davidson's Mill Pond Park (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m., 3 miles, easy pace. There are lovely garden displays and a butterfly house. We begin our hike on the Yellow Trail, a grassy/rocky section through the woods that includes narrow boardwalks over swampy areas. Option to continue on the forested Blue Trail that has elevations, exposed roots to step over and large stones for steps in some sections. Good footwear and hiking poles (if you use them) are recommended. Wear a broad-brimmed hat, light clothing, and pants tucked into socks. Leaders will bring insect repellent and sunscreen. Bring water, snacks, and lunch, and a folding chair for lunch after the walk along the pond. Dogs on leash are welcome. Portable toilet at parking lot. Excessive heat cancels. Rain cancels. Meeting location will be sent to those who register. Co-leaders: S.P., spjersey@gmail.com and Leona F, pineypaddlers@gmail.com Preregistration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley (RV)

Aug 21 (Fri): Summer Walk at Duke Farms (Somerset Co.) 10 a.m., about 3 miles, leisurely walk with property highlights stops along the way, including the Orchid Range. Duke Farms serves as a model of environmental stewardship in the 21st century. The trails are easy and mostly level; the surface varies between paved, gravel, and grass/wood chips. Most trails are in the open. Broad-

brimmed hat and sunscreen recommended. Meet at the Farm Barn Orientation Center parking lot. Look for the Sierra Club banner on our car. Address: 1112 Dukes Pkwy. W., Hillsborough. Bring a camera, water, snacks, and lunch on the walk. There are restrooms in the Farm Barn and on the walk. Pets are not permitted. Excessive heat cancels. Rain cancels. Co-leaders: Leona F., pineypaddlers@gmail.com and Margaret Mary Piccolo, gogreenp1@yahoo.com Preregistration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/ocean-county (O)

Aug 29 (Sat): Walking Toward Your Future Self at Lake Henry (Bergen Co.) 9 a.m., 3 miles, easy pace around the 1-mile lake path. Lake Henry is nestled behind Continental Soldier Field in Mahwah—a beautiful setting for a morning of reflection and intentional walking. We'll begin with a guided visualization to connect with your future self, a guided journaling session to capture what surfaced and then walk the lake trail in silent presence to further explore what your future self is calling you toward. After our walk, we'll gather for lunch to journal again to identify an actionable step forward and then share what the trail offered. No experience with hiking, meditation, or journaling necessary—just an openness to each of those practices. Bring a journal or notebook, lunch, water and insect repellent. Recommend hiking shoes. A folding chair or blanket is optional. No pets. Facilities at Continental Soldier Field, 550 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah. No charge for the hike. Rain cancels. Leader will provide meeting location and directions after participants register. Leader: Kathy, info@athenawellness.com. Registration required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey (N)

Aug 29 (Sat): Summer Hike at Henry Hudson Trail (Monmouth Co.) 10 a.m., 3+ miles, easy pace. The Henry Hudson trail is a recreational trail for nature appreciation and environmental purposes. Walk on a flat gravel trail along Sandy Hook Bay. Recommend walking shoes and poles (if you use them). Bring insect repellent in tick season, water, and snacks. There are facilities. No charge for the hike. Rain cancels. Leader will provide meeting location and directions after participants register. Leader: Sandra, gohikenow@icloud.com Registration required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-shore (JS)

SEPTEMBER

Sept 12 (Sat): Sandy Hook Hike, Gateway NRA, Highlands (Monmouth Co.) 10 a.m. Arrive by 9:40 a.m. Hike starts at 10 a.m. 5 miles, 3 hours, Sandy Terrain with Sand Dunes. Features: Dunes and Beaches. Location: Gateway National Recreation Area, Highlands. Restroom buildings in the park. Wear hiking boots and non-cotton hiking socks, and a backpack with water and snack/lunch. RSVP required: at www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar. Scroll down to "Sandy Hook Hike" and click on it. Click on the RSVP (in red background) then fill it out. Directions will be sent via email to those who RSVP. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak the_hikist@mac.com and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

Sept 13 (Sun): Guided Tour of the Isaac Watson House (headquarters of the Daughters of the American Revolution) and Spring Lake Walk (Mercer Co.) 12:30 p.m. The Watson House is open for public-guided tours in the spring and fall. Free, but donations are welcome. Built by Isaac Watson in 1708 and recognized as the oldest house in Mercer County, this historic landmark was originally set on 800 acres and is situated on a bluff overlooking Watson's Creek in John A. Roebling Park. After the tour, we'll take a walk around Spring Lake and look for sunning turtles on logs, resident birds, **mute swans** on the lake and active **beaver** lodges. Bring water and snacks. There are food trucks and picnic tables. Leashed dogs are welcome. Meet at the parking area 151 Westcott Ave., Hamilton Twp. There are restrooms at the Tulpehaking Nature Center. Rain cancels the Spring Lake walk. Leaders: Leona and George F., pineypaddlers@gmail.com Registration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey (C)

Sept 20 (Sun): Cloverdale Farm County Park Naturalist Guided Tour and Nature Walk (Ocean Co.) 11:00, about 2 miles. Patti Trasferini is the head naturalist and program coordinator at Cloverdale Park. Our presentation will begin at 11:30 a.m. There is no charge. The Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund Program acquired Cloverdale Farm in 2004. Within the boundaries of this 90-acre park, we find the diversity of the Pine Barrens wetlands, uplands, and the beauty of 20 acres of cranberry bogs all year long. Meet at the picnic tables area next to the visitor's center, 34 Cloverdale Rd., Barnegat. There are restrooms. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Wear a broad-brimmed hat, light clothing, pants tucked into socks. Bring insect repellent. Co-leaders: Leona F., pineypaddlers@gmail.com and Margaret Mary Piccolo, gogreenp1@yahoo.com Registration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/ocean-county (O)

Sept 24 (Wed): Autumnal Equinox Hike at Billie Johnson Mountain Lakes Nature Preserve (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., about 3 miles, easy pace. This 75-acre natural area is mostly flat, wooded terrain with some inclines, and occasional tree roots. The preserve is a "central park" in Princeton with two lakes. Meet at 30 Mountain Ave., Princeton parking lot. Look for the Sierra Club banner on our car. There are restrooms. Hiking boots and hiking poles (if you use them) are recommended. Trails can be muddy in some places. Rain cancels. Bring water and snacks. Option: late lunch at Conte's Pizza. Co-leaders: Leona F., leona@pineypaddlers.com and Lynn E., lynnebeling@comcast.net Registration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey (C)

Sept 26 (Sat): Hike at Cheesequake Park (Middlesex Co. bordering Monmouth Co.) 10 a.m., 3 miles, easy to moderate pace. Cheesequake Park has recreational trails and ecosystems including saltwater/freshwater marshes, pine barrens, and hardwood forests. Walk on mostly easy to moderate trails with some inclines. Recommend hiking shoes and poles (if you use them). Bring insect repellent in tick season, water, and snacks. There are facilities. No charge for the hike. Rain cancels. Leader will provide meeting location and directions after participants register. Leader: Sandra, gohikenow@cloud.com Registration required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-shore (JS)

Sept 26 (Sat): Walking with the Land at Lake Henry (Bergen Co.) 9 a.m., 3 miles, easy pace around the 1-mile lake path. Lake Henry is nestled behind Continental Soldier Field in Mahwah—a beautiful setting for a morning of quiet listening and intentional walking. There is an ancient idea, found across cultures and throughout human history, that nature is not just a backdrop to our lives, it's a teacher. We'll begin with a guided visualization to help you arrive fully and open to what the natural world has to offer, followed by a guided journaling session to capture what surfaced. We'll then head out onto the trail in silent presence, carrying our guiding question: "What does the land have to teach me?" After our walk, we'll gather for lunch to journal our insights, share what the land offered and how we'll integrate that learning into our lives. No experience with hiking, meditation or journaling necessary—just an openness to each of those practices. Bring a journal or notebook, lunch, water and insect repellent. Recommend hiking shoes. A folding chair or blanket is optional. No pets. Restrooms at Continental Soldier Field, 550 Ramapo Valley Rd, Mahwah. Rain cancels. Leader will provide meeting location and directions after participants register. Leader: Kathy, info@athenawellness.com. Registration required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey (N)

OCTOBER

Oct 4 (Sun): Hike at Batsto Village Wharton State Forest (Atlantic Co.) 10 a.m., 2 miles, easy pace on the Batsto Lake Blue Trail and through the village with lunch at the picnic tables back at the parking area. Leashed dogs are welcome. Good footwear and hiking poles are recommended (if you use them). Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Meet at the Batsto Village Visitors Center parking lot, 31 Batsto Rd., Hammonton. There are facilities. Rain cancels. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian, tfboghosian44@gmail.com and Ysan Reischke, reischky@gmail.com Registration required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar (SJ)

Oct 10 (Sat): Fall Hike at Holmdel Park (Monmouth Co.) 10 a.m., about 3 miles, easy pace. Holmdel Park is one of Monmouth County's most popular locations for recreation and nature

>continued on page 12

OUTINGS continued from page 11

appreciation. Hike on a wooded trail through rolling hills with views of the forest and a pond. Leader: Sandra, gohikenow@icloud.com Registration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-shore (JS)

Oct 16 (Fri): National Trails Day: Our Sixteenth Annual Guided Walk at Double Trouble State Park/Village (Ocean Co.) 10 a.m., 2-3 miles, easy pace. Once home to both a lumber industry and cranberry farm, this former company town is a window into past and current industries in the Pinelands. Andrew Anderson, historic resource interpretive specialist, will be our guide. Meet at Double Trouble State Park parking lot, Pinewald-Keswick and Double Trouble Rds. There are restrooms. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Rain cancels. Co-leaders: Leona F., pineypaddlers@gmail.com and Margaret Mary Piccolo, gogreenp1@yahoo.com Registration is required: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/ocean-county (O)



There are 12 regional groups in the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club. All groups have open officer positions for volunteers and welcome new members. Interested persons should reach out to the contacts listed below. Participation in the Sierra Club is a meaningful and rewarding way to give back to your community and help create a sustainable and healthier environment for all.

Groups are listed in rough geographical sequence: North to South

SKYLANDS GROUP

(Sussex and Northern Warren counties)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/skylands

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC

Email: chachabacon@yahoo.com; phone: 973-886-7950

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and other OFFICERS (ExCom members are elected to serve 2-year terms; term-expiry date in parentheses)

Chair	Greg Gorman	chachabacon@yahoo.com
Vice Chair	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Secretary	Norene Haberski	norenehaberski2@gmail.com
Treasurer	Norene Haberski	norenehaberski2@gmail.com
ExCom at Large	Dave Alcock	dwhoob@hotmail.com
	Allison Orsi	aeorsi@hotmail.com
	Jill Aquino	jda1timeforchange@gmail.com
	Chris Dunbar	chrisdunbar458@gmail.com
Conservation Chair	Greg Gorman	chachabacon@yahoo.com
Outings Chair	Dave Alcock	dwhoob@hotmail.com
Outreach Chair	Open Position!	
Environmental Justice	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Political Co-Chair	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Publicity Chair	Norene Haberski	norenehaberski2@gmail.com
Recycling/Zero Waste	Jill Aquino	jda1timeforchange@gmail.com
Chair Webmaster	Ron Goshal	

GENERAL MEETINGS (Conducted via Zoom)

The Skylands Group of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club serves Sussex and Northern Warren counties. We offer a variety of opportunities for the public to learn about and connect with the natural environment. We present informative films and speakers; exploration of the great outdoors on hikes, edible-plant tours, and picnics; public outreach via town tabling; and visits to schools. Our hope is to foster love and deep respect for our great outdoors.

The Skylands Group works with grassroots organizations to protect open spaces and water quality, promote clean energy, and oppose privatization of public trust resources.

CURRENT CAMPAIGNS: The Skylands Group advocates the protection and enjoyment of the wild environment and public parks.

The Skylands Group supports the Green New Deal, Sunrise Movement, and transition toward a clean energy economy, and the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic River Partnership.

HUNTERDON WARREN GROUP

(Hunterdon and Southern Warren counties)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdon-warren

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/sierraclub.hunterdonwarren/

YouTube: www.youtube.com/@sierraclubhunterdonwarren9255/videos

OFFICERS

Chair	Celeste Martin*	onecentral@mac.com
Vice Chair & Secretary	Karen Becker*	karbecker@gmail.com
Treasurer	John Kashwick*	jkashwick@gmail.com
Conservation Chair	Open Position!	
Outings	Open Position!	
Political Chair	Karen Becker*	karbecker@gmail.com
Warren County		
Warehouse Issues	Pat Banes	patrick_banes@comcast.net
Light Pollution and Dark Skies	Jonathan D. Wall*	docjdwall@gmail.com
	Arlene Tkatch*	abt22@gmail.com
	John Kashwick*	jkashwick@gmail.com
Webmaster/Listmaster	John Kashwick*	jkashwick@gmail.com
	Tom Schroth*	tfschroth@gmail.com

ExCom at Large

Jonathan D. Wall*	docjdwall@gmail.com
Tom Schroth*	tfschroth@gmail.com
Amelia Weeder	aweeder@comcast.net
Arlene Tkatch*	abt22@gmail.com

* Group Executive Committee Member (EXCOM)

GENERAL MEETINGS: Meetings are virtual or in-person at 7-9 p.m. In person meetings are at Hunterdon North County Library, 65 Halstead St, Clinton, NJ 08809.

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS: We are planning events for the summer months which include volunteering with Grow-A-Row, and a presentation on Emergency Preparedness.

Please check www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdon-warren for information and updates or to register for events. Registered participants will receive Zoom meeting information for virtual events.

EVENTS

Email jkashwick@gmail.com with your name and email address to get on our mailing list.

CURRENT ISSUES

Glen Gardner Quarry: Help support Glen Gardner residents as they fight Vulcan Materials' request for variance that would negatively impact the quality of life. Concerns include clean water, air quality, veteran's PTSD and compromising building foundations due to quarry blasts. Planning board meetings are held at Spruce Run Memorial VFW Post 5119, 179 Main St, Glen Gardner. Contact Celeste at for upcoming meeting dates and times.

Warehouse Projects: There are several massive warehouse projects proposed for Hunterdon and Warren counties. Please consider representing our group at local, county and state meetings that may permit these projects. Contact: Patrick Banes at patrick_banes@comcast.net

Night Skies: The Hunterdon Warren Group and the Light Pollution and Dark Skies Committee (LPDSC) are encouraging municipalities to curb light pollution by adopting stricter ordinances to reduce excessive light pollution. Help us partner with environmental commissions and land use boards to encourage municipalities to enact energy and tax saving initiatives. Contact: Jonathan Wall at jonwall@jonwall.com

NORTH JERSEY GROUP

(Bergen and Passaic counties)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey

Facebook: www.facebook.com/northjerseysierraclub

Twitter: @sierraclub_nj

Instagram: sierraclubnorth_nj

OFFICERS

Chair	Diane Scarangella	diascat@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Bob Weiss*	bobweiss1967@gmail.com
Secretary	Ron De Vos	rondevos58@outlook.com
Event Planning and Political Action Committee		
Chair	Ron De Vos	rondevos58@outlook.com
Outings Committee		
Chair	Rebecca Wilkin	rebeccawilkin@gmail.com
Youth Outreach Chair	Open Position!	
Conservation Committee		
Chair	Open Position!	
Climate Change Committee		
Chair	Judy Green*	jugreen547@gmail.com
Co-Chair	Martine Jaffe	martinejaffe@yahoo.com
Diversity, Inclusion, Environmental Justice		
Chair	Bushra Asfare*	bushra_c.e@hotmail.com
Consulting Engineer		
	Bushra Asfare	bushra_c.e@hotmail.com
Social Media/Website		
Chair	Marie Mannino	mmannino@yahoo.com

*Elected North Jersey Group Executive Committee Member.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you like meeting people and working with others to create educational events and develop new members and partners? If so, please join our leadership team as our new Membership and Special Events Coordinator. We need you! Contact Diane at diascat@hotmail.com if interested or if you have questions.

Are you interested in leading an all-inclusive and/or LGBTQIA+ hike? A nature walk, backpacking trip, or water event? If so, please let us know! We need you! Contact:

- Wanda Ashbrook: pridegrrlnj@aim.com
- Rebecca Wilkin: rebeccawilkin@gmail.com

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

- Rail Safety Advocacy: Supporting legislation for improved rail safety. Contact Betsy Longendorfer (BetsyLong.env@gmail.com).
- Climate Superfund Act advocacy: Contact Diane at diascat@hotmail.com

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

- Composting & Sustainability Initiatives: Outreach to school districts and research on composting grant funding. Contact Rebecca Wilkin (rebeccawilkin@gmail.com) to participate.
- Electrification Coaches Available: Free home electrification coaching through the NJ Electrification Coaches Network. Visit: njecn.substack.com.
- Protecting open space, parkland, wetlands and flood prone communities from development/overdevelopment: Contact Diane at diascat@hotmail.com.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Join Our Slack Group! Are you a high school or college student interested in envi-

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environmental activism? Join our Youth Slack Group: bit.ly/3BHU8Uc or contact Rebecca Wilkin (rebeccawilkin@gmail.com).

Stay engaged, volunteer, and take action with the North Jersey Sierra Club!

GATEWAY GROUP

(Hillside, Elizabeth, and Essex County, except for Livingston, Millburn, and Roseland)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Gateway/ (Also accessible from the NJ Chapter webpage: sierraclub.org/new-jersey/gateway)
 Members can join the Gateway Group on **Facebook** at www.facebook.com/pages/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782

Please contact any of the leaders below if you are interested in joining our campaigns to protect the environment. There are several group officer positions open.

OFFICERS

Chair	Bill Beren*	973-746-9661	Beren1@verizon.net
Conservation Chair	Open Position!		
Treasurer	Open Position!		
Secretary	Columb Mahoney		
Program Chair	Steven Yafet	908-354-2537	syafet@gmail.com
Environmental Justice Chair	Allison Fabrizio		allisonlfabrizio@gmail.com
Publicity Chair	Open Position!		
Political Chair & Recycling Coordinator	Danielle Rapsas*		danielle.rapsas@sierraclub.org
Fundraising Chair	Open Position!		
Membership Chair	Steven Yafet*	(see above)	
Passaic River Issues	Steven Yafet*	(see above)	
Outings Chair	Ron Pate		ronpate31@verizon.net
Webmaster	Christy Morganstein	732-718-4343	christy@medartsweb.com

*Group Executive Committee

The following Gateway Group positions are open for volunteers: vice-chair, conservation chair, Newark and Elizabeth issues. If you are interested, contact Bill Beren at 973-746-9661.

Please contact our program co-chairs if you have ideas or suggestions for a meeting-topic, program, or conservation project.

We invite YOU to join in our activism and ask your support as we strive to address the many issues facing our urban and suburban communities. Note the several vacant positions listed above.

Congratulations to our Political Chair Danielle Rapsas and author of our well-received report on Essex County recycling for graduating from Barnard College with a BA in environment & sustainability and human rights, and minor in political science. Danielle reached out to us at the end of her freshman year to see if we had any internships available (resulting in the Recycling Report), and has continued to actively work with the Gateway Group on recycling and political issues as a volunteer and Executive Committee member. Danielle is also a member of the Caldwell Environmental Commission. It doesn't seem like it's been three years since she joined our group.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We are looking forward to once again participating in **Montclair's Fourth of July Parade**. Once again we will feature electric vehicles driving alongside the marchers. The march route is about 1 ¼ miles long, most of it along tree-shaded Park Avenue from the Montclair Library to Edgemont Park. Sierra Club members are invited to march with us. If you come, bring some homemade signs, banners or art work with climate change and environmental themes. If you have battery electric lawn mowers and leaf blowers, bring them along to promote sustainable gardening activities. Marchers don't have to be from Montclair or even Sierra Club members—all are welcome.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Montclair's EarthFest 2026 was a great success. The event attracted a full range of exhibitors, including a farmers' market stand. We had a lot of visitors to our table giving us an opportunity to spread word about all the good work done by the Gateway Group and the state Chapter.

The Gateway Group once again sponsored a Drive Electric Earth Month (DEEM) event at the festival with 8 electric vehicles being shown, representing all price ranges, from the budget Chevy Bolt to the high-end Lucid Gravity SUV. Other EV models shown at the event included a Cadillac Optiq, Hyundai Ioniq5s, Teslas, a Honda plugin hybrid, and Chevy Equinox SUV. This was our fourth consecutive DEEM event and we look forward to next year's event.

The Gateway Group in conjunction with the Loantaka Group circulated a questionnaire to all the candidates running for at-large commissioner seats on the Essex County Board of Commissioners. Four candidates were endorsed based on their answers and their proven record of championing environmental initiatives in their current positions as local municipal officials. Letters were sent to Sierra Club members who reside in Essex County with the names of the endorsed candidates. We intend to similarly endorse candidates in the general election.

We have found that sending out questionnaires to local candidates is a great way to forge strong relationships with elected officials, often resulting in local ordinances or advocacy that address local environmental issues ranging from land preservation to public transportation improvements. Gateway members are encouraged to help us identify local issues and candidates that warrant our support in your community. Please email Chairman Bill Beren or Political Chair Danielle Rapsas with suggestions.

As an example of how endorsing candidates can give rise to environmental action, Montclair's Town Council is continuing to follow up with New Jersey Transit to restore seven-day-a-week bus and rail service between Montclair and New York City. This effort was one of the issues the Gateway Group highlighted when we sent questionnaires to all the candidates for Town Council two years ago.

Montclair's Environmental Commission has written a new tree ordinance that is being considered by the Town Council for adoption. Written with the support of the Sierra Club and Sustainable Montclair, it provides better protection for Montclair's trees located on private property, requiring permits to take down trees and increasing penalties for not filing.

The commission has also set up a collection box for Montclair residents to recycle fabrics such as old clothes, towels, and other cloth. The box is located on the side of the Montclair Library next to their old book collection box.

West Orange residents are continuing to pressure the town planning board to deny the necessary permits to build on the West Essex Highlands.

OUTINGS

Our Outings Chair, Ron Pate, continues to schedule hikes and activities in Essex County parks. These are included in the outings section of this newsletter and in the Gateway Group calendar at [Gateway Group | Sierra Club](#).

HUDSON COUNTY GROUP

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/udson-county
Email: HUDSONSIERRACLUB@gmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/HCSierraClub/
Instagram: www.instagram.com/hcsierraclub/
Twitter: twitter.com/hcsierraclub

OFFICERS

Chair	Patricia Hilliard*
Secretary	Open Position!
Conservation Chair	Open Position!
Political Chair	Ricardo Pereira*
Delegate to Chapter	Ricardo Pereira*
Membership	Meera Jaffrey*
Publicity	Open Position!
Outings / Events	Steve Krinsky*
At-Large	Nancy Booth*
(*ExCom)	

Meeting Schedule: The Hudson County Group meets four times a year. Contact us at HUDSONSIERRACLUB@gmail.com for details.

Upcoming Events: We are planning activities: nature walks, shoreline cleanups and public forums. We will also be doing political outreach. Check our online calendar, watch your email or find us on social media!

Current Campaigns: Please join in. We can use help with any of these:

Environmental Justice: Clean air for Hudson County! We oppose scrap metal processing plants that pollute the air. Low-income communities suffer the most from environmental destruction with elevated levels of cancer, asthma and other respiratory disease. We also oppose Data Centers in Hudson County because they drive up electricity prices, pollute the air with diesel back-up generators while creating only a few temporary jobs.

Liberty State Park: We support rallies called by the Friends of Liberty State Park. As part of our environmental justice campaign, we support the work on the interior of the park which will create 180 acres of wildlife habitat and 50 acres of active recreation for the community.

Skyway Park on the Hackensack River and Essex-Hudson Greenway: The Hudson County Group of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club is working to support and expand green spaces in Hudson County. We want to connect existing parks and trails, as part of the Crossroads Campaign to connect greenways across Hudson County. Join up and learn how you can help.

Political Action: In preparation for upcoming elections in New Jersey, we plan to meet with sympathetic public officials. We support the Protecting Against Climate Threats Act (PACT), the Essex Hudson Greenway and the Clean Energy Equity Act. We support renewable energy for NJ Transit and oppose rate hikes for passengers. Let us know if you would like to join our campaigns.

LOANTAKA GROUP

(Morris and Union counties (except for Elizabeth and Hillside), plus Livingston, Millburn, and Roseland, approximately)

Contact: Richard Isaac, risaac@aol.com

OFFICERS

Group Chair	Richard Isaac	risaac@aol.com	973-716-0297
Treasurer	Paul Sanderson		
Secretary	Emily Madeo-He		
Conservation Chair	Eric Hausker		
Presentations	Allen Swanson		
Group Webmaster	Gilbert Rohde		
Invasive Species	Rob Metters		
Fundraiser	Eric Hausker		
Programs Coordinator	Emily Madeo-He		
Political Chair	Richard Isaac		

On Wednesday, September 16, 7:30 p.m., at the Library of the Chathams in the Lundt Room, Dini Checko, Project Director for the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) will give a presentation.

Her presentation will be on waste reduction, specifically the Skip the Stuff and Food Waste Reduction Laws.

Skip the Stuff is an initiative aimed at reducing waste by encouraging restaurants and food delivery services to stop automatically including disposable items such as uten-

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sils, straws, napkins, and condiment packets in takeout and delivery orders. Instead, these items are only provided upon customer request.

All are welcome, light refreshments will be served.

If you are interested in becoming involved with the group, contact Rich Isaac at ri-saacx@aol.com, 973-716-0297.

CENTRAL JERSEY GROUP

(Mercer County and neighboring towns in adjoining counties)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey
Or find us from the NJ Chapter's website.

OFFICERS

Group Co-Chair	Kip Cherry	Kipatthesierraclub@gmail.com
Group Co-Chair	Sylvia Kay	Sylviakay222@gmail.com
Secretary	Leona Fluck	Pineypaddlers@gmail.com
Treasurer	Arlene Ceterskiva	Va2c2015@gmail.com
Outings	George and Leona Fluck	Pineypaddlers@gmail.com
Programs	Joanne Pannone	JPatMeadowbrook@gmail.com
Conservation Chair	Kip Cherry	Kipatthesierraclub@gmail.com
Zero Waste Coordinator	Sylvia Kay	Sylviakay222@gmail.com
Trails	Dave Mattek	MattekDC@aol.com
Webmaster	Benjamin Steinberg	
Group Executive Committee Members		
Kip Cherry, Sylvia Kay, Joanne Pannone		

We need volunteers to help us develop ways to achieve better land use decisions and make decisions that are related to the preservation of drinking water, better storm-water management, and the promotion of habitats and freshwater ecosystems. Our members have been speaking at township meetings, working with neighborhoods impacted by possible development, coordinating possible legal actions, and working on legislation to improve environmental sustainability. We are working to promote legislation to improve data center development. Recent projects have included:

- QTS Data Center, East Windsor, NJ
- Sentinel Data Center, South Brunswick, NJ

We are also working to protect the historic Monmouth Battlefield area from inappropriate development.

We are working with the Transportation Committee in encouraging school districts to invest in clean electric school buses that improve student health, neighborhood air quality, and lower fleet operating costs throughout New Jersey. Our recycling and zero waste coordinator is also the Chapter Zero Waste Co-coordinator and has given presentations on plastics and worked on legislation/bills on single-use packaging and extended producer responsibility (EPR).

More than 25 states have some form of an EPR bill for single-use packaging. We need to reduce the growing amount of municipal solid waste management from local governments and make the producers responsible to remove packaging toxins and hazardous materials from our environment. People are now accustomed to living without the plastic bags at the store and we notice less-littered roadways, waterways, and beaches. Our trails coordinator has been working with municipalities to obtain access through obtaining more open space, specifically in Mercer County. We need to preserve more open space to provide clean air and clean water and habitat for people and wildlife to survive and thrive.

We support the Green Amendment. We welcome new members!

RARITAN VALLEY GROUP

(Middlesex and Somerset counties and surrounding areas)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley
Facebook: www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC
Twitter: www.twitter.com/RaritanSierra

OFFICERS

Group Chair	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
Conservation Chair	Gary Frederick	garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Membership Chair	John Miraglia	johnworks3@aol.com
	Marty DuBois	mdub78@aol.com
	Open Position!	
Political Co-Chairs	Bernadette Maher	berndanerin@aol.com
	Open Position!	
Publicity Co-Chairs	Open Positions!	
Treasurer	S. Pasricha	
Co-Webmasters	Dennis Colligan, Open Position!	
Outings/Events Co-Chairs	John Miraglia, S. Pasricha, Bernadette Maher	
Health & Air Quality Issues Coordinator	Linda Powell	
Group Executive Committee Members	Gary Frederick*, S. Pasricha*, Teresa Callahan**, Kevin Corcoran**, and Bernadette Maher*	

*Jan 2025-Dec 2026

**Jan 2026-Dec 2027

Monthly membership meetings are typically held on the fourth Wednesday in New Brunswick. We discuss environmental issues (impacting Middlesex and Somerset), upcoming events, and volunteer efforts. See the calendar on the RVG webpage for meetings, outings, and events.

The issues of interest to our communities include:

1. Opposition to new fossil fuel infrastructure;

2. Conservation, preservation, and protection of the Raritan River Basin area; and,
3. Passage and enforcement of environmentally friendly ordinances.

NEWS FROM THE RARITAN VALLEY AREA

• **Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE), new FERC Docket CP17-101-007:** Sadly, to put the final nail on the coffin, in May 2026, the NJDEP Tidelands Resource Council voted to grant Transco the utility licenses to lay the pipes in critical wetlands. The pipeline will enter the **Raritan Bay** and **Cheesequake Creek** through NJ tidelands in **South Amboy**. Thank you to the entire Stop NESE coalition and activists in New Jersey for commenting at the hearing. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2026/03/one-last-chance-coalition-unites-against-ny-fossil-fuel-pipeline>

The NJDEP also approved the air and water permits for the polluting pipeline that will send fracked gas to New York City. Note that the gas does **not** increase supply in New Jersey. Disturbing and dredging the sensitive habitat for construction will irreparably damage the bay. The Sierra Club and others filed lawsuits against the NJ-DEP for improperly approving the water permits. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2025/11/groups-challenge-new-jersey-s-approval-nese-pipeline-court>

Williams' plans also call for a new gas fired polluting compressor station near homes and schools in **Franklin Township**, Somerset County. Additionally, there will be an expansion of the compressors in **Old Bridge**, Middlesex County. Once built, the compressors will send a larger volume of gas at a much higher velocity through existing pipelines via various towns in New Jersey. Map of pipelines by county: <https://pvnpm.phmsa.dot.gov/PublicViewer/>

The compressor station proposed near retirement communities in Franklin Township will spew hazardous toxins. The toxins are directly linked to cancer, asthma, heart disease, and neurological and developmental diseases. Yet, the NJDEP approved NESE's air permit application without any regard to human health. <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2026/01/nese-gains-air-permit-locking-new-dirty-gas-in-frastructure-nj>

• The Federal Regulatory Commission (FERC) reinstated Transco's **Regional Access Expansion (REAE) pipeline (CP21-94-004)** despite the fact the Club prevailed in the lawsuit opposing the pipeline. The REAE will increase the capacity of the toxic compressor stations at CS 207 in **Old Bridge**, Middlesex County and at CS 505 in **Neshanic Station**, Branchburg, Somerset County.

• **South Brunswick:** In July, the NJDEP Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission approved the construction of a data center proposed at the contaminated Princeton Nurseries site despite the Club's objections. The NJ Water Supply Authority draws water from the D&R Canal to supply drinking water for 1 million people. Details from the July hearing: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/drcc/pdf/minutes/2025/drcc%20minutes%2007.17.25.pdf>

• **New Brunswick's** city council voted to block the construction of a 27,000 square-foot data center. Residents opposed the environmental impacts, the demands on energy, and the changes to the local neighborhood.

• **Franklin Township** has passed an ordinance that does not allow new warehousing within 500 feet of residential areas. https://anjec.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Franklin-Warehouse_Ordinance.pdf

• **North Brunswick Township:** has passed a resolution in support of the Climate Superfund Act. The legislation aims to hold polluters accountable for damage caused by the climate crisis. <https://tinyurl.com/582w68vy>

• **Middlesex and Somerset Counties:** Despite April showers, we are still experiencing drought conditions. A **warning** by the state is in place to conserve water supply. Check the drought status here: <https://dep.nj.gov/drought/current-conditions/>

We encourage you to get involved by attending your town's planning and zoning board meetings. If you are aware of development proposals in your neighborhood that may have a negative environmental impact, please contact us and join our meetings.

JERSEY SHORE GROUP

(Monmouth County, approximately)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/
Facebook: www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/

OFFICERS

Secretary	Tim Macaluso	
Chair (Emeritus)	Dennis Anderson	dennisaza@aol.com
Co-Chair	Robin Zullo	zullo@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Co-Chair/Letter Writing/ Webmaster/Climate Chair	Steve Miller	stevemiller@comcast.net
Vice Chair /Conservation/ Letter Writing	Stan Greberis	sgreberis@newjersey.sierraclub.org
ExCom, Treasurer/Political	Jim Baye	
ExCom, Education Chair	George Moffat	
ExCom	Bob Grize	
ExCom	Pat Miller	pat.miller@newjersey.sierraclub.org
ExCom	Harold Zullo	zullo@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Hike Leader	Sandra Peterson	sandrahike@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Outreach Coordinator	John Luard	
Social Media/ Assistant Webmaster	Elvira Tabaku	njshore.social@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Speaker Program	Lara Zullo	

Upcoming Science Monday Lectures

Date: September 28, 2026

Title: "50 States of Sustainability:" Hope=Action=Impact

Speaker: Larry Confino, film director and producer

Description: Larry Confino is the director of "50 States of Sustainability," a nationally distributed PBS docuseries spotlighting individuals, corporations, nonprofits, and

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government agencies advancing practical solutions in energy innovation, resource resilience, infrastructure modernization, and next-generation workforce development. For his presentation, he'll show clips from the series and talk about the challenges and solutions to affect change from within every industry. He will further discuss how businesses, non-profits and individuals are working hard towards a more sustainable future. Discussion followed by Q&A.

Biography: Larry Confino is an alum from New York University's film program and has been an independent director and producer for over 25 years. His focus has been feature documentary production and documentary style productions for agencies, corporations and non-profits. His current project "50 States of Sustainability" is a docuseries about renewable energy and sustainability that has been airing nationally on PBS. Season #2 began airing in January 2026. Season #3 is currently in pre-production. Each episode highlights real-world progress across industries.

Date: October 26, 2026

Title: Watershed management: Green and sustainable infrastructure for stormwater management

Speaker: Christopher C. Obropta, Professor in Environmental Sciences, Rutgers University

Description: Join Dr. Christopher C. Obropta from the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program for an engaging presentation, "All About Rain Gardens." Learn how rain gardens help reduce flooding, improve water quality, and beautify communities by capturing and filtering stormwater naturally. Dr. Obropta will also share information about the Green Infrastructure Champions Program, which trains and supports local leaders, municipal staff, and residents in implementing green infrastructure projects throughout New Jersey. Whether you're interested in improving your community's resilience or creating a rain garden at home, this talk will provide the knowledge and inspiration to get started!

Biography: Christopher C. Obropta, Ph.D., PE is the Extension Specialist in Water Resources with Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and he is a professor with the Department of Environmental Sciences at the School of Environmental & Biological Sciences, Rutgers University. Prior to joining Rutgers, Dr. Obropta was an environmental consultant for 12 years at Omni Environmental Corporation. Dr. Obropta has a background in watershed management, water quality modeling, hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, and coastal engineering. His specific experience includes watershed restoration, wastewater treatment system design and management, TMDL studies, stormwater management, wetland design, longshore sediment transport, and geographic information systems (GIS).

Date: November 23, 2026

Title: Habitat conservation for endangered species in NJ

Speaker: William Pitts, Senior Zoologist with NJ DEP Fish & Wildlife's Endangered & Nongame Species Program

Description: New tools and technologies are being applied to habitat conservation in New Jersey, to help endangered species such as the kestrel (our smallest falcon), the bog turtle, and the tiger salamander. Different species and the ecosystems they depend upon will be covered. The eDNA project (uses samples collected from the environment to assess the presence of species), GIS modeling of habitat suitability, and other tools are enriching the reach of our state's wildlife biologists to study and protect the breeding and survivorship of endangered species.

Biography: William "Bill" Pitts is a Senior Zoologist with NJ DEP Fish & Wildlife's Endangered & Nongame Species Program. He has been with the program since 2005, and manages several projects across various species groups including, eastern tiger salamanders, migratory shorebirds, and American kestrels. He has coordinated with and developed partnership with organizations in New Jersey such as the Conserve Wildlife Foundation and Raritan Headwaters Association, and in so doing has educated the public and supported the development of citizen and community science programs.

Science Monday lectures are usually held at Brookdale Community College on the fourth Monday of Sept, Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, March, and April. Upcoming lectures are listed below. All lectures start at 6:30 p.m. and are held in the Twin Lights Rooms of the Student Life Center at Brookdale Community College. Meetings are free and open to the public; light refreshments are served.

Visit: <https://shorturl.at/sVuc6>

DIRECTIONS to BROOKDALE and the campus building:

To get to Brookdale's Lincroft campus, take Parkway Exit 109 to Route 520 West (Newman Springs Road, which becomes E. Main Street at the Lincroft campus). Take the traffic circle into the campus and follow the signs to the Warner Student Life Center and parking lot 7. As you walk east toward the building complex, Warner will be down a slight incline to your left.

OCEAN COUNTY GROUP

Webpage: www.meetup.com/sierra-club-ocean-group/

OFFICERS

Group Outings Chair	Terry Brown	terrybrown@comcast.net
Group Treasurer,		
Political Chair	Margaret Mary Piccolo	gogreenp1@yahoo.com
Group Representative	Alejandro Meseguer	alejandro.meseguer@gmail.com
	Andrew Goddard	av.goddard@hotmail.com
	Maritza Sierra	

Activities and Issues: Our group is focused on many critical issues. Locally and statewide we are fighting a myriad of overdevelopment problems. Along with our allies, we are working hard to save Barnegat Bay and The Pinelands, two natural gems in Ocean County. We have been reignited. Come join us! The group is looking to build up its membership and welcomes new volunteers who care about the environment, combatting climate change, and people simply interested in getting outdoors. Interested persons should contact Terry Brown, terrybrown@comcast.net.

WEST JERSEY GROUP

(Camden, Gloucester, and Burlington counties, approximately)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey

Facebook: www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC

Log on and Like Us!

OFFICERS

Chair	Gina Carola	856-848-8831	ginaceee@verizon.net
Vice-Chair	Tony Hagen		editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Secretary	Open Position!		
Treasurer	Trish Clements		patri3210@gmail.com
Publicity Chair	Open Position!		
Political Chair	Open Position!		
Greenways Coords.	Frank and Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Conservation Chair	Stacey Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
Pinelands Rep	Eleanor Kelly		ekelly0917@gmail.com
Beyond Plastics			
Coordinator	Virgil Maderich		vann118@comcast.net
Membership Chair	Open Position!		
Media & Communications	Tony Hagen		editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Open Positions! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831

Political chair, smart growth chair, programs chair, social media coordinators, outings chair, Off shore Wind Committee

West Jersey Group Meetings: Currently, there are no general meetings planned, due to difficulty in securing a venue. Please check our Facebook page for announcements.

If you would like to receive an email invitation when we do have meetings and are not already on our email reminder list, please send an email to Gina Carola, ginaceee@verizon.net, or visit our Facebook page for information: <http://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC/>

Contact Gina to get involved in any of our many initiatives on climate change.

SOUTH JERSEY GROUP

(Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem counties, approximately)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/south-jersey

OFFICERS

Group, Outings Chair	Tom Boghosian	609-335-6907	tfboghosian44@gmail.com
Vice-Chair	Open Position!		
Conservation Chair	Open Position!		
Political Chair, Calendars	Dick Colby	609-965-4453	dick.colby@stockton.edu
Membership Chair	Open Position!		
Secretary/Treasurer	Open Position!		
At Large	Allie Horn		

Dick Colby is an Atlantic County Parks Commissioner; contact him if you might be interested in attending monthly meetings of the Commission, which are open to the public. Julie Akers also works with Atlantic County Friends of the Parks, and is President of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association.

Current Issues: (1) We've been blue-blazing the southern portion of what will be a continuous footpath between the southern and northern tips of New Jersey, called the New Jersey Long Trail. Many others (and other groups) are contributing. Detailed maps and descriptions are now on the chapter website. Dick has produced a brochure describing 15 historic walks in Egg Harbor City. Copies (electronic or paper) are available on request. (2) We continue to hope for community solar opportunities for each municipality in South Jersey.

SINGLES SECTION

(A chapter-wide special interest section offering hikes/cleanups, social gatherings, meetings, etc.)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles

OFFICERS

Co-Chairman	Ron Pate	ronpate31@verizon.net
	Jimi Oleksiak	The_Hikist@Mac.com
Outings Chair	Jimi Oleksiak	
Treasurer	Jimi Oleksiak	
Social Chair	Position Open!	
Publicity	Position Open!	
Membership	Position Open!	
2025 Executive Committee	Ron Pate, Jimi Oleksiak	

The Singles Section has a need for volunteers. Contact the officers if you would like to volunteer for any of the following: outings chair, conservation chair, treasurer, social chair, vice social chair, programs, publicity, membership, nominations.

We're a friendly, active group of individuals who enjoy hiking, biking, canoeing/kayaking, as well as a variety of social and cultural activities throughout the year. This section was created to offer a variety of singles-oriented activities to NJ Sierra Club members. See the Outings section in this issue for a list of upcoming hikes.

COMMUNICATIONS: The best way to be notified of upcoming singles events is to join our free listserv. Anyone may subscribe by going to: <https://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/NJ-SINGLES-NEWS.html> and clicking on "Join or leave the list." You may subscribe and unsubscribe at will. Events are also listed on the online calendar on the Chapter's website: sierraclub.org/new-jersey. You can also "like" us on Facebook: "Singles Group New Jersey Sierra Club." Activities will also be posted on Meetup.

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LGBTQIA+ (LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, QUEER, TRANSGENDER+) SECTION

Our mission is to support Sierra Club goals and to promote environmental activism and social equity. We are an inclusive section of the Sierra Club – all members of the LGBTQIA+ community and their allies are invited to join us for a hike or a rally.

Want to do more? Consider volunteering to work with our dedicated leadership team as our treasurer, secretary, or social media specialist! Volunteer and help us grow and better serve New Jersey's LGBTQ+ hikers and environmentalists of all ages!

For more information or to help out, contact
 • Diane Scarangella: diascat@hotmail.com
 • Wanda Ashbrook: pridegrlnj@aim.com

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/
Meetup: www.meetup.com/njsierraclub
Facebook: www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt

OFFICERS
Co-Chair Diane Scarangella diascat@hotmail.com
Co-Chair and Outings Chair Wanda Ashbrook pridegrlnj@aim.com
Secretary Open Position!
Treasurer Open Position!
Webmaster/List Master Open Position!

OUTINGS AND ACTIVISTS
 Are you interested in joining or assisting's on LGBTQIA+ hikes or outdoor adventures? Create community surrounded by nature and have fun, too. Guidance and support to become a hike leader is available. Meet us at the trailhead.

Contact:
 Wanda Ashbrook: pridegrlnj@aim.com
 Rebecca Wilkin: rebeccawilkin@gmail.comHello

Please consider spending some of your time providing events that build environmental advocacy through direct involvement in nature. Hikes, water activities, field trips, nature walks, backpacking trips—these are just some of the activities we can provide if we have the help of people like you!

ICO: INSPIRING CONNECTIONS OUTDOORS

(A special interest activity with the motto: "No child left inside!")

OFFICERS
Chair Oscar Nazar chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com
Other Officers Amanda Gaglio

New Jersey Inspiring Connections Outdoors: (NJ ICO) provides safe and fun wilderness trips for children and teenagers with limited access to the outdoors. Volunteer leaders collaborate with community partners to facilitate, lead, and promote events that will educate and foster a love of nature and the outdoors for youth in New Jersey, who may not otherwise have the opportunity or the means. The program works to reduce barriers by providing gear, transportation, trip fees, and leaders to create opportunities to explore, enjoy, and advocate for nature. The chair welcomes inquiries from leaders of schools and other community organizations.

The chair is currently seeking volunteers looking to get involved as outings leaders to help facilitate and organize outings with our Youth Partner Organizations.

The group is also looking to fill its treasurer position. Any member with prior experience or interest is welcome to reach out to the group chair for more information.

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

All members are welcome to attend these monthly policy deliberations, held by Zoom video conferencing usually on second Saturdays. Zoom can be accessed from a computer, smartphone, or telephone. The Conservation Committee meets from 10 a.m. to noon and the Executive Committee meets from 1 to 3 p.m. For meeting link, contact secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Upcoming Meetings: July 11, August 8, September 19



SIERRA CLUB

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

At-Large Executive Committee Members
 Olivia Xu, Renée Pollard, Joe Testa, Denise Brush, Kip Cherry, Stan Greberis, Pat Hilliard, Tony Hagen, Paul Sanderson

Chapter Chair and Council of Club Leaders
 Joe Testa • chapter.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Chapter Vice-Chair
 Tony Hagen • vice.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Conservation Chair
 Greg Gorman • ggorman07419@embarqmail.com

Conservation Vice-Chair
 Gina Carola (856) 848-8831 ginaceee@verizon.net

Political Committee Chair
 Ricardo Pereira political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Parliamentarian and Council (CCL) Delegate
 Joe Testa • CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org
 Vice-Parliamentarian • Dick Colby

Secretary
 Jim Andreano • Jimandreano@gmail.com

Treasurer
 Paul Sanderson (908) 233-2414 Treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Vice Treasurer
 Sunil Somalwar • sunil.somalwar@gmail.com

Membership Chair
 Seth Kantor • Membership.NJSierraClub@outlook.com

Outings Chair
 Leona Fluck (609) 259-3734 pineypaddlers@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor
 Tony Hagen (609) 499-8678 editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Social Media Content Producer
 Evan Cohen

Webmaster
 Dennis Colligan • webmaster@newjersey.sierraclub.org

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Inspiring Connections Outdoors Chair (ICO)
 Oscar Nazar • ICOChair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Compliance Officer
 Open Position

Legal Advisor
 Chris Hitchcock • chitchcock650@gmail.com

Committees

Building and Electrification Committee
 Steve Miller, Co-Chair • stevemiller@comcast.net
 Pat Miller, Co-Chair • patmiller@comcast.net

Clean Energy Committee
 Denise Brush, Co-Chair offshorewind@newjersey.sierraclub.org
 Howard Stein, Co-Chair • stein5765@verizon.net

Communications Committee
 Seth Kantor, Chair • membership@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Elections Committee
 Tony Hagen • editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Environmental and Social Justice Committee
 Renée Pollard, Chair • rpollard16@comcast.net

Facilities Committee
 Paul Sanderson, Chair • treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Finance Committee
 Paul Sanderson, Chair • treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Forest Conservation Committee
 Greg Gorman, Chair • ggorman07419@embarqmail.com

Fundraising Committee
 Jim Andreano, Chair • Jimandreano@gmail.com

Group Vitality Committee
 Joe Testa, Co-Chair • chapter.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
 Rich Isaac, Co-Chair • richard.isaac@sierraclub.org

Information Technology Committee
 Joe Testa, Chair • CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Inspiring Connections Outdoors Committee
 Oscar Nazar, Chair • chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com

Legislative Committee
 Laura Lynch, Chair • njsierraclub@gmail.com

Light Pollution and Night Sky Committee
 Jonathan Wall, Chair • docjdwall@gmail.com;
 John Kashwick • John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Nominating Committee
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Personnel Committee
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Student Action Committee
 Olivia Xu, Chair student.action@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Transportation Committee
 Bill Beren, Chair • Beren1@verizon.net

Data Center & Warehouse Committee
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Chapter Organizer
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Please share this newsletter with a non-member friend and invite them to join (see membership coupon this page).



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Opinions, unless otherwise indicated, are the writer's own. Advertised products and services carry no Club endorsement.

Thank you to all who contributed to this issue! This newsletter is produced mostly by volunteers.

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SIERRA CLUB

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