



The Pinchot Papers

Newsletter of the Governor Pinchot Group of the Sierra Club

Spring 2019

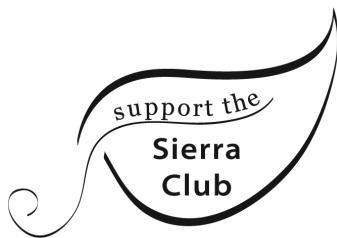
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Stay in Touch

Find out more about GVP meetings, hikes, cleanups, and other activities by checking out <https://www.sierraclub.org/pennsylvania>.

GVP Executive Committee & members usually meet the last Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. To be added to our email list, email gvpsierraclub@gmail.com.

Find Out What's New with the GVP

Are you looking for an outing near you? Do you want to know when and where GVP is holding a general meeting? Would you like to see what activities are going on in our area?

It's easy! Go online and visit <https://www.sierraclub.org/pennsylvania>. You will see all statewide meetings and outings on the home page.

- Choose either the "List view" or "Calendar view" tab
- Click on the "Search Options" button; then click on "Sponsoring Entity" and choose "Governor Pinchot Group"
- Click on the "Filter activities" button

You will see all the events just in the GVP area!

If you want to learn more about the event, or sign up to participate, just click on the event. You will find a description of the event and the outing leader's contact information.

If you are traveling and would like to attend an outing somewhere else in the State, just view the outings map or the Statewide outings list, or search for outings listed under that area's local group.

(You can also reach this list of events by searching for PA Chapter Sierra Club, clicking on Outings and then Upcoming Outings.)

Keeping TMI-1 Open Stirs Nuclear Debate

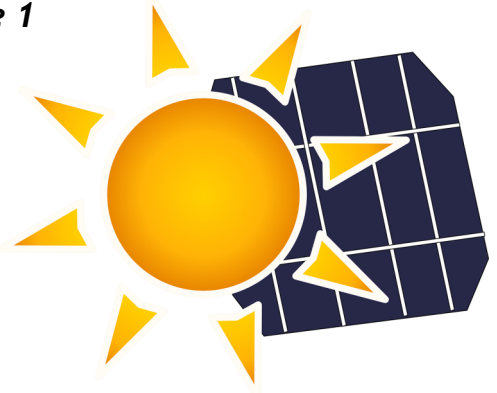
Exelon Corporation's self-imposed deadline for closure of the undamaged reactor at Three Mile Island (TMI) has legislators racing to find a way to keep the nuclear plant open for more years.

Producing electricity from nuclear fission is not cost-efficient. TMI is scheduled to close at the end of 2019 because it failed to sell its output in the annual PJM capacity auction last year. This was the fourth year that TMI failed to sell its capacity through this PJM auction, the regional electricity grid, according to the Harrisburg *Patriot-News*.

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TMI-1 Stirs Nuclear Subsidy Debate, continued from page 1

TMI has been a money losing operation for six years, as a result of persistently low wholesale energy prices and market rules, according to Exelon, the plant's owner. In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Exelon stated the primary factors contributing to Unit 1's "deteriorating economic value" include significant declines in plant revenues due to prolonged periods of low wholesale power prices, the absence of federal or state policies that place a value on nuclear energy for its clean-energy attributes, and the plant's relatively high operating costs as a single-unit site. TMI employs 675 workers, according to the *Patriot-News*.



Exelon, which also owns other nuclear facilities in Pennsylvania, is seeking to guarantee a market for all its nuclear plants by requiring Pennsylvania's electric distribution companies, such as Met Ed and PPL, to buy a certain share of their electricity from nuclear plants. This is at the heart of PA House Bill 11, recently introduced by Rep. Mehaffie (Dauphin County). Implicitly all electric distribution companies in Pennsylvania would have to raise electricity prices for ratepayers.

The nuclear industry has needed huge government subsidies over six decades to stay afloat. Among other subsidies, TMI's prior owners received a "stranded cost payment" when Pennsylvania was undergoing electricity market deregulation. A bill to subsidize TMI would reverse some aspects of the deregulated electric market.

Industry spokesmen have pitched a need to protect the nuclear industry from the free market because the electricity produced is "carbon-free." Only the steam-generating fission process itself is carbon free. Every step in the lifecycle of uranium fuel is heavily reliant on fossil fuel to mine, process, deliver, and dispose of radioactive materials. The desire to keep TMI operating ignores the subsidies, costs, risks and inefficiencies of the nuclear process. Among the major costs that cannot be avoided this year is the construction of a nuclear fuel containment facility to store spent fuel rods at the plant.

Sierra Club has been working to educate legislators about the need for a sustainable, comprehensive strategy that moves renewable energy forward to address the climate crisis. Sierra Club is opposing this latest nuclear bailout proposal that perpetuates a costly, inefficient operation. We need to phase out aging, increasingly expensive nuclear reactors.

TRIVIA **CORNER**

Which part of poison ivy may cause a serious rash?

- a) Bare stems and branches
- b) Leaves and leaflets
- c) The whole plant

answer on page 4

Poison Ivy *Toxicodendron radicans*
Photo credit: David Platt



GVP Group's 2019 Calendar of Events



- ⇒ **Saturday, April 13:** Birdsong Walks at 7 a.m. Short day hike on two short, nearby trails at The Nature Conservancy's Cove Mountain Preserve, located just west of Marysville. Each trail is one mile long with some elevation and features views of the river. Contact Bob at bobreuck@frontiernet.net
- ⇒ **Saturday, May 4:** Yard Sale to benefit GVP Group, 3244 Green Street at 8 a.m. Contact Robin at rbroderick1@email.com (Drop off donations on the front porch at 3244 Green Street, Harrisburg, beginning April 27th and ending Friday, May 3rd at midnight.)
- ⇒ **Sunday, May 5:** Highway Cleanup at 9 a.m. at airport end of connector. Contact Jill at kerrouac@msn.com
- ⇒ **Saturday, May 18:** Tree Identification Hike at the Ned Smith Center at 9:30 a.m. Hike is about three miles long. After the hike, attendees can visit the art gallery. Contact Bob at bobreuck@frontiernet.net
- ⇒ **Saturday, June 15:** Susquehanna River Rally in front of Capitol. Bring your canoe or kayak to launch at City Island. Meet at the Beach House before launching. Check the website for details TBA. Contact thomxau@yahoo.com
- ⇒ **Sunday, June 23:** Highway Cleanup at 9 a.m. Contact Jill at kerrouac@msn.com
- ⇒ **Saturday, July 13:** Hike at Stony Valley/Beaver Dams at 9:30 a.m. Moderate nine-mile hike with views of beaver dams. Contact Bob at bobreuck@frontiernet.net
- ⇒ **Saturday, July 27:** Kayak or canoe at the Swatara Creek - BYOK (Bring Your Own Kayak or canoe). Contact Bob by July 24 at bobreuck@frontiernet.net Details TBA
- ⇒ **Tuesday, August 6:** Happy Hour at the Millworks, meet at 6 p.m. Contact: Jill at kerrouac@msn.com with questions. No need to RSVP.
- ⇒ **Saturday, September 7:** Highway Cleanup at 9 a.m. Contact Jill at kerrouac@msn.com
- ⇒ **Sunday, September 8:** Annual Susquehanna River Cleanup. Contact Robin at rbroderick1@email.com for time and meeting place.
- ⇒ **Saturday, September 21:** Hike at Tom's Creek near Michaux State Forest. Contact Bob at bobreuck@frontiernet.net Time TBA.
- ⇒ **Saturday, October 5:** Highway Cleanup at 9 a.m. Contact Jill at kerrouac@msn.com
- ⇒ **Sunday, October 20:** An entertaining and informative talk by Gene Wingert, Dickinson College biologist, from 1-3 p.m. Meet at Wildwood's Olewine Nature Center, 100 Wildwood Way, Wildwood Park, Harrisburg.
- ⇒ **Thursday, November 7:** Happy Hour at 6 p.m. Check website for details or contact Jill at kerrouac@msn.com
- ⇒ **Friday, December 13:** Annual Holiday Party at 6 p.m. Check website for details TBA or contact Justina at Jawasicek@gmail.com

For up-to-date additional information, directions, and cancellations, and to electronically register, visit the Pennsylvania Chapter Website at www.sierraclub.org/pennsylvania, and select our outings listed in the activities.



**SIERRA
CLUB**
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Governor Pinchot Group
P.O. Box 606
Harrisburg, PA 17108-0606

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Remember to Vote for National Sierra Club Elections

The annual election for the Club's Board of Directors is now underway. Members eligible to vote in the national Sierra Club election should have received a ballot in March, either by mail or online if you chose e-delivery.

Each candidate provides a statement about themselves and their views on the issues on the official election ballot. You can also visit the Club's election web site for additional information about candidates: <https://www.sierraclub.org/board/election>. **Voting online is quick and easy!**

Even if you receive your election materials in the mail, you can use the Internet voting site to save time and postage. If sending via ground mail, please note your ballots must be received by no later than Election Day, April 24, 2019.



Trivia Corner Answer

c) The whole plant may cause a rash

Remember "leaves of three, let it be!" Very common in Pennsylvania, poison ivy is a ground and climbing vine that can cause a severe itchy rash. In winter, when the leaves have dropped, branches and stems are more difficult to identify, so beware of touching unknown vines which may have the poisonous oily sap. Some people believe rubbing jewel weed on skin that has been in contact with poison ivy may prevent a rash, but this has not been proven according to the *Journal of Wilderness Medicine*.