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Pinchot Papers

Newsletter of the Governor Pinchot Group of the Sierra Club
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Spring
2012

2012 Spring Wildwood Nature Presentation



*“Three Days in the Everglades”
with Gene Wingert*

Join us on Saturday, May 12, for a program on the habitats of south Florida and the wading birds that use those habitats over winter. The same birds are also present in the local area and we will explore the connection of the Everglades to Pennsylvania. The program will answer the question, “Why should we care about the Everglades?”

Mark your calendar for 1 to 2:15 p.m. at the Wildwood Nature Center near Harrisburg on Saturday, May 12, 2012. Free admission. Refreshments will be provided.

The presentation is followed by a nature walk around Wildwood led by naturalist and local historian John Lenahan. Questions? Call Jack Flatley at 717-921-2838 or email him at riverman17018@comcast.net.



Native Fresh Water Eels and Mussels in the Susquehanna River by Arlene Buchholz, Sierra Club Activist

The American eel, *Anguilla rostrata*, is the only fresh water eel native to North America. These eels live in streams, rivers and estuaries of the Atlantic and Gulf coasts including the Susquehanna River and its tributaries.

American eels were abundant and an important fishery from the Susquehanna River until the early 1900s. Eel populations declined after hydroelectric dams were built along the Susquehanna River at multiple sites and eels are now rare.

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The cost to produce solar power is going down.

Recent advances that are about to hit the market will bring the costs of producing solar power down to near 1 cent per watt, says Joshua Pearce, Adjunct Professor, Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering at Queen’s University.

Feedback, Please

Let us know what you think about your local Governor Pinchot group of the Sierra Club.

We are compiling a list of the top five places to hike within the GVP area. Please send us an email letting us know about your favorite hike.

Let us know what environmental issue you are most passionate about. Is there something going on in the GVP area that you would like more info on or more attention paid to. Let us know.

What’s in a name? The name of our group is Governor Pinchot after a person who was considered a great environmentalist of his time. We are trying to decide if we should change the name to another person who might be more well known or to a name that is more descriptive of our location. What do you think?

Photo Contest Cancelled



Sorry everyone, we tried having a photo contest, but the electronic files were too large for our email. Even when folks attached links to their photos, we could not open them.

If we figure out a better way to handle the technical issues, we might try it again.

Good News for the Environment

from the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development

A new UN report details how fast cuts to non-CO2 short-lived climate forcers (SLCFs), including black carbon, methane and tropospheric ozone, can cut the rate of global warming in half, preventing up to 0.5°C of warming by 2040. If combined with rapid cuts to CO2 this could keep long term warming below 2°C through the end of the century.

Cutting SLCFs represents a “win-win” for climate mitigation, public health and food security. Targeted national efforts on 16 abatement measures, supported by regional and global frameworks, can prevent more than two million premature deaths a year, mainly women and children, with more than 80% of the health benefits occurring in Asia. Cutting SLCFs can avoid approximately 32 million tones of crop losses each year. Up to fifty percent of the identified control measures can be implemented at a net cost savings, including measures such as replacing traditional biomass burning stoves with modern efficient stoves and capturing landfill methane.

Native Fresh Water Eels, continued from page 1

Dams prevent eels from completing their life cycle. American eels are “catadromous” – adults spawn in salt water in the Caribbean Sargasso Sea. Juvenile eels or “glass eels” migrate north into coastal estuaries, and up into streams and rivers to mature.



American Eel, Aguilula rostrata
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Eels spend their adult life in fresh water, can live 20 years or more and grow to 2 feet in length. Dams prevent movement of adult eels to salt water for spawning and juvenile eels migrating into streams and rivers. Juvenile eels are also harvested in estuaries before they can return to rivers. Fish ladders and lifts have been placed at many of the dams, however they have had limited success in allowing eels to return to their previous ranges. (<http://fishandboat.com/pafish>)

A secondary effect of the decline in American Eel populations is a decrease in the native fresh water mussel, the Eastern Elliptio, *Elliptio complanato*. Fresh water mussels filter nutrients and sediments from streams, rivers and lakes and are an indicator of stream health. The Eastern elliptio can grow to 10 cm and live up to 100 years. These mussels require a host to complete their life cycle and the preferred host of *Elliptio complanato* is the American eel. (<http://www.dnr.state.md.us/streams/pdfs/elliptioComplanata.pdf>)

Research to determine the effective methods to adapt fish lifts for migration of eels may help to increase eel populations and, in turn, Eastern elliptio populations. Also, research is being done on releasing eels into rivers and streams above the dams in order to increase populations.

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New Community and Environmental Coalition Forming

Former Cumberland County Commissioner Rick Rovegno is leading an effort to form a broad-based coalition of community and environmental organizations to focus on the conservation needs of the Cumberland Valley.

The mission of new coalition is to promote sustainable and healthy communities by identifying and fostering synergy among different groups toward the common purpose of balancing economic growth with preservation of land and water resources for residents and visitors.

There are a number of initiatives currently underway, such as the preservation of the Appalachian Trail. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy has established a mini-grant program that emphasizes multi-partner regional long term collaborations.

Given the environmental challenges to our region and the financial challenges to governments at all levels, it is imperative the local groups coordinate their efforts. The new coalition hopes to communicate a consistent message more effectively to both elected officials and the general public. The name of the new coalition has not been selected yet, so suggestions are welcomed. Stay tuned for more information.



Mark Your Calendar

Friday, April 20

Highway Cleanup with students from Messiah. Call Robin for details at 717-903-7555.

Saturday, April 28

Earth Fest, Dickinson College. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Visit the Dickinson Website.

Tuesday, May 1

May Day Rally on the Capital Steps. Support Clean Energy and Clean Jobs. 1 - 2 p.m. Bring a sign! The bigger the turnout, the better.
Contact
Randy.Francisco@sierraclub.org

Saturday, May 5

Yard Sale fundraiser. Drop off items Monday through Friday before the sale at Robin's, 3244 Green St., Harrisburg. Call Robin at 717-903-7555.

Saturday, May 12

Wildwood Nature Center Program, 1-2:15. Details on front page of this newsletter.

Saturday, June 2

Bike Trip from Lawn to Mt. Gretna.
Contact Justina at
jawasicek@gmail.com

Saturday, July 21

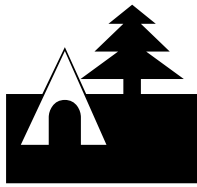
Canoe Trip, 1-3, on the Juniata to the Susquehanna. Contact Jack at 717-921-2838 or
riverman17018@comcast.net

Saturday, September 8

Bike Trip from Downtown York.
Contact Justina as above.

Saturday, September 15

Annual Susquehanna River Cleanup.
Contact Jack as above.



Mark Your Calendar!

2012 July Outing at Ohiopyle State Park

Join us and bring your family and friends July 13, 14 and 15

Enjoy camping, hikes, potluck dinner, and more!

There is no cost for Sierra Club members to attend.

For more information contact: pennsylvania.chapter@sierraclub.org

Environmental Regs and the "Job Killer"

Myth by Paula Toth, Sierra Club Activist

A recent Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) report states that stormwater and sewage plant upgrades could create 240,000 new jobs in the Bay area. Debunking the "Job Killer" Myth: How Pollution Limits Encourage Jobs in the Chesapeake Bay Region disputes the unfounded premise that environmental laws hurt the overall economy. Instead, the study supports the established fact that jobs have already been and will continue to be established as a result of the Bay pollution limits.

According to CBF President William C. Baker, "For years, opponents of environmental regulations have argued that they cost jobs and hurt business [but] that is not borne out by the facts." He maintains that America's ability to "innovate" makes compliance with pollution-reducing rules "spawn advances in technology that actually improve products that we all take for granted every day."

Baker is not alone in his observations. Even economists uphold that there is no scientific foundation for a net loss of jobs because of these regulations. For example, when the federal Clean Air and Clean Water Acts passed in the 1970s, industry immediately began to offer new and different kinds of jobs that bolstered economic conditions through pollution reduction, including improvements to sewage and power plants.

Debunking the Myth clearly calculates that the environmental industry is now worth \$312 billion per year nationally, and employs about 1.7 million people with approximately 75 percent of job growth in this field driven by government regulations. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that stormwater projects could provide work for 178,000 full-time equivalent jobs across the Bay area alone. Maryland and Virginia by themselves project investing a total of \$3 billion to upgrade sewage treatment plants over the next decade, creating 60,000 related jobs.

Baker further adds, "A clean environment and a vibrant economy are two sides of the same coin. One supports the other. We will have more fish, crabs, and oysters and fewer health impacts from dirty water."

For more information on the CBF report, tune to WITF's Radio Smart Talk Green Jobs aired on Friday, January 6, 2012.

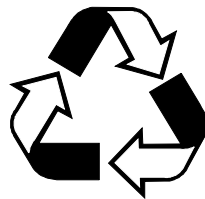


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All are welcome to attend GVP meetings. They are held the last Tuesday of every month. The May and June meetings will be held at the East Shore Library. To check time and locations of meetings, email or call Jack Flatley at riverman17018@comcast.net or 717-921-2708.

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