



**SIERRA
CLUB**
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TERRA FIRMA

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2019

PUBLISHED BY VOLUNTEERS FROM THE LOWER HUDSON GROUP SIERRA CLUB

COMPREHENSIVE CLIMATE PLAN HIGHLIGHTS HISTORIC NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION!

*By Roger Downs, Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter
Conservation Director*

On July 25, 2019, flanked by former Vice President Al Gore and hundreds of advocates and policy makers, Governor Cuomo signed into law the strongest climate legislation in the nation as part of an exhaustive three-way agreement with the Assembly and Senate. The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act's road to passage was the culmination of a multi-year effort, deeply rooted in climate justice, and widely supported and led by frontline community groups, environmental justice organizations, labor and environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club.

This bold, historic legislation represents a framework by which New York can lead the nation and the world in addressing the climate crisis while building a clean energy economy that works for all New Yorkers.

The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act will

- Set the highest standards in the nation by mandating 85 percent greenhouse gas emission reductions economy-wide by 2050, with incentives to reduce the impact of the last 15 percent
- Mandate that New York sources 70 percent of its electricity from renewable sources, like wind and solar, by 2030, and achieves a 100 percent carbon-free electric sector by 2040
- Codify the governor's existing clean energy commitments, including a 3 percent utility energy efficiency target, 9 gigawatts of offshore wind, 3 gigawatts of energy storage and 6 gigawatts of distributed solar
- Invest 35 percent of state climate funds in frontline communities through efficiency, renewable energy, job programs and more
- Protect disadvantaged communities by requiring an air quality monitoring program and prohibiting carbon offsets for the electric, transportation and building sectors
- Create a framework by which the Department of Environmental Conservation, in consultation with the climate council and others, must craft regulation to implement emission-reduction targets across

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Membership Meeting Schedule

For up-to-date meeting info, visit
SierraLowerHudson.org
RocklandSierraClub.org

NON-MEMBERS WELCOME!
**MEETING DAYS AND PLACES VARY, PLEASE
CHECK CAREFULLY BELOW**

*Light refreshments are served.
Meetings are free and open to the public.*

Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at 7:00pm
Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd, Scarsdale
This is a handicapped-accessible location

Film Screening: Paris to Pittsburgh

Join us for a screening of the documentary Paris to Pittsburgh. From National Geographic comes a story about how Americans are demanding and developing real solutions in the face of climate change. Click on the image to see the movie's trailer. Presented in collaboration with the Greenburgh Nature Center.

Harvest Square Dance!

Saturday, September 21, 2019 at 5:00pm
Faraway Farm Alpacas, 1307 Baptist Church Road, Yorktown, NY 10598

Our 6th annual fundraiser, this event is always a hit. Tickets and additional info at harvestsquaredance.brownpapertickets.com. Come join the fun and Do-Si-Do with us! For all ages - NO PARTNER NECESSARY! - Wear your dancing sneakers 'cause this is a real barn dance!! Enjoy ole time square and line dancin' with friends and fellow "greenies". Tickets on discount till September 9.

- * Tour the farm and meet the alpacas and Icelandic horses at 5:00.
- * Delicious food (vegan & gluten free options) including desserts, wine, beer.
- * Veteran dance caller from Foot & Fiddle Dance Co.
- * Artisanal ice cream from Blue Pig in Croton.
- * Raffle of luxurious alpaca wool throw, and 50/50 raffle.
- * Rain or shine - Large barn and tenting.

County Candidates Q&A on Environmental Issues

Wednesday, October 9, 2019 at 7:00pm
Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd, Scarsdale
This is a handicapped-accessible location

Election season is upon us, make your vote count by casting it for the candidate that best represents your values. Ask candidates running for contested seats about how they will handle the issues that matter most to you. Presented in collaboration with the Greenburgh Nature Center.

Join us to work on environmental issues in Rockland County!

Rockland Sierra Club was one of the groups leading the successful effort to defeat plans to desalinate Hudson River water for Rockland's drinking water. We are now helping the County craft a sustainable water management policy. We are also working to limit new fossil fuel infrastructure such as Pilgrim crude oil pipelines, and have partnered with 350.org on efforts to address climate change through divestment and through promoting Climate Smart/Clean Energy Communities programs for towns and villages.

Rockland Sierra Club usually meets during the first week of each month. Check RocklandSierraClub.org for dates and locations. For more information: pkurtz9@gmail.com or deby1012@gmail.com. Or call 845-358-3386.

THE 6TH ANNUAL

Harvest Square Dance

SIERRA CLUB LOWER HUDSON GROUP

September 21ST

2019

At 5 PM

Tour the Alpaca Farm at 5PM

**Delicious Food
Desserts
Beer & Wine**

From
LOCAL SUPPLIERS

Enjoy Artisinal ice cream from Blue Pig in Croton

Proceeds go directly to our efforts to protect the health, safety and environment in our communities.

Help us protect gains made and defend against new attacks on our environment at the local, state and national level.

Come at 5 PM to tour the Alpaca Farm and shop for garments and gifts.

**PRICES INCREASE AFTER SEPTEMBER 8
RAIN OR SHINE - LARGE BARN AND TENTING**

YORKTOWN

For more info and tickets visit:
harvestsquaredance.brownpapertickets.com



Directions to Greenburgh Nature Center

99 Dromore Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583

In bad weather, confirm meeting by calling (914) 723-3470

From Rye & Southeast Westchester Take I-287 West to Exit 5 (Route 100). Go left at the end of the ramp, go to traffic light and turn left again, and continue 0.5 miles to Central Avenue (Route 100). Turn right onto Central Avenue/Route 100 and go 2.5 miles. Pass a Getty station on the left, go about 100 yards and see on the right Tile Shop, then Scarsdale Plaza (3-story dark green glassed building) on the right, and Dromore Road is directly across the street on the left. (If you pass Burger King on left, you went too far.)

From Northern Westchester Take the Bronx River Parkway to Exit 22 (Westchester County Center), where you turn right. Cross Route 119 to Central Avenue (Route 100). Take Central Avenue for 2.5 miles. Pass a Getty station on the left, go about 100 yards and see on the right Tile Shop, then Scarsdale Plaza (3-story dark green glassed building) on the right, and Dromore Road is directly across the street on the left. (If you pass Burger King on left, you went too far.)

From Southern Westchester Take Bronx River Parkway north to Exit 15 (Fenimore Road). Turn left onto Fenimore, cross over parkway and go through the town of Hartsdale to Central Avenue (Route 100), turn left there and go 1.2 miles. Pass a Getty station on the left, go about 100 yards and see on the right Tile Shop, then Scarsdale Plaza (3-story dark green glassed building) on the right, and Dromore Road is directly across the street on the left. (If you pass Burger King on left, you went too far.)

From Rockland County Take Tappan Zee Bridge, continue on Route I-287 east, get off at Exit 5. You should be on Route 119 east and Route 100 south, which share the pavement. Turn right onto Central Avenue/Route 100, and go 2.7 miles. Pass a Getty station on the left, go about 100 yards and see on the right Tile Shop, then Scarsdale Plaza (3-story dark green glassed building) on the right, and Dromore Road is directly across the street on the left. (If you pass Burger King on left, you went too far.)

the economy, including the electric sector; performance standards for buildings, industry and other sectors; and transportation sector emission-reduction programs, including electrification

Implementation of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, however, will be the challenge of our time. The climate justice and equity goals of the bill will be especially difficult to realize without strong pressure in next year's budget negotiations for hundreds of new staff to facilitate this great transition. The renewable energy targets are only as strong as our ability to cut through local siting roadblocks and NIMBYism to get wind and solar projects built. But the legally enforceable framework now exists — it's an invitation for us to roll up sleeves and make an equitable and fossil fuel-free future a reality.

While the climate bill alone may represent one of the most important pieces of legislation enacted in the last half century, it underscores that elections really do matter, and when we get the right people in office, change can come like floodgates opening. Thanks to the new progressive shift in the Senate, led by Andrea Stewart-Cousins, decades of legislative gridlock broke free and an astounding body of progressive legislation passed, reforming key policy areas that affect reproductive rights, housing, election law, public ethics, workers' rights, criminal justice and environmental protection. In conjunction with Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and the leadership of the Environmental Conservation Committee Chairs, Assemblyman Steve Englebright and Senator Todd Kaminsky, the legislature passed these environmental enhancements and protections.

Through the summer and fall, the Sierra Club will continue to advocate for Governor Cuomo to approve the remaining pieces of environmental legislation that have passed the Senate and Assembly and await his signature. We will also prepare for an even more productive 2020 legislative session, during which we hope to

- advance measures to significantly increase staffing to our environmental agencies
- fill gaping holes in wetland and stream protection laws
- fix regressive standing requirements for environmental lawsuits
- ban the importation of fracking and drilling wastes
- protect our pollinators from harmful insecticides
- improve NYS recycling programs
- efficiently and effectively implement the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act

All that we have achieved this year would not have been possible without the work of thousands of volunteers across the state pushing not only for the policies we so desperately need, but to elect progressive thinkers who can get the job done. Please continue to support us in this fight.

This article was reprinted in part from the Summer 2019 online issue of *Sierra Atlantic*. Read the full article and list of bills that passed at <https://atlantic2.sierraclub.org/content/albany-update-summer-2019>

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THE NEW YORK STATE ELECTRIC GRID – PART 2

by Laura Burkhardt

Evolution of the Electric Power Grid

From Individual Utilities to Large Regional Systems. At the beginning of the 20th century, more than 4,000 individual electric utilities operated in isolation from each other. As the demand for electricity grew, especially after World War II, utilities began to connect their transmission systems. These connections allowed utilities to share the economic benefits of building large and often jointly-owned electric generating units to serve their combined electricity demand at the lowest possible cost. Interconnection also reduced the amount of extra generating capacity that each utility had to have in order to ensure reliable service during times of peak demand. Over time, three large, interconnected systems evolved in the United States:

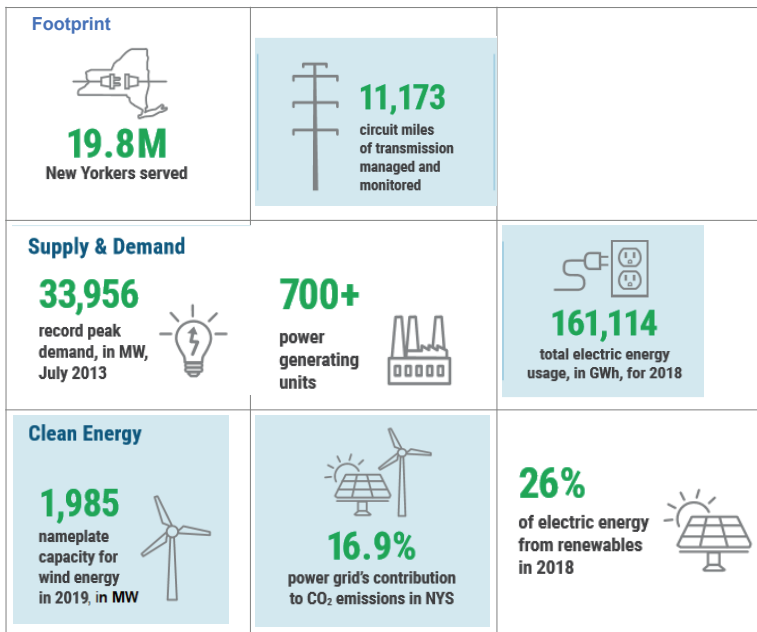
- the Eastern Interconnection, covering the area east of the Rocky Mountains and a portion of the Texas panhandle;
- the Western Interconnection, covering the area from the Rockies to the west;
- the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), covering most of Texas.

The Eastern and Western Interconnections in the US are also linked with the Canadian power grid. The network structure of the interconnections provides multiple routes for power to flow and allows generators to supply electricity to many load centers. This redundancy helps prevent transmission line or power plant failures from causing interruptions in service to retail customers.

Deregulation. In the late 1990s many states, including New York, went through a process of electricity deregulation. Before this time utilities were vertically integrated, regulated monopolies; i.e., they owned and operated generation plants as well as transmission and distribution facilities. Under deregulation utilities were forced to become either electricity generators or electricity distributors; if the utility owned both generation and distribution plants it had to sell one or the other of these assets. For example, Central Hudson in Orange County chose to become a distributor and sold its Danskammer Generating Station in Newburgh to Dynegy in 2001 (followed in later years by a succession of other owners). Similarly, Con Edison also chose to become a distributor and sold its Indian Point Unit 1 and Unit 2 reactors to Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.; the New York Power Authority, which built Indian Point Unit 3, also sold its reactor to Entergy.

The Grid in New York State

By The Numbers. As we have described, the electricity grid in New York State is the system of interconnected energy infrastructure — power plants, transmission lines, transformers, substations, and distribution lines — that move power from suppliers to utilities and then to all New York residents and businesses. The following graphics illustrate the scope of the grid.



Terms & Abbreviations

Megawatt (MW): A measure of electricity that is the equivalent of 1 million watts. It is generally estimated that a megawatt provides enough electricity to supply the power needs of 800 to 1,000 homes.

Megawatt-Hour (MWh): A megawatt-hour is equal to one megawatt of energy produced or consumed continuously for one hour.

Gigawatt (GW): A unit of power or capacity equal to one billion watts.

Gigawatt-Hour (GWh): A gigawatt-hour is equal to one gigawatt of energy produced or consumed continuously for one hour.

Load: A consumer of energy, or the amount of energy consumed. Load can also be referred to as demand.

Capacity: Capacity is the maximum electric output that a generator can produce. It is measured in megawatts (MW).

Generation: Generation is the amount of electric output that a generating station produces. It is expressed in megawatt-hours (MWh). It can also be referred to as supply.

Nameplate Capacity: The maximum amount of electric output that any particular power source could produce. Generating stations typically run at something less than this maximum.

Graphics from *Power Trends 2019*, published by the New York Independent System Operator, copyright 2019. ([2-1], pg. 3)

Terms & Abbreviations also from *Power Trends 2019*, pg. 70-74.




Managing the Grid: The New York Independent System Operator. New York’s electric grid is part of the Eastern Interconnection mentioned above that extends from Canada to Florida and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Rockies. The New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) is responsible for maintaining the safe, reliable flow of power throughout New York State. It was formed in 1997 and officially took control of New York’s electric power system on December 1, 1999. NYISO is a not-for-profit corporation and is governed by an independent Board of Directors and a governance structure made up of committees, with market participants and stakeholders as members.

What NYISO does:

- operates the state’s bulk electricity grid. NYISO coordinates the daily operations to distribute electricity supply and monitors the reliability of the system.
- administers New York’s competitive wholesale electricity markets (see the sidebar)
- conducts comprehensive long-term planning for the state’s electric power system, and
- advances the technological infrastructure of the state’s electric system.

Every 5 minutes 24/7, 365

Electricity in New York is bought and sold through wholesale energy markets.

- **Energy Markets:** Provide day-ahead and real-time commitments to meet load. 
- **Ancillary Services:** Every six seconds resources compete to respond to changing system needs. 
- **Capacity Markets:** Ensure enough generation to meet peak demand and encourage generators to invest in new technology and deactivate outdated resources. 

Source: *Power Trends 2019 – Executive Brief*, published by the New York Independent System Operator, copyright 2019. [2-2, pg. 3]

See the January issue of *Terra Firma* for Part 3 of this continuing series on the grid in New York State.

Sources

- [2-1] *Power Trends 2019*, published by the New York Independent System Operator, copyright 2019. <https://www.nyiso.com/documents/20142/2223020/2019-Power-Trends-Report.pdf/0e8d65ee-820c-a718-452c-6c59b2d4818b?t=1556918784400>
- [2-2] *Power Trends 2019 – Executive Brief*, published by the New York Independent System Operator, copyright 2019. <https://www.nyiso.com/documents/20142/2225614/2019-Power-Trends-Insert.pdf/8ffd81ec-237c-4a8e-dbd8-1d0e8c00d49a?t=1556802528151>
- [2-3] <https://www.nyiso.com/>
- [2-4] <https://www.nyiso.com/what-we-do>
- [2-5] <https://adirondack.org/sites/default/files/energy/Gillian%20Black%20%2B%20Frank%20McCleneghen-%20solar%20workshop%20presentation.pdf>
- [2-6] <https://www.ferc.gov/market-oversight/mkt-electric/new-york/2007/04-2007-elec-ny-archive.pdf>

Gary Shaw 1949 - 2019

Gary Shaw of Croton, a leader of the Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition, succumbed to brain cancer on May 24 shortly after a family celebration of his daughter’s forthcoming wedding. Gary was a fierce opponent of Indian Point and masterful in his command of the facts and figures surrounding the reactors. His presentations were brilliant and much in demand. His mantra was “carbon free and nuclear free.” His guiding principle was “... I am who I am, I do what I do, it is what it is. Somebody had to do it.”

He is sorely missed. – Marilyn Elie

PLEASE VOTE IN THE 2019 ELECTIONS IN PUTNAM COUNTY

If you Google “close elections”, you will find many lists showing races where the winner won by one or two votes, or even when the results were tied. In these cases, they often used a technique such as tossing a coin to determine the person would be declared the winner.

In off-year elections, such as in November 2019, turnout tends to be small. The party that gets the most voters to the polls can win. Winners then make decisions about your local taxes, building and zoning regulations, and especially environmental protection. Both parties have candidates to fill almost every open position in the six towns in Putnam County. Would you want the office holder to be elected by a one or two vote majority, especially if the winner was not your choice?

Look at the websites of the candidates in your district and decide which candidates deserve your vote. Ask questions of the candidates if you want to know their position on the issues. Attend the candidate forums that the League of Women Voters run each year.

There will also be early voting at the Board of Elections from Saturday, October 26 through Sunday, November 3. You can call the Board of Elections at (845) 808-1300 for the time schedule. Election Day is Tuesday, November 5, from 6 AM to 9 PM at your regular voting place.

You can visit SierraLowerHudson.org for a list of Sierra Club endorsed candidates.

Jerry Ravnitzky
Ex-Com Member of Sierra Club Lower Hudson Group

YOUR VOTE IN NOVEMBER COUNTS IN ROCKLAND AND WESTCHESTER ELECTIONS, TOO!

This November, the ballot will only include local elections. There are no state or federal candidates unless a district has a special election.

Some voters sit these elections out, but did you realize that your vote counts even more in a local election because fewer people are voting? This is a great opportunity to protect the environment by voting for good candidates, since much important environmental work gets done, or not, at the local level through county and town boards, involving decisions about zoning, building, and using municipal resources.

Visit SierraLowerHudson.org for a list of Sierra Club endorsed candidates, but here is the general election landscape in Rockland County:

All the seats of the Rockland County Legislature are up for election this time, and there is an open seat in District 15. (The County Executive seat will not be up for election until 2021.) All five town supervisor positions are up for election; Orangetown is an open seat. In Clarkstown all ward seats are up for election; in the other towns, half of the seats of each town council are up for election. There are also elections for village mayors and trustees, town clerks, superintendents of highways, and town and village justices.

Visit SierraLowerHudson.org for a list of Sierra Club endorsed candidates, but here is the general election landscape in Westchester County:

All the seats of the Westchester County Board of Legislators are up for election this time. There are also elections for village mayors and trustees, town clerks, superintendents of highways, and town and village justices.

Remember that because of increased citizen participation in the electoral process in 2017, changes were recently made in the Westchester County government. We now have a county government that reinstated testing the water quality at Westchester County Airport. The drinking water for 9 million people sits right next door in the Kensico Reservoir. The previous administration had stopped testing to save money. In addition, Westchester recently passed a ban on Styrofoam products to go into effect in January. Elections have consequences.

Thanks for voting!

2019 ELECTION BALLOT

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, SIERRA CLUB LOWER HUDSON GROUP

VOTING DEADLINE OCTOBER 31, 2019*

YOU CAN VOTE ONLINE!

Please check your email inbox in early October for your official, *non-transferable* link to the 2019 Sierra Club Lower Hudson Group Online Ballot, which will be sent to all members with email addresses on file. Submit your vote via this official online ballot, do not email your vote.

If you cannot find your ballot email, email us with your name, postal address and Member ID** at sierralowerhudsonelection@gmail.com by October 20, 2019 and your official ballot link will be emailed to you.

You must choose to EITHER vote online OR by filling out this paper ballot.
There are five vacancies on our executive committee ("ExCom").

Candidate Statement of Linda Brunner

I feel lucky to have spent time during the last 2 years as a member of the activist committee of the SCLHG, meeting unique, dedicated and well informed members and continuing on a constant and steep learning curve. Helping to find speakers and venues for our lecture series in cooperation with the Greenburgh Nature Center has provided an opportunity for me to be more active and productive. I hope to continue in my role of publicist to local media for SCLHG as well as with canvassing for our endorsed candidates in elections.

Candidate Statement of Laura Burkhardt

I have been active with Lower Hudson Group since I moved to Rockland County 5 years ago, serving as Election Coordinator for 3 years and now serving as Secretary and Alternate Delegate to the Atlantic Chapter meetings. My special interest is learning about the NY electric grid and writing articles to help our members better understand how it works. I am also working with other Chapter members on proposals to increase solar-generated power so that the state can meet its goal of a 70% renewable electric grid by 2030. Since I view climate change as the most important issue of our time, I was glad to be part of the successful effort to stop Pilgrim Pipelines from enabling more fossil fuel to be transported and used. I would appreciate your vote as I continue this work.

Candidate Statement of George Klein

I ask for your vote in order to continue to oppose the expansion of the Westchester County Airport, support opposition to expansion of gas pipelines, find ways for our activists to work together more effectively, deepen our outreach to younger members, seek new ways for the group to communicate our values and messages more widely and forcefully to both members and the public, keep our group financially strong, encourage everyone to enjoy our great outdoors, and, personally for me, to continue work with our wonderful activists.

Candidate Statement of Bill Meyer

For the past five years I served our group as its Chairman and State Chapter Delegate. In these positions I brought substantial club resources to our group which contributed to stopping the destructive desalination plant in Rockland, and setting a closing date for Indian Point. I would like to continue on the excom to support our ongoing work in resisting all fossil fuel infrastructure, protecting our local water resources, and promoting renewable energy generation while developing broad solutions to climate change. Our group membership is growing and I remain committed to helping these new voices be heard.

Candidate Statement of Sarah Wilson

I have been a Sierra Club member for almost 20 years, and the Lower Hudson Group Treasurer since 2010. As Treasurer, I attend the monthly Activist Meetings regularly, and have enjoyed supporting the work of the passionate, committed members of our LHG ExCom. I was a charter member of Green Yorktown, which was inspired by the Sierra Club Cool Cities program. I have conducted carbon footprint workshops, and promoted both Sierra Club and electric vehicles at public information events. I am the organizer of the quarterly Yorktown Repair Cafe, and have supported the expansion of the Repair Cafe concept to other towns in Westchester, with sponsorship by Sierra Club LHG. As a member of the ExCom I am interested in focusing on efforts to solicit and encourage broader and deeper participation by you, our valued membership base, in activities of the Lower Hudson Group.

Please vote for up to five candidates. If you vote by paper ballot, cut off this whole page and mail to Gale Pisha, 13 New Haven Avenue, Nanuet, NY 10954 so that it is received no later than October 31, 2019. Member information, needed to verify that the member has not also voted online, will be separated from votes before votes are tabulated to ensure secrecy.

Vote here:

- Linda Brunner
- Laura Burkhardt
- George Klein
- Bill Meyer
- Sarah Wilson

*If you have a joint membership, vote here also:

- Linda Brunner
- Laura Burkhardt
- George Klein
- Bill Meyer
- Sarah Wilson

*If you have a single membership, this column will be ignored when votes are counted.

To help out with or be present at the vote counting on or about November 10, please email sierralowerhudsonelection@gmail.com or call 845.623.4980 by 10/15/2019.



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LOWER HUDSON GROUP

SIERRA CLUB

WESTCHESTER, PUTNAM & ROCKLAND COUNTIES

*"Climate change is an existential threat."
--Joe Biden*



SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

TERRA FIRMA

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2019

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