



Catoctin News

Newsletter of the Catoctin Group
Serving Carroll, Frederick and Washington Counties

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Summer 2016

2016 John Muir Scholarship Program a Success

by Lee Popkin
John Muir Scholarship Chair

This, in only our second year, has been a very successful year for the John Muir Scholarship. We have added two new schools, Governor Thomas Johnson High School and Middletown High School, and awarded four scholarships totaling more than \$3,000. We are well on our way to reaching our goal of offering this scholarship in every high school in Frederick County. Representatives from the Maryland Sierra Club Catoctin Group attended all the Senior Day ceremonies and awarded the scholarships in person to deserving students.

The John Muir Scholarship was created to support the next generation of environmentalists and conservationists. While there are a lot of people and organizations doing exceptional work throughout the world, we must make sure we encourage our young people to continue this work that we have started. This scholarship recognizes the hard working efforts and passions of our young adults and encourages them to continue their work through higher education preparing them for a lifetime of protecting our planet.

As the 2016 spring awards season winds down and our Class of 2016 prepares to move on to college and university, it gives me great hope to see such a fine group of students preparing for their future and aspiring to make an impact on our world. Our group of students selected for the 2016 John Muir Scholarship is exceptional in no uncertain terms.

A sincere thank you goes out to members of our own Catoctin Group who have donated their time and personal finances to support this program, to the hard working teachers and school administrators at the schools where we offer this scholarship, and to community members who have supported and championed this program on behalf of their local students.

Please look for our fall issue of Catoctin News highlighting our four scholarship award winners and their achievements. We are also in the process of planning for our first annual John Muir Scholarship Fall Fund Raising Event in October.

Congratulations to our scholarship award winners and best wishes as you embark on fulfilling your passions!

**First Annual
John Muir
Scholarship Fund
Raising Event
planned for Fall
2016. Check the
Catoctin Group
website for future
Event updates.**

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Fracking Threat in Frederick County

by Harry George

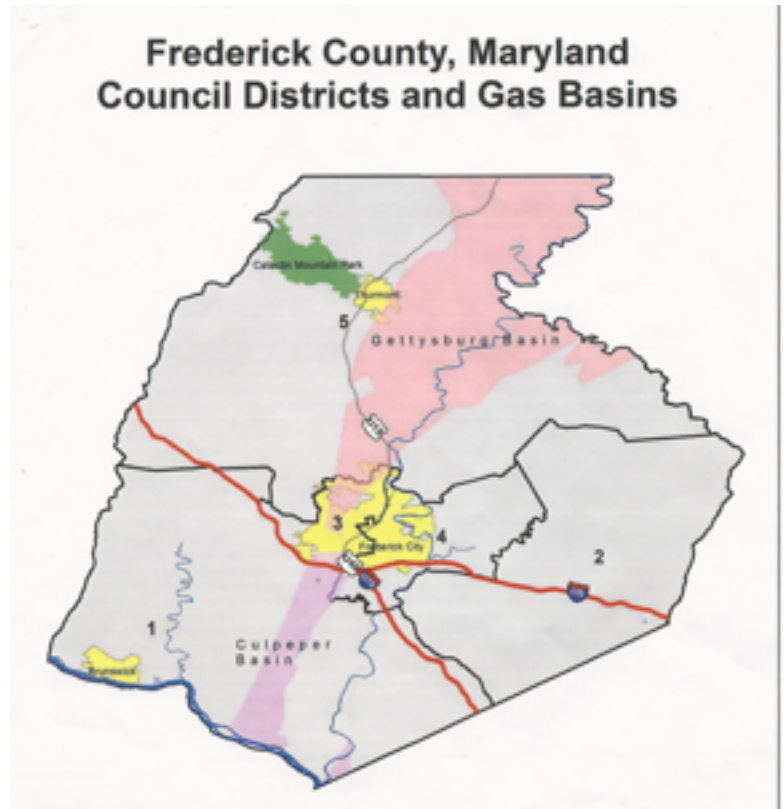
As you probably know, “fracking” (hydraulic fracturing) is a process of pumping millions of gallons of chemical-infused water, mixed with sand, under tremendous pressure, into the ground, where it pulverizes layers of rock far inside the earth, thereby allowing trapped oil and gas to be released from that rock and extracted for energy consumption. (The term “hydraulic fracturing” even sounds painful. It’s easy to imagine Mother Nature’s agony as she experiences it.)

While use of this extraction technique has primarily been focused in North Dakota (Bakkan Basin), Texas (Permian Basin) and Ohio/Pennsylvania/West Virginia (Marcellus formation), it is important to note that the Marcellus and other formations also extend into Maryland. Garrett and Allegany Counties are part of the Marcellus formation and have garnered most of the attention in Maryland. However, recent data has documented other gas basins, including the Taylorsville and Delmarva basins on the Eastern Shore and in Southern Maryland, as well as the Culpeper and Gettysburg basins laying under ~19% of Frederick County!

Aside from the fact that this extraction method perpetuates our reliance on fossil fuels, and the well documented and commonly accepted role fossil fuels play in climate change, there are other, more localized impacts this particular technique brings with it, such as:

- Increased aquifer and ground water/well contamination
- Increased seismic activity (earthquakes)
- Damage to road infrastructure from heavy truck activity associated with transporting material to the well site
- Reduced real estate values of 25%+ for property located near “fracking” wells
- Negative impact to tourism and outdoor recreation
- Increased pollution from the improper disposal of the chemically infused water extracted from the well after the initial fracturing process
- Increased water usage (an average of 4.5 million gallons of **clean water** is used to “frack” a typical well in the Marcellus formation)

This doesn’t even include the serious public health and social impacts for residents!



In 2015 the Maryland legislature passed a 2.5 years moratorium on “fracking” to provide time for studies to assess the environmental, social, and economic impact. This moratorium, however, will expire October 1, 2017. The Sierra Club is working with the “Don’t Frack Maryland” coalition, which includes over 100 state and local organizations, businesses, and faith institutions, to permanently ban “fracking” in Maryland. It is imperative that we, the citizens of Frederick County, not rely solely on those efforts, but also make our voice heard and urge our local and County representatives to ban “fracking” in Frederick County. Even in states that allow “fracking,” individual municipalities and counties have successfully banned “fracking.” (As an example, on May 27, 2016, the Western Maryland town of Friendsville proposed to ban “fracking” within their town limits.)

Please contact your representatives today, and make **your voice** heard! Frederick County residents can email the county council at councilmembers@frederickcountymd.gov. Ban “fracking” for natural gas extraction in Frederick County, now and forever!

**The Climate Mobilization
Climate Emergency Day of Action
July 10, 2016**

Washington, D.C. - **The Climate Mobilization** will present **Climate Emergency Day of Action**, taking place in the nation's capital with a rally at the U.S. Capitol July 10th at 11:30am. Calls for climate action will be addressed by The Rev. Lennox Yearwood of the [Hip-Hop Caucus](#). Rev. Yearwood is a Howard University student who attended the [Paris climate conference](#). Sudheer Shulda from Biodiversity for a Livable Climate, and others, will also be speaking.

This is the second annual Climate Emergency Day of Action and it is taking place in cities across the country and the world. We are raising public awareness of the imminent threat to civilization posed by climate change and the climatic changes already underway.

The Climate Mobilization is demanding government action to phase out the use of fossil fuels completely by the year 2025, reach 100% renewable energy, end industrial agricultural practices, and restore ecosystems to draw down enough atmospheric carbon to return to pre-industrial levels of climate safety and stability supportive of human civilization.

For more information about attending this event visit:

**The Climate Mobilization
Climate Emergency Day of Action**

Highlights of the 2016 Legislative Session

by Ronnie Poklemba

The Maryland Chapter Sierra Club Legislative Committee prioritized six bills this past legislative session which were the focus of much volunteer energy. Yielding both victories and disappointments, the efforts of all who made these environmental gains possible should be applauded.

The six bills prioritized were:

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (GGRA) Reauthorization has been signed into law. Maryland must reduce its greenhouse gas pollution by 2030 to 40% below 2006 levels. GGRA is an important bipartisan act that will determine the shape of all of Maryland's climate and energy programs including EmPOWER and the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Clean Energy Jobs Act

Governor Hogan has vetoed this bipartisan piece of legislation. The bill increased Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirements from 20% to 25% by 2020, two years ahead of the previous goals. The legislation is expected to create 250 new MW of solar, an additional 1,000 MW of other renewable energy and potentially thousands of clean energy jobs. **Please contact your state representative to ask them to overturn this veto.**

Pollinator Protection Act

The Pollinator Protection Act (PPA) has been signed. Maryland will be the first state to restrict consumer use of neonic pesticides. Maryland beekeepers sustained an extraordinary 61% loss of their bee populations last year, twice the national average. Neonics have been found in dead bees surrounding hives adjacent to agricultural fields. Even low levels of Neonic contact can undermine a bees capacity to learn hindering their ability to forage for food and map routes to and from the hive — a symptom of colony collapse.

RPS Clean UP

While the bill to address the subsidizing of trash incinerators, paper mill waste combustion, and other combustion technologies within the Renewable Portfolio was lost in committee, Sierra Club efforts created public awareness that should help push this bill forward next year. The bill intends to remove all combustion-based energy resources from RPS.

Keep Antibiotics Working

This bill restricted the routine preventative medicinal use of antibiotics on farm animals. Unfortunately this bill did not progress in committee. The intent of the bill was to mitigate antibiotic resistance by eliminating the routine application of antibiotics to farm feed. Although hearings illuminated the connection between antibiotic use in farm animals and the escalation of drug-resistant bacteria that affect human populations, there was no committee vote on the legislation.

Bottle Bill

This bottle recycling bill was also lost in committee. The intent of the legislation was to reduce beverage container litter, as well as encourage recycling rather than landfill and incinerator disposal of beverage bottles. Again the success of this effort was in drawing attention to an environmental issue that hopefully will be addressed in the future.

Other bills too numerous to note in detail were also considered during the 2016 legislative session. Click [here](#) for information on those bills. Should you like to volunteer to advance next year's legislative goals click [here](#) to sign up.

Outings

Check the Catoctin Group website for information on upcoming hikes.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/catoctin-group>

Officers/Committee Chairs

Chairman & Energy

Dan Andrews

Treasurer

Anthony Iacovelli

Secretary & Outreach/Social Media

Amy Andrews

Conservation

Lew Sherman

Anthony Iacovelli

Invasive Plant Removal Stewardship

Carolyn Puckett

Outings

Harry George

Anthony Iacovelli

Membership

Patti Fredericks

Teresa Baker

Newsletter

Teresa Baker

For further information visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/catoctin-group>

The next Executive Committee/General Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, July 2, 2016 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the Thurmont Regional Library, 76 East Moser Road, Thurmont, Maryland, 21788 in Frederick County.

Executive Committee/General Meetings are usually held the first Saturday of every month. Location varies.

All are welcome, members and non-members alike.

Contact Dan Andrews at dooze@qis.net for exact date, times and location.