

MASSACHUSETTS

SIERRAN

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Fall 2010

40th Anniversary Issue

Reaching More Than
20,000 Sierra Club
Members in Massachusetts

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www.sierraclubmass.org



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Dear Fellow Sierra Club Member,

We share a passion for the environment and an understanding that the choices we make today will affect this planet for generations to come. When we preserve open space, stop the use of a toxic pesticide, or advocate for clean renewable energy, we're making a statement: our resources are finite. If we resist squandering them, we can preserve our environment for future generations.

Chapter volunteers and staff have been working tirelessly to protect our limited resources. We are constantly battling well-funded commercial interests and those who would destroy an endangered species just to make a profit.

This is where you come in: your support is instrumental in keeping up our work. Your direct donation to the Massachusetts Chapter will help us preserve our local resources: our treasured parklands, rich wetlands, rivers and lakes, our air quality, and the air we breathe. Won't you take a moment and make a direct donation today? Any amount, large or small, helps us in our work, ensuring a healthy and diverse environment for the future. For your convenience, there's an envelope on page 8, or you can donate online.

Sincerely,

Dan Proctor
Chapter Chair

P.S. Please read about our upcoming 40th Anniversary Celebration. We have a lot to celebrate, and I hope that you can join us.



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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Massachusetts Sierra Club

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IT WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO TODAY

Letter from the desk of James McCaffrey, Director

It was just over twenty years ago this past spring that I first attended a meeting of like-minded Sierrans interested in protecting the rain forests of the world. The rest, as it is often said, is history. You can read about some of that history in this issue and the Spring 2010 edition of the *Massachusetts Sierran*, and learn even more (and meet many that helped make it all happen) by joining us at our 40th Anniversary event on October 21st.

In the spring issue of the *Massachusetts Sierran* I wrote in detail about the great achievements of Club volunteers and staff during my tenure at the Club. I hope you will have a chance to read about that work. But this letter is more personal - a heartfelt "thank you" to the incredible Sierra Club volunteers and staff I have had the privilege to know and work side-by-side with all these years. For me, the rewards and challenges of environmental work stem not only from the critical victories we achieve, but also from the inspiration I get on a daily basis from the volunteers, staff, and colleagues working tirelessly to protect our world.

We had intended to dedicate this entire issue to a further retrospective of the last twenty years. But alas, open space is precious both in the wild and here on the printed page. There is simply too much happening in the Sierra Club *today*, and too many new initiatives and recent victories to tell you about moving forward; new challenges, new staff, and new campaigns.

After twenty years of working for the Sierra Club I still believe the simplest of actions can lead to profound change. The Club exists because you, our members, continue to think globally and act locally every day by joining, donating, and volunteering your time. The legacy of our work in Massachusetts is a tribute to your ongoing support, for both the *past* forty years, and the *next*. ❖

ON THE COVER: Marsh Marigold Photo by Elisa Campbell

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Circulation of the Massachusetts Sierran is over 20,000 outdoor-minded, environmentally aware readers.

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Chapter Chair's Remarks

by Dan Proctor

Agenda for the Next 40 Years

Usually, when the legislature passes a bill that we support, our work on that measure is over. But two years ago, the state legislature passed two landmark statutes that to a great extent set our chapter's agenda for the next 40 years. The Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) charges the executive branch with preparing and carrying out a plan to reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by 80% of 1990 levels by the year 2050. This applies to the state's emissions as a whole, not just those of the government. The Green Communities Act (GCA) is a companion piece that provides incentives and assistance for cities and towns to reduce these emissions.

The state has begun implementing the Green Communities Act, and it is clear that our members have an important role to play in their localities to both encourage and assist this work. The state is currently developing its initial 10-year emissions-reduction plan as directed by the GWSA. Our chapter submitted extensive comments on the first draft and will closely examine and respond to the next draft, which is

due by the end of this year. But this is only the first in a series of four ten-year plans called for by the Act. Thus we can expect the chapter to be engaged over the next 40 years in encouraging the state to develop excellent plans.

There will be much more for our chapter to do with regard to the GWSA. We have already embarked on developing our own global warming solutions plan. We will use our plan as a basis for critiquing the state plan, setting our priorities, and designing campaigns.

The GCA and GWSA suddenly gained greater importance this past summer, when it became clear that the U.S. Senate would not pass meaningful legislation to protect the world's climate. This egregious failure means that the burden remains with state and local government, with individual businesses and households, and with organizations such as the Sierra Club.

Where does the buck stop?

Much of the existing federal and state legislation pertaining to global

warming relies on incentives rather than requirements. The Green Communities Act signals this form of buck-passing in its title. This approach places responsibility on civic organizations to educate and persuade both the public and their officials as to the severity of the threat, nature of the incentives, and much more. The implications for the Sierra Club, which has members in nearly all of the state's 351 cities and towns, are clear: we must provide support for our members to play an effective role in helping their towns take maximum advantage of the Green Communities Act.

Our state and municipal governments will need all the help they can get over the next 40 years in bringing about the necessary reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. As you review, in other articles in this edition, the chapter's activities over the past 40 years, you will see that we often found ourselves in opposition to government proposals. But with regard to the two statutes discussed above, we can expect to find ourselves amplifying and accelerating government action. ❖

Massachusetts Chapter to Celebrate 40 Years of Protecting the Environment



photo by Elisa Campbell

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul alike." John Muir

On Thursday, October 21st, the Massachusetts Chapter will celebrate 40 years of protecting our environment in New England during an evening reception held at The Hampshire House in Boston. The Massachusetts Chapter, originally part of the larger New England Chapter which included Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and Rhode Island, is commemorating the work of the Club throughout New England, with a special focus on achievements and efforts here in the Commonwealth.

Representatives from the Executive Committee, Greater Boston Group, Thoreau Group, Cape Cod & Islands and Inner City Outings have been working together since June to help ensure the event's success. Sierra Club members and Chapter leaders are very excited to celebrate this milestone. To learn more about the event, please visit www.sierraclubmass.org/40years.html ❖

Gov. Deval Patrick Lt. Gov. Tim Murray

There is no doubt that the Patrick Administration is the greenest we've had in many years. Below are some of the highlights.



Energy and Climate Change: Signed the *Green Communities Act*, which places a priority on energy efficiency and renew-

able energy to meet our energy needs and gives municipalities new incentives to make greener energy choices. It also increases the amount of new, renewable energy. Signed the **Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)**, the nation's first cap-and-trade program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from power plants while generating funds for energy-efficiency investment. Actively **supports Cape Wind**, while the other candidates have reservations despite conclusive studies and federal rulings in support of the project. Signed the **Global Warming Solutions Act**, the nation's strongest greenhouse gas law, which requires emissions reductions of 80% by 2050. Launched the **most ambitious energy efficiency program in the country** – \$2 billion of investment in efficiency measures resulting in \$6 billion in savings over the next 3 years. Laid out ambitious renewable energy goals: 250 mw of solar by 2017 and 2,000 mw of wind by 2020. Gov. Patrick used **incentive programs for renewable energy** to increase installation of photovoltaic power nearly 20-fold and wind power 10-fold statewide over 4 years. Passed the **Clean Energy Biofuels Act**, exempting cellulosic biofuels from the gasoline tax; sets minimum biofuel content for diesel and home heating fuel.

Natural Resources: Launched the **largest land conservation initiative** in state history, permanently protecting 54,000 acres, emphasizing urban parks and habitat protection. Passed the largest **Environmental Bond Bill** in state history to protect more open space and fund environmental agencies. Created a comprehensive **Ocean Management Plan** for state waters, providing increased protection for 2/3 of state waters.

Mass Transit: Supported improved transit by: requesting federal funds to study the alignment route of the **North/South Rail Link**; working with the other states to bring **high-speed rail** to the region; using stimulus funds and other sources to strengthen existing rail networks; negotiating a comprehensive agreement to **improve and streamline rail service statewide**, which included the purchase of the Boston-Worcester rail line; made progress toward establishing a **South Coast commuter rail line** that would connect Boston with New Bedford, Fall River, and the surrounding communities.

Endorsed Candidates – 2010 General Election

Statewide

Governor - Deval Patrick
Lieutenant Governor - Tim Murray
Attorney General - Martha Coakley
Treasurer - Steve Grossman

US Congress

MA-01 - John Olver
MA-02 - Richard Neal
MA-03 - Jim McGovern
MA-04 - Barney Frank
MA-05 - Niki Tsongas
MA-06 - John Tierney
MA-07 - Ed Markey
MA-08 - Michael Capuano
MA-10 - Bill Keating

State Senate

Cape & Islands - Daniel Wolf
First Middlesex - Eileen Donoghue
First Middlesex & Norfolk - Cynthia Creem
First Plymouth & Bristol - Marc Pacheco
First Worcester - Harriette Chandler
Middlesex & Essex - Katherine Clark
Middlesex & Worcester - James Eldridge
Middlesex, Suffolk & Essex - Sal DiDomenico
Second Middlesex - Patricia Jehlen
Second Middlesex & Norfolk - Karen Spilka
Second Suffolk - Sonia Chang-Diaz
Second Suffolk & Middlesex - Steven Tolman
Third Middlesex - Susan Fargo

Sierra Club endorsements are based on a candidate's record and demonstrated commitment to the environment. Candidates meriting the Club's support have also shown a realistic approach in tackling key concerns facing us. By supporting Sierra Club endorsed candidates, you can help elect a team that will protect the land, water, and air that are vital to us. Please volunteer to help elect Sierra Club endorsed candidates. Contact cpc@sierraclubmass.org

State Representatives

1st Barnstable - Cleon Turner
3rd Barnstable - Matt Patrick
4th Barnstable - Sarah Peake
5th Barnstable - Lance Lambros
1st Berkshire - Gail Cariddi
2nd Berkshire - Paul Mark
2nd Bristol - Bill Bowles
4th Bristol - Steven D'Amico
8th Bristol - Dave Dennis
8th Essex - Lori Ehrlich
9th Essex - Mark Falzone
15th Essex - Linda Dean Campbell
17th Essex - Patricia Commune
18th Essex - Barbara L'Italien
1st Franklin - Stephen Kulik
1st Hampshire - Peter Kocot
2nd Hampshire - John Scibak
3rd Hampshire - Ellen Story
1st Middlesex - Jesse Reich
3rd Middlesex - Kate Hogan
7th Middlesex - Tom Sannicandro
8th Middlesex - Carolyn Dykema
11th Middlesex - Kay Khan
12th Middlesex - Ruth Balsler
14th Middlesex - Cory Atkins
15th Middlesex - Jay Kaufman
23rd Middlesex - Sean Garballey
24th Middlesex - Will Brownsberger
25th Middlesex - Alice Wolf
26th Middlesex - Timothy Toomey
27th Middlesex - Denise Provost
29th Middlesex - Jonathan Hecht
31st Middlesex - Jason Lewis
34th Middlesex - Carl Sciortino
37th Middlesex - Jennifer Benson
13th Norfolk - Denise Garlick
14th Norfolk - Alice Peisch
15th Norfolk - Frank Smizik
8th Suffolk - Marty Walz
9th Suffolk - Byron Rushing
17th Suffolk - Kevin Honan
1st Worcester - Ken O'Brien
12th Worcester - Harold Naughton
14th Worcester - Jim O'Day

U.S. CONGRESS

Niki Tsongas

US Congress, 5th CD:

In her first term, Rep. Tsongas has been working to take action on climate change, protecting our environment, and investing in alternative energy. One of her first votes in Congress was to increase fuel efficiency standards. In the next term, she will work to advance protections for the Concord, Nashua, and Merrimack Rivers, as these cultural landmarks need action to improve water quality and to prevent further pollution. One of her top priorities will be working to pass a comprehensive climate change bill, capping greenhouse gas emissions and making the renewable energy sector commercially viable.



Bill Keating

US Congress, 10th CD:

Bill Keating is a fierce protector of our environment. In the State Senate, he wrote our state's tough safe-water law, which protects lakes and streams from chemical pollution. He recognizes the threat that climate change will have on our coastal communities, and will confront it by fighting for the passage of an energy bill that increases the use of renewable energy such as solar and wind. Bill is a supporter of Cape Wind because it will help make us a leader in the green economy, create hundreds of clean energy jobs, protect our coastline from environmental disasters, and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.



Endorsed Candidates – 2010 General Election

STATE HOUSE

Jen Benson

37th Middlesex: In her first term, Rep. Benson worked to support smart energy initiatives. She strongly advocated for updating the bottle bill, stronger energy consumption guidelines on consumer electronics, and smarter wind turbine siting guidelines. She filed legislation to reduce the number of single-use plastic bags in our waste stream. She will continue to work with her colleagues to draft and file legislation to ensure that environmental causes are not ignored during this difficult fiscal time. Rep. Benson strongly believes that we need to push our Commonwealth and the nation into stricter limits and standards on energy consumption, and use our ability to legislate change as the catalyst rather than only relying on market-driven influences.



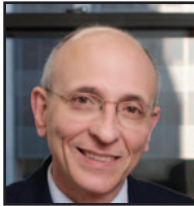
Bill Bowles

2nd Bristol: Rep. Bowles has a solid record as a steward of the environment. Having been a longtime environmental advocate throughout his career, he has been working to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels via tougher emission standards and improving access to public transportation. He is working to reduce the materials that end up in landfills and/or floating barges by increased recycling and reduction in waste. He is also a strong advocate for open space preservation, recognizing that once we develop land, it is very unlikely we will ever get it back.



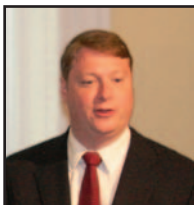
Steve D'Amico

4th Bristol: Rep. D'Amico has co-sponsored and worked for the passage of just about every one of the Chapter's priority bills, concentrating on energy conservation, alternative energy production, toxic chemical reductions, and open space and agricultural land preservation. He has worked for passage of bills that protect forest and parks, limit the use of toxins, support alternative energy production, combat climate change, improve recycling rates, and address health issues. His hard work was key in the passage of some of the most important environmental bills the state has ever seen.



Mark Falzone

9th Essex: Rep. Falzone is an environmental powerhouse. He has led the effort to maintain a moratorium on incinerators. He is a strong voice for producer



responsibility, renewable energy, and sustainable growth. He will continue his effort to legislate an incinerator moratorium in Massachusetts. He will re-file legislation on mercury-added lamps. In the next session, he will also file legislation to educate the public on radon, requiring additional testing in certain circumstances, such as buying or renting a home.

Matt Patrick

3rd Barnstable: Rep. Patrick has been a strong environmental voice in the State House. He is a leader in establishing an affordable alternative to wastewater treatment, working on shutting down the Canal Power Plant for good - as taxpayers are paying \$9 million/month to keep the plant open. He co-sponsored a bill that would provide incentives for the purchase of energy-efficient cars, filed legislation to provide a tax credit for installing solar systems, led in increasing the threshold for net metering from 60 kw to 2 mw--as well as virtual metering, which eliminates the need to go through a meter. He was the lead sponsor of a bill to decrease plastic bag use.



Jesse Reich

1st Middlesex: Jesse Reich understands the value of protecting the environment and recognizes the importance of passing a healthier environment on to future generations. He founded Baystate Biofuels, providing a less expensive, American-made alternative to petroleum diesel in Massachusetts. As a result, 14 million pounds of CO2 emissions have been avoided. Jesse is dedicated to defending the region's quality of life by preserving its protected and recreational open spaces, its natural resources, its historic treasures and its character. He understands the importance of working to identify opportunities for open space management, protection or acquisition.



Tom

Sannicandro

7th Middlesex: Rep. Sannicandro has stood with the Sierra Club on many of our priorities. He has been on the front lines working to pass the updated bottle bill, has been supportive of smart zoning, has been a strong advocate for public transportation, stopping sprawl. He worked to increase the service and reliability of commuter rail between Boston and Worcester. He sees his role as a steward of what we have, and a responsibility to the next generation. That means conserving resources and energy, not creating pollution but instead a sustainable, energy-efficient infrastructure to improve people's lives.



Cleon Turner

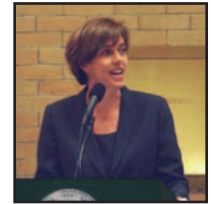
1st Barnstable: Rep. Turner championed and/or co-sponsored many of the Sierra Club's priority bills this past session, including the Forest Stewardship Bill, the Off Highway RV Regulation bill, Sustainable Water Resources Management bill, and Wind Energy Siting Bill. In his district, Rep. Turner has been working with water districts in seeking grants and funding for land purchases for environmental protection. He has pledged to continue supporting these priorities to ensure that our environment continues to be protected, as well as working with his member communities to protect the natural resources of the district, the Cape, and beyond.



STATE SENATE

Katherine Clark

Middlesex and Essex: As a state representative, Katherine Clark has been working to protect the health and safety of residents and the environment. As a Senator, she will continue that work and help lead the charge for better transit, improved recycling programs and a healthier state. She sees our greatest challenges as climate change, traffic and sprawl, and protecting our coasts and oceans. She will continue her passionate support of alternative and sustainable energy research and green technologies. She was a strong voice for ocean protections, encouraging the development of bike and pedestrian paths/lanes, reducing plastic bag use, and promoting public transit.



Dan Wolf

Cape & Islands: Dan Wolf will focus on key environmental issues: wastewater management to protect 350 fresh water lakes and ponds as well as marine embayments, energy conservation/efficiency, long-term energy policy focused on renewables and non-carbon based production, reduced dependence on automobiles, and smart growth in desired areas that provides 'offsets' through conservation and land banking. At Cape Air, he initiated the largest photovoltaic project in SE Mass, which will make Cape Air electricity-neutral. He has pledged to not only champion green initiatives but to work actively on consensus and coalition building around these issues.



Grassroots Efforts Help Clean Up the Massachusetts Military Reservation

by David Dow

The Threat to Cape Cod's Aquifer

The Cape Cod and Islands Group (CC&I) of the Sierra Club has worked with other local environmental activists since the late 1980s to ensure that polluted surface soil and underground pollution plumes found at the Massachusetts Military Reservation (MMR) are cleaned up by responsible parties.

Military training activity at the MMR from the 1940s until the early 1990s polluted 60 billion gallons of Cape Cod's sole source aquifer. The pollutants include a variety of volatile organic contaminants, heavy metals, explosives, and propellants. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP) have overseen the cleanup. The cleanup itself is being conducted by the Air Force Center for Engineering & Environment (AFCEE) and Massachusetts Army National Guard's Environmental Restoration Center. A number of civilian advisory groups were established to provide community input on the cleanup and the CC&I Group has participated in these meetings.

The Sierra Club supported the cleanup at Otis Air Force Base on the southern part of the MMR and at Camp Edwards, which occupies the northern area of the MMR. The federal and state regulators had to develop cleanup standards for many of the MMR contaminants, since maximum contaminant levels for drinking water had not been established for many of these toxic chemicals. MA DEP developed the most protective standard in the country for perchlorate, an endocrine disruptor found in propellants (including fireworks). A recent federal study by the *Centers for Disease Control* found perchlorate in 100% of the people who were sampled. EPA, under pressure from polluting industries and the military, declined to develop perchlorate standards during the Bush Administration, but is currently developing a standard for this toxin under the Obama Administration.

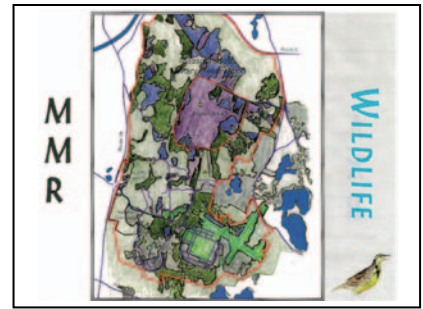
A Switch from Cleanup to Dilution

For many years the cleanup of contaminated soil and groundwater at the MMR represented a good example of cooperation between responsible parties, regulators, local officials and residents, until recently when the military and regulators ceased active cleanup. They are instead pushing an approach called "monitored natural attenuation with land use controls". We view this as "dilution", and since Sierra Club opposes dilution as the answer to toxic pollution of air, water or soil, we stopped our engagement in the MMR cleanup process and switched our focus to addressing toxics associated with wastewater.

Under the current schedule, all remediation efforts by the military should be in place by late 2010, followed by EPA and MA DEP plans to clean up Camp Edwards. It is important to have an effective cleanup for both the source areas of the pollution and the underlying groundwater plumes because the contaminants at the MMR lie at the top of the groundwater lens for the Upper Cape. The models of contaminant migration from surface soil down to the groundwater have been severely criticized by the CC&I Group, while the predictions from the groundwater models often prove to be overly optimistic. These constraints and limitations in the monitoring efforts will only undermine dilution as the preferred solution to the aquifer contamination.

Reuse Trumps Cleanup

The switch from active cleanup of pollution to keeping the base open to act as an economic hub for the Upper Cape, including continued military training along with new civilian uses, is of great concern. The CC&I Group has never called for shutting down military training at the MMR, but we have expressed concerns over some proposed civilian uses at the base. These uses include a transportation center for summer tourists and commuters, development of affordable housing at the base with limited availability of public transportation, con-



In 2003, The Cape and Islands Group issued a comprehensive mapping vision for the cleanup of the MMR including creation of wildlife habitat.

struction of large hotel and recreation complexes on top of our sole source of drinking water, and building of a road through the MMR to connect the mid-Cape highway to the Bourne Bridge.

The Sierra Club and other Cape en Even though the MMR cleanup has received more financial resources (roughly \$1 billion) and more concentrated cleanup effort than other Superfund locations, it is unlikely that the military's promise to "make Cape Cod whole" from damages to our groundwater resources will be met. Our local, state and national politicians and the environmental regulators have instead reached a compromise with the military to support the current status quo. The Sierra Club has fought for many years to get the military to pay damages for the lost use of the 61 billion gallons of our sole source aquifer for drinking water that the military polluted. The new focus on keeping the base open for its economic benefits to the local economy makes it unlikely that our groundwater will be completely cleaned and natural resource damages ever collected.

The Sierra Club and other environmental groups can be proud of the thirty years of activism that forced the military to take cleanup seriously. From closed-door meetings evolved an open process that included citizens, regulators, the military and contractors. Despite recent setbacks, much progress has been made thanks to grassroots efforts of Club members and many others. The Sierra Club will continue to monitor and participate in addressing toxics associated with wastewater. It has not been a perfect process, but the model of all stakeholders sitting down to solve problems has led to significant, if not complete, cleanup at MMR. ❖

David Dow chairs the Cape Cod and the Islands Group and received the Sierra Club 2010 Special Service Award.

AFRICA RESPONDS TO GLOBAL WARMING

by Robert Murphy

This past summer, the weather went crazy.

During July and August, Russians fought forest fires and major floods overwhelmed villages in China and Pakistan. Heat-related deaths and hospitalizations increased from Arizona to Maine during a series of heat waves. Maybe it was just a series of bad breaks and coincidences. Still, at some point, one wonders, "Is this what happens during an era of global climate change?" A second question may be even more important. "What should the Sierra Club do in the midst of natural disaster?"

In July, I went in search of answers. The Sierra Club's Global Population and Environment Program sent me to

Ethiopia with three other Sierra Club activists involved with human rights and environmental issues. Our study tour went into Africa in the hope of finding new and useful ways to help bridge the divide between wealthy and developing nations.

For ten days, we moved across the countryside by airplane and land cruiser, visiting rural schools, irrigation projects, health care centers, and national parks. Our team crossed mountainous areas and the Great Rift Valley. We were in some rough areas and faced some difficult conditions. We met with local leaders and listened as they expressed their concerns about global climate change.

continued on page 9



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"The U.S. Senate has scuttled President Barack Obama's goal of putting a price on carbon, leaving state and regional efforts the key drivers in the effort to move the country past coal and oil."

(New York Times, Sept. 19)

Dear fellow Sierran,

The spectacular failure of the U.S. Senate to pass comprehensive global warming legislation means that state and local governments will have to implement their existing climate-related statutes to the fullest while seeking to pass additional measures. It also means that our chapter must work to ensure that our state and local governments move quickly and fully on existing legislation, particularly the Green Communities Act and the Global Warming Solutions Act. This will require an unprecedented mobilization of our membership. This responsibility falls heaviest on the Sierra Club because organizationally we are in the best position to draw on large numbers of volunteers for sustained, effective action. We will need volunteers and donors to step forward to help in this work. Please contribute as much as you can of your time and treasure—it has never been more important.

Thank you,
Dan Proctor, Chapter Chair

To the Editor:

It is very exciting that the Massachusetts Chapter Sierra Club is celebrating its 40th anniversary, which is also the anniversary of the New England Chapter. I plan to attend the celebration, and I hope that folks from all the other former New England States also have been informed about the event, as I would dearly love to see folks I worked with in the 1970's, both from Massachusetts and elsewhere, as well as meeting those of you who are continuing the good fight today!

I was the third chair of the New England Chapter – Roger Marshall was the first, and Paul Swatek the second. I served in that capacity 2½ years, from 1972 – 1974 approximately. Among the big issues at that time were proposed oil drilling in the ocean off Georges Bank; proposed filling of parts of Boston Harbor to link the harbor islands to the mainland to create a site for a proposed World's Fair and the parallel Boston Harbor Islands Park Project (I was on the advisory committee); a proposed deepwater harbor for oil tankers at Searsport, Maine (John and Louise Lewis were leaders in fighting to protect both the Harbor islands and the Maine coast); federal Wilderness designation and management of the Green and White Mountain National Forests (Allen Smith, who later worked for The Wilderness Society in Alaska was chair of the chapter Wilderness Committee, while the late Lowell Krassner led successful National Forest Wilderness protection efforts in Vermont); the effort to shape a federal Coastal Zone Management Act, with hearings at Faneuil Hall; an east-west highway across NH (Route 101?) fought by the NH Group; efforts regarding toxic pollution by W.R. Grace in Acton, led by Gil Woolley; and many other issues and leaders in the Chapter's five states, which comprised 13 local Groups in 1975.

Sharp attorneys played a critical role in shaping Chapter policy, including land use expert Alexandra Dawson and Tom Arnold, who led the successful fight against Dickey Lincoln Dam on the St. John's River in Maine. Abigail and Stuart Avery were rock solid at the center of all the Chapter's public lands conservation work, as well as influential in national affairs, including the creation of the North Cascades National Park (Abby was a friend of David Brower and later Amory Lovins). Abby funded my on-the-ground work on the 1977 "RARE II" (Roadless Area Re-Evaluation) analysis of the WMNF, which provided a foundation for Wilderness recommendations by not only the Sierra Club but also The Wilderness Society and others. Lastly, the Chapter had an outstanding newspaper that kept us all informed about issues throughout New England, edited for many years by Edie Wilkinson.

I am greatly looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones! The Sierra Club in New England holds a very special place in my heart.

Sincerely, Wilma

Wilma E. Frey, Senior Policy Manager
New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Far Hills, NJ

Chapter History, Part Two

by Elisa Campbell

In the Spring Sierran I wrote about the first 20 or so years of the Massachusetts Chapter of the Sierra Club, ending in 1992 when a “Massachusetts Chapter” emerged from the former New England Chapter. While some things didn’t change -- we still had an office in Boston, and the same people continued as volunteers -- other things did. Our long-time staff person, Priscilla Chapman, became a regional representative for the Sierra Club and we hired her assistant, Jay McCaffrey, as our new chapter’s Director (he still is!). The focus of our work continued a gradual shift from national concerns to issues in and around Massachusetts (the change in presidential administrations from Reagan and Bush to Clinton probably assisted that transition). Since many environmental battles are never really “won,” we’ve been working on many of them over the course of our second two decades.

First, I’ll mention some of the battles that appear to be over, or at least changed significantly.

There were proposals for significant expansions of several airports, including Logan, Hanscom and New Bedford. Blossom Hoag led the fight against expansions in the Boston area while Jay and Alexandra Dawson made frequent trips to New Bedford to successfully block that proposal, which would have had large-scale wetlands impact.

The proposal to build a large “public-private” development in Greylock Glen at the foot of our state’s highest peak was gradually downsized to a convention center, nature center, campground and similar recreation facilities, and the town of Adams was named as the preferred developer. That project is still on the books, but waiting to get started. We hope that delay does not result in a resurrection for something huge.

Parklands and state forests have always needed defending from inappropriate ideas. The chapter has fought many battles to try to prevent parklands from being taken for building sites (usually schools) and parkways from being converted into highways. We’re still working to pass the “Parks Protection Package” which would require no-net-loss of parkland.

We fought for years to prevent the expansion of the ski development in Mt. Wachusett State Reservation. The Sierra Club went to court because the decision to allow the removal of 12 acres of fine red oaks for a snowboard area was inconsistent with the approved plan for that Reservation. Unfortunately, the state’s Supreme Judicial Court ruled that under the laws in effect at the time, the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) was not obliged to follow its own approved plan! The Club was still instrumental in keeping multiple ski trails out of the old growth forest there, but

the state approved the clearcutting of 12 acres of a 140 year old forest block anyway. Despite this tragedy, the ski area never actually built the trails even after the trees were cleared. Largely as a result of that decision, when the state decided to merge its two main parks agencies (DEM and the Metropolitan District Commission) into one department, the Sierra Club made sure the legislation had strict wording requiring plans and adherence to the plans.

More recently, we’ve been involved in forestry issues. The first big issue I took on, which was very controversial within the chapter, was what to do about the large deer population that was preventing the regeneration of forest plants on the watershed of the Quabbin Reservoir. After much debate, we decided to support a controlled hunt of the deer; that hunt is succeeding in reducing the deer population to a level that is allowing gradual improvement to the forest.

The chapter supported the original effort by state agencies to have their forestry work “green certified” and the subsequent designation of large Forest Reserves on land managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW). In the past few years, with significant public controversy emerging about forestry on public lands, the chapter has participated in the Forest Visioning process set up by DCR, and plans to be involved in the reviews of forestry operations at Quabbin and on DFW land.

In the meantime, forest issues expanded to energy issues, and the state verged on permitting large wood-burning plants to generate electricity. The chapter effectively and successfully opposed this step. The responsible state agency is now preparing regulations that we expect will square with an exemplary biomass policy that Chapter Director McCaffrey developed. This policy is also serving as a model for other Sierra Club chapters around the country.

Of course the biggest energy issue in Massachusetts for years has been Cape Wind. The chapter carefully studied the associated issues, calling on people who work mostly on energy for the Club and including members from the Cape Cod and the Islands Group. The final decision was to support Cape Wind, and at key points the chapter has helped bolster the case before regulatory bodies.

Blossom and Ethan Hoag and others worked to support a good regional “cap and trade” agreement (Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative) on fossil-fuel-burning electric-generating plants. At the same time, we were fending off proposals to build liquified natural gas terminals in Boston Harbor, Fall River, and off the coast near Gloucester.

continued on page 9



Mt. Wachusett as seen from the summit of Mt. Watatic.

continued from page 8

During her time as chapter chair, Mary Ann Nelson recruited several bushy-tailed members for the political committee. Among these was Phil Segó, who as chair of that team for the past six years has worked diligently and effectively to increase its capacity. The committee examines city council and mayoral elections in the state's larger municipalities, and in even-numbered years, this hard-working committee reviews all candidates in over 200 state Senate and House elections; the 10 congressional elections; plus state-wide candidates and ballot questions. In cooperation with group and chapter excoms, endorsement votes are taken and you may read elsewhere in this *Sierran* about those who merited endorsement in the current cycle.

Work on public transportation is never-ending. The late Louise Lewis worked for more than a decade to get rail lines constructed to connect the North and South Stations. Our transportation committee, headed by John Kyper, continues to keep this important project - the North-South Rail Link - high on the chapter's agenda.

The Cape Cod and Islands Group is working hard to keep environmental justice issues front and center in efforts for energy conservation. David Dow, long-time activist there and recent recipient of an award from the national Sierra Club, monitors several complicated fisheries issues. He also, for years, was our representative in the effort to clean up the pollution in the Cape's aquifer (please see page 6).

Anita King, as chair of our Population Committee, has been alerting people to the dangers of overpopulation and over-consumption for more than a decade.

One of our newest committees is the Zero Waste Committee, which recently played a key role in stopping what appeared to be a move by state government to allow the construction of new trash incineration plants.

So – as you can see – there's plenty of ongoing issues, plus all the newer ones for us (like solid waste – which we worked on many years ago and now it's back). Jump in and join us! ❖

Elisa Campbell has served as chapter chair and Sierran editor.

continued from page 7

The Ethiopians didn't cause the global climate crisis. Indeed, they contribute little to global pollution and their per capita use of fossil fuels is very low by international standards. Yet because of widespread poverty and the geography, countries like Ethiopia are extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. During the 1970s and into the 1980s, Africa suffered major famines and, even today, malnutrition remains a significant problem. Ethiopians worry about drought and water quality, and malaria and waterborne diseases of poverty are among the major causes of death. Approximately 400,000 Ethiopian children die each year before their fifth birthday.

So what can an American environmentalist say to the people of Ethiopia? Telling Ethiopians to "simplify" is pointless. The people of Ethiopia need to consume more, not less, in order to survive and prosper. Americans can apologize for their global greed, but the Ethiopians I met were looking for solutions, not regrets.

Ethiopia is trying to adapt to the hard reality of climate change and support from American environmentalists is needed. Our Sierra Club team listened as village leaders talked about their involvement with population, health, and environment programs to help communities protect their natural resources while slowing population growth and improving the quality of community life. At the local level, experts on sustainable development work together with farmers, physicians and nurses, teachers, and village leaders.

Understanding these efforts and their importance may help to bridge the gap between wealthy and developing nations. It's a concept that I'll be promoting with environmentalists as part of the Sierra Club's Global Population and Environment Program. In an era of crazy weather, there is a need to find solutions for the people who are the most at risk, and to try and support programs that build a just, sustainable, and peaceful world for all, not just the prosperous and protected. ❖

Bob Murphy is Vice-Chair of the Cape Cod & Islands Group

SIERRA CLUB CHAPTER AND GROUP ELECTIONS

*Your membership number must appear on the outside of your envelope in order for your ballot to be valid.
~ An extra ballot is provided for households with joint memberships ~*

Voting Instructions and Election Procedures

You elect the Sierra Club leadership each year. Below you will find candidates' statements and ballots (on page 12) for all Chapter & Group Elections. All Massachusetts Sierra Club members may vote for the Chapter Executive Committee and also the group committee they are represented by. Please contact the chapter office if you have a question about your group membership.

Mail ballots to: Sierra Club Elections, 10 Milk Street, Suite 632, Boston, MA 02108. Ballots must be received by 5:00 PM, Friday, November 26th, 2010 in order to be counted. Vote for no more than the number of candidates indicated on each ballot.

In order to validate your ballots, please write your membership number on the upper left hand corner of your envelope. Your eight-digit membership number appears on the mailing label of the *Sierran*. A second ballot is provided for those households with joint memberships so that each member can vote. If you have any questions, please call the chapter office at (617) 423-5775.

Massachusetts Chapter Executive Committee Candidate Statements *(Ballots are on page 12)*

ELISA CAMPBELL – I have been involved in this chapter of the Sierra Club for almost 40 years, at various times being chair of the chapter or the local group. After editing the *Sierran* for five years, I'm now running for the ExCom to bring a perspective from beyond the Boston metropolitan area. For 20 years I've concentrated on protection and management of Massachusetts' public lands. More recently I've added efforts to keep our privately-owned forests as forests, not developments, as part of the Wildlands and Woodlands partnership. I'm also concerned about population, consumption, and accepting responsibility for our own ecological footprints. I would appreciate your vote.

ERNEST EDWARDS – I am a Framingham architect. I was born in Norfolk, VA, then the largest city in the state. I grew up playing in one of the most polluted rivers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, living 400 yards from the city dump and the incinerator which was next to the coal piers where ships took Appalachian coal to the world. My first public action was an air pollution newspaper editorial when I was about nine and I've been involved on these type of issues ever since. At the end of last year, I finished six years on a number of architectural organizations where SC type issues were my main focus. Though recently appointed to an unexpired term, I would love to continue my ExCom involvement.

BLOSSOM HOAG – I have served at all levels of the Sierra Club for over thirty years. I also represented the Sierra Club at two UNICC conferences in Canada and Kenya. Conservation is in my blood and in every aspect of my life. I strive to assist others to further their conservation goals. In the Club, I work on local, regional and national transportation issues, marine issues, and helped form the staff recycling committee at MIT which won awards for its efforts. Getting off of fossil fuel is not an option; it is a necessity. I ask for your vote.

JOHN LEWIS – My primary interest is in the area of transportation and what can be done to use transportation to maintain and hopefully, improve the environmental health of Massachusetts and elsewhere. The politics of transportation have a larger effect on our ecosystem than almost any other policy decision. But political transportation decision making is susceptible to pressure from the Sierra Club due to its very nature, and the Sierra Club, due to its structure, is an excellent tool to promote an environmental agenda. That is why I would like your vote for a position on the executive committee. Presently I am a commissioner on the Boston Conservation Commission.

DAN PROCTOR– Four years ago I led the reactivation of the Thoreau Group. I have served as its chair and representative to chapter excom since then, and was elected chapter chair last January. My effort focuses on increasing the chapter's capacity to deal effectively with the issues facing us. We are making progress, and I would like to continue to contribute to this advancement.

PETER RUGGIERO – Since being elected to the Executive Committee two years ago, it has been my privilege to serve the Chapter. While I entered into environmental activism through a keen interest in natural health, my long-standing membership in the Sierra Club and my work on the Executive Committee - in particular - have underlined the interrelatedness of environment, health, and justice. In addition, my sense of urgency regarding the environment has only increased as my participation in the Club has increased. There is much to be done because we still have a long way to go in terms of repairing and preserving the natural world that is our home. I hope to continue being a part of this process by continuing to serve on the Executive Committee. ❖

SIERRA CLUB CHAPTER AND GROUP ELECTIONS

Greater Boston Group Candidate Statements

SUE BUTLER – As past-president of Green Decade/Cambridge, and a co-founder of the Home Energy Efficiency Team (EPA Environmental Merit Award), I review Cambridge City Council agendas for sustainability. To make real change, I have insulated, weatherized, and retrofitted with geothermal to have heat, air-conditioning, and domestic hot water without combustion or carbon. My photo-voltaics sell to the grid. Our situation is urgent; doing is necessary. Teaching and policy change are needed and the Sierra Club has advocated for environmental preservation from protecting trees to challenging mountain top removal and tar sands extraction. I would be delighted to participate in these efforts.

DAVID HEIMANN – As Energy Chair I have coordinated comments on such issues as Cape Wind, RGGI, and Congressional climate-change legislation. I have also led an effort to address the Chapter's financial situation, and am currently chair of the Financial Committee. This has resulted in the hiring of a Development Associate, a plan to observe the Chapter's 40th Anniversary, and a plan to identify fundable projects and possible donors. I live in Jamaica Plain Cohousing (JPC), and am a member of the group that successfully developed the project. JPC earned the 2007 Green Residential Award for sustainable construction from the City of Boston.

ETHAN HOAG – As an active member of the Sierra Club since 1983, with your vote, I would be happy to serve on the Greater Boston Group executive committee. I am the group energy committee chair and work with the Chapter Energy Committee. I have been concerned for many years about the pollution caused by the global use of energy and the role it plays in global warming for future generations. In my opinion it is by far the most critical issue we face today and in the future. Please contact me at: ethanhoag@gmail.com or 781-740-2848 with your concerns or questions.

ELENA SAPORTA – I am a registered landscape architect and have been responsible for completing many successful urban design and environmental planning projects. I have been serving on the GBG ExCom and wish to continue my activities there. In the United States, city dwellers consume fewer environmental resources than their counterparts in the suburbs and beyond. As our cities become more densely populated, it is critical to balance growth with quality of life. As an inhabitant of the Boston metropolitan area, I am committed to improving our air and water quality, developing walkable, transit-centered communities and protecting open space. ❖

Cape Cod and Islands Group Statements

DAVID DOW – David Dow is currently Treasurer and Chair of the Cape Cod & the Islands Group. For a long time he was active in the cleanup at the Massachusetts Military Reservation and currently works on Zero Waste and wastewater infrastructure upgrade issues. He has recently been appointed Chair of the Massachusetts Chapter's Marine/Coastal Committee. He has recently been given a Special Service's Award by the national Sierra Club.

MARTHA GILLIS – I've been a member of the Sierra Club for many years and a member of the CC&I ExCom for the last two years. I'm concerned about environmental issues; in particular the protection of birds, fish, and other wild life. I believe the Sierra Club is a leading voice in the United States in these areas, helping to bring these issues to the attention of the general public and our government. If elected, I hope to make connections and build support for the Sierra Club at the local level that will help to influence environmental decisions on the Cape & Islands.

KIRSTEN MORITZ – I am a member of the Falmouth Town Energy Committee, the Falmouth Climate Action Team and chair of the Falmouth Democratic Town Committee's Energy group. The interests of those groups often overlap with those of the Cape and Islands Sierra Club. I would like to join the local Club's executive committee as a liaison for all those groups. I want to work on issues of climate change. I'd like to see the Sierra Club put increasing emphasis on that issue in considering its policies, and have seen that much useful information on that topic comes out of the local Club. ❖

Thoreau Group Candidate Statements

POLLY OLIVER – Polly grew up on a farm in Concord and has lived in her home town all but a few years. She helped re-activate the Thoreau Group four years ago and has served on its excom since then. Sustainable agriculture is one of her main interests.

LAUNA ZIMMARO – Launa retired from a 35-year career in education and has been devoting full time to civic activity, mainly on behalf of the environment. She helped organize the Carlisle Sierra Club Committee two years ago and has ably served as its chair since then. She has also been an associate member of the Thoreau Group excom. ❖

Ballots can be found on page 12.

Candidate Statements on Pages 10 and 11 - CLIP and MAIL BALLOTS TO:

Sierra Club Elections, 10 Milk Street, Suite 632, Boston MA 02108

Your membership number, which appears above your name on your mailing label, **must appear on the outside** of your envelope in order for your ballot to be valid. A second ballot is provided for households with joint memberships. Space is provided for write-in candidates.

Ballots must be received by Friday, November 26th, 5:00 PM in order to be counted.

BALLOT

**Massachusetts Chapter
Executive Committee Election**

Vote for no more than six candidates.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elisa Campbell | <input type="checkbox"/> John Lewis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ernest Edwards | <input type="checkbox"/> Dan Proctor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blossom Hoag | <input type="checkbox"/> Peter Ruggiero |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | |

Cape Cod and Islands Election

Vote for no more than three candidates.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> David Dow | <input type="checkbox"/> Kirsten Moritz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Martha Gillis | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Greater Boston Group Election

Vote for no more than four candidates.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sue Butler | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethan Hoag |
| <input type="checkbox"/> David Heimann | <input type="checkbox"/> Elena Saporta |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | |

Thoreau Committee Election

Vote for no more than two candidates.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polly Oliver | <input type="checkbox"/> Launa Zimmaro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | |

BALLOT

**Massachusetts Chapter
Executive Committee Election**

Vote for no more than six candidates.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elisa Campbell | <input type="checkbox"/> John Lewis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ernest Edwards | <input type="checkbox"/> Dan Proctor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blossom Hoag | <input type="checkbox"/> Peter Ruggiero |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | |

Cape Cod and Islands Election

Vote for no more than three candidates.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> David Dow | <input type="checkbox"/> Kirsten Moritz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Martha Gillis | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Greater Boston Group Election

Vote for no more than four candidates.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sue Butler | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethan Hoag |
| <input type="checkbox"/> David Heimann | <input type="checkbox"/> Elena Saporta |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | |

Thoreau Committee Election

Vote for no more than two candidates.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polly Oliver | <input type="checkbox"/> Launa Zimmaro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | |

Sierra Club Beyond Coal Campaign Comes to the Bay State



by Carol Oldham

For decades coal has been polluting our communities in Massachusetts. Coal is our dirtiest energy source. Getting it out of the ground destroys our mountains, burning it causes asthma, global warming, and releases harmful pollutants like mercury into our air, and disposal of the leftover coal ash is contaminating our water.

That's why the Sierra Club Beyond Coal Campaign is working hard to:

1. Stop the construction of dirty, new coal-fired plants.
2. Retire old plants that are the worst contributors to health-harming soot and smog pollution and replace them with clean energy solutions.
3. Work with communities to protect our mountains, lands and waters by keeping our vast coal reserves in the ground

What does this mean for Massachusetts?

We have four coal fired power plants: Brayton Point and Somerset Station, both close to the Rhode Island Border, Salem Harbor on the coast, and Mount Tom on the Connecticut River. Both Salem Harbor and Brayton Point are owned by Dominion Power, a company renowned in Virginia for their support of mountaintop removal.

Pumping out more than eight million tons of greenhouse gas every year, the four coal plants in Massachusetts also pollute our air and water with more than 96 pounds of mercury. The health costs of these four plants to the people of the Commonwealth have been calculated at more than 300 million dollars.



Sierra Club members collected postcards over the summer urging EPA to strengthen federal coal ash regulations.

With the foregoing in mind, we are excited to announce that Drew Grande will be joining our team as an Associate Field Organizer based in Boston on the coal campaign to shut down old dirty coal in the state of Massachusetts. Drew earned a degree in environmental science and management from the University of Rhode Island and has always had a passion for the environment. Drew comes to us from the Boy Scouts, where he has been working for years to get boys out of doors to learn about the value of nature. Drew has also volunteered for the last few years with our office in New Hampshire.

Drew will be working to shut down outdated polluting coal plants here in Massachusetts and replace them with energy efficiency and clean renewable energy that creates jobs and moves us toward a clean energy future. Many people and good organizations have been working hard to shut down coal and move to a better cleaner source of energy, and we look forward to working closely with them on this fight. We are excited to have Drew's skills and abilities to reduce carbon and move Massachusetts toward a clean energy future. We hope when Drew contacts you to ask you to speak out for shutting down coal and moving toward clean energy to make a better future for Massachusetts that you will say yes! ❖



Sierra Club welcomes *Danielle Piscatelli*

The Sierra Club is pleased to welcome Danielle Piscatelli who started with the Massachusetts Chapter earlier this spring as our part time Development Associate – a newly created position for the Chapter. Since joining us Danielle has been identifying development opportunities for the Chapter, and working closely with Chapter leaders to plan our upcoming 40th anniversary event at the Hampshire House in Boston on October 21st.

Danielle has worked in the development field for over 10 years, holds an MPA in non-profit management from Suffolk University, and is an avid hiker, including traveling throughout the country doing volunteer trail work.





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40-Year Nostalgia

by Bob Weggel

What strides the Sierra Club has made since 1970! Back then its membership--if memory serves me right-- was only a few thousand in all of New England; now it's 19,000 in Massachusetts alone. It has political muscle that we could only dream of, an office and staff, and a web site where, with a click or two of a mouse, one can send an e-mail message to the powers that be [1970: "What's a web site? A mouse click? E-mail?"].

But I think back fondly to the Club of yore. We had an intimacy with our membership. We maintained our own membership database, by which to print our own mailing labels--the only chapter in the country to do so. Typing the punched cards, I soon memorized zip codes throughout New England [2010: "What's a punched card?"]. Our outings covered much of the Northeast, introducing me to much more than Massachusetts: the White Mountains, the Green Mountains and Maine. Now, one has to go out-of-Chapter for such offerings. Yes, my heart warms to the Club of the '70's. But yes, too, I welcome the strength that has come with its maturation. ❖

Bob Weggel served as Treasurer of what was initially known as the New England Group and later the New England Chapter.

Massachusetts Chapter Meetings & Events

Due to the long lead time of the Sierran publication schedule, all events, meetings, and outings are now listed on the Chapter web site and in the E-Sierran.

Please sign up for the E-Sierran (see page 16) and/or visit www.sierraclubmass.org and click on "Meetings and Events" to access the latest listings, or call the chapter office at 617-423-5775.

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Please note that outings may be cancelled for insufficient interest up to three days before the scheduled date. If you are interested in an outing, please do not wait until the last minute to contact the trip leader.

Biomass Victory

MA Issues Draft Regulations for Wood Biomass Facilities

by James McCaffrey

Sierra Club efforts to oppose utility-scale biomass facilities in Massachusetts saw major progress this fall when the administration issued a ground breaking set of draft regulations that will help reshape the renewable energy sector in the commonwealth.

Biomass has long been promoted as an energy resource eligible for Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) – an incentive designed to promote renewable energy. These incentives led to multiple large-scale biomass facilities being proposed throughout the commonwealth. But academics, scientists, advocacy groups, and citizens began to question biomass industry claims when it became clear that certain types of facilities actually generated huge amounts of CO₂ and other hazardous emissions while operating. Further investigation indicated that the volume of trees required to fuel utility-scale woody biomass plants could quickly threaten the great forests of the Northeast with massive clearcutting.

In response to pressure from the Sierra Club, grassroots activists, and a broad coalition of environmental groups, the state put all biomass projects effectively on hold in December 2009. The MA Department of Energy then commissioned a comprehensive scientific study of the CO₂ and tree harvesting impacts of woody biomass burning in Massachusetts. When the study was released in May it sent shockwaves through the industry. The report, authored by the renowned Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, determined in part that ramping up a utility scale biomass sector could actually increase carbon emissions over that of other fossil fuels for at least 40 years.

Under the Global Warming Solutions Act (please see “Chairs Remarks” page 3) the state is required

to reduce its CO₂ emissions 80% by 2050. In an effort to meet these goals, the state drafted new biomass regulations strengthening the requirements for certain energy facilities to qualify for RECs. The new regulations would ensure that only truly green and renewable sources of energy are eligible for ratepayer incentives and subsidies. The directive also shuts the door on projects that would have combusted contaminated construction and demolition debris, a practice that has already been outlawed in other New England states. Finally, the regulations establish sustainable forest harvesting standards and propose that any biomass energy production must meet minimum efficiency standards in order to qualify for RECs. The primary goal – one that the Chapter supports - is to ensure that renewable energy sources ultimately out-perform the polluting energy sources they are supposed to be replacing.

The Sierra Club believes there is little likelihood that the current energy resource provided by forest biomass can be increased sustainably or efficiently, especially at the utility-scale proposed nationwide by the biomass industry. There may be some room in our energy mix for smaller more efficient combined heat-and-power facilities, and the new regulations



are designed to promote this type of biomass energy. There is also some potential that small quantities of biomass fuel, if sustainably harvested, could provide benefits to private forest landowners who otherwise would have no market for “low-value” timber and may be inclined to convert lands to other uses, like development or agriculture. But this too raises serious questions about fuel supplies. Most studies indicate that current industries do not provide enough left-over wood to fuel the biomass industry without also turning to native forests to harvest and burn trees. Indeed, most existing plants already do harvest, chip and burn whole trees.

Sierra Club members played a key role in this landmark victory, and your calls and efforts throughout the campaign made a difference. The draft regulations will need continued strong support this fall if they are to become law by the end of the year. Please visit our website to learn more about what you can do to help make the newly proposed biomass regulations a reality. ❖

David Dow Receives National Award

David Dow was honored with a *Special Service Award* on September 25 in San Francisco for his long-term commitment to conservation and the Sierra Club. David has worn many Sierra Club hats, including outings leader and chair of the Cape Cod & Islands Group. Perhaps most importantly, he has been a thoughtful and effective spokesperson on issues as diverse as the clean-up of the MA Military Reservation Superfund site (please see page 6), ocean and fisheries management and offshore renewable energy.

SIERRAN

Reaching More Than 20,000
Sierra Club Members in Massachusetts

**Massachusetts Chapter
Sierra Club**

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617-423-5775

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- Club meetings, and lots of great ways to get involved in protecting our environment

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- Events, film showings, and gatherings
- Announcements regarding critical environmental issues
- Information about important items in the news

To help save the chapter's resources as well as trees, the Massachusetts chapter is now publishing the *Massachusetts Sierran* twice per year, instead of quarterly. Our new E-Sierran comes out monthly and provides an easy way to be informed and get involved. We're urging all our members to sign up for the E-Sierran today! It's free and it only takes a minute to subscribe.

Just visit www.sierraclubmass.org and click on "E-Sierran".

Privacy: *E-mail addresses of members of the lists will not be shared, rented, sold or otherwise provided to any non-Sierra Club entities. The list will be used only for Sierra sponsored and cosponsored events, and critical issue reports.*



Bequests have played a key role in the Sierra Club's environmental successes over the years.

Planning now may make your gift more meaningful and reduce taxes on your estate. We have many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter. For more information and confidential assistance, contact:

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