

M A S S A C H U S E T T S

SIERRAN

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Spring 2006

Reaching More Than
26,000 Sierra Club Members
in Massachusetts

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CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2006

Mary Ann Nelson, Chair
chapter-chair@sierraclubmass.org
617-442-0123

Blossom Hoag, Vice Chair
vice-chair@sierraclubmass.org

Don Carlson
dcarlson@sierraclubmass.org

John Deacon
jdeacon@sierraclubmass.org

David Heimann
dheimann@sierraclubmass.org

Deborah Holt
Deborah.Holt@sierraclub.org

John Kyper
jkyper@sierraclubmass.org

John Lewis
jlewis@sierraclubmass.org

Phillip Sego
phil@sierraclubmass.org

CHAPTER STAFF

James McCaffrey, Director
Jeremy Marin, Associate Regional Representative
Yi Ching Fedkenheuer, Administrative Assistant
office@sierraclubmass.org

LEADERS LIST

For information on local environmental issues, membership, meetings, outings, and any other Sierra Club events, call or write the group or issue leaders listed below.

GROUP LEADERS

Cape Cod Group
David Dow, *Acting Chair*
ddow@sierraclubmass.org

Greater Boston Group
John Lewis, *Chair*
jlewis@sierraclubmass.org

Pioneer Valley Group
Elisa Campbell, *Acting Chair*
ecampbell@sierraclubmass.org

Blackstone Valley Group
Wendy Rowland, *Acting Chair*
wrowland@sierraclubmass.org

Essex County Group
Mike Dorsey, *Chair*
ddorsey@sierraclubmass.org

CHAPTER ISSUE LEADERS

Conservation Chair
Gilbert Woolley
gwoolley@sierraclubmass.org

Energy Chair
David Heimann
dheimann@sierraclubmass.org

Outings Chair
Deborah Holt
Deborah.Holt@sierraclub.org

Public Lands & Open Spaces Chair
Elisa Campbell
ecampbell@sierraclubmass.org

Transportation Chair
John Kyper
jkyper@sierraclubmass.org

Population Chair
Anita King
413-268-9212

REGIONAL CONTACTS

Maine Sierra Club
44 Oak Street, Suite 301
Portland, Maine 04101
207-761-5616

New Hampshire Sierra Club
40 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301
603-224-8222

Vermont Sierra Club
73 Center Street
Rutland, VT 05701
802-651-0169

Rhode Island Sierra Club
298 West Exchange Street
Providence, RI 02903
401-521-4734

Connecticut Sierra Club
118 Oak Street
Hartford, CT 06106
860-525-2500

Annual dues in the Sierra Club are \$39, of which \$1 is for a subscription to the Massachusetts Sierran.

BARELY HOLDING GROUND – Ups and Downs for Our Parks

Letter from the desk of James McCaffrey, Director

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is responsible for managing both our urban parks system (formerly run by the Metropolitan District Commission) and the state forests and parks system (formerly the Department of Environmental Management). Far from the “world class parks” vision Governor Romney promised when he took office in 2002, our parks continue to suffer from a lack of funding and potential mismanagement due to under-staffing. The state only recently gave an overall increase to funding for the parks after years of decreases or level funding.

The most notable increase is the commitment by DCR to allocate \$2.5 million over the next three years to hire eight new staff members at DCR to develop a baseline management planning process for the entire parks system. Just as you could never manage a store without knowing your inventory, you can't manage a park without first understanding the resource. The management planning staff at DCR are some of the best and brightest land use planners in state government. Yet the department has been severely understaffed for over a decade and less than ten percent of DCR properties have a management plan at all. The Club will continue to work closely with DCR staff as they move forward in developing management plans for all properties within the system — an ambitious, but necessary, goal. The DCR Stewardship Council, a legally mandated advisory committee, was instrumental in insuring that this initiative was included in the Governor's final budget. The program should be fully funded by the legislature.

continued on page 12

ON THE COVER: Pristine Brewster Cove and Calf Bay as seen from Outer Brewster Island, the gateway to the Boston Harbor Islands National Park. An energy developer has proposed taking Outer Brewster Island to build the nation's largest LNG terminal/storage facility. Join us May 21st (see page 8) as we take a boat cruise to these spectacular outer harbor islands.

Photograph by Sherman Morss

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Elisa Campbell..... Editor
Ricki Pappo..... Designer

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www.sierraclubmass.org
office@sierraclubmass.org

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Opinions, unless otherwise stated, are of the author only; positions adopted by the Sierra Club are identified as such.

Circulation of the Massachusetts Sierran is over 26,000 outdoor-minded, environmentally aware readers.

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State OKs Wetlands Losses at Blue Hills Reservation

by Sue Bass

For at least two decades, Massachusetts state officials have pledged to prevent any net loss of wetlands. That promise became a cornerstone of green campaigns. In 1990, the No-Net-Loss-of-Wetlands Policy was adopted by the Water Resources Commission. Plans for implementation of this policy were embodied in a formal document signed by the Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs and the commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). In it, they pledged to “stop the incremental destruction of Massachusetts’ wetlands” and “to achieve the short-term goal of no net loss and the longer-term goal of an increase in our wetlands base.” The state’s website still declares that “wetlands resources...are protected by a ‘no net loss of wetlands’ policy. Projects that affect wetlands are required to avoid impacts where possible, minimize unavoidable impacts, and mitigate for unavoidable impacts.” [See [http://www.mass.gov/czm/envpermitaprotectionact.htm](http://www.mass.gov/czm/envpermitmaprotectionact.htm)]

Nevertheless, last fall the DEP authorized a permit allowing the destruction of 8.7 acres of wetlands and “land under water,” a resource area protected under the state Wetlands Act, in the Blue Hills Reservation. DEP required restoration of less than one-quarter of an acre of wetlands. This is the largest loss of wetlands resources authorized in 15 years. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) has drained a pristine reservoir in the Blue Hills in order to construct two huge concrete tanks, each 40 feet high and 240 feet in diameter. The tanks will be filled with 20 million gallons of water to serve as a one-day emergency drinking water reserve for 100,000 Quincy-area residents.

Emptying Blue Hills Reservoir has scarred the natural scenery of a more than century-old park that provides one of the few bucolic escapes for the city and suburban population. The tanks will displace many wetland species, disfigure the heart of the park with chain-link fences and “No Trespassing” signs, and destroy the longest water view from any roadway in the reservation. Many people living near the Blue Hills have questioned whether this project is necessary or desirable. Bottled water would be a cheaper way to provide a one-day emergency drinking water supply, they note. And there’s no need for covered tanks for water to fight fires; that could have been obtained from the old reservoir.

Worse yet is the language in this wetlands variance that declares that DEP does not have a

no net loss policy. Environmental groups expressed shock at the state’s disavowal of the “no net loss” policy. Sixteen organizations, including the Sierra Club, wrote to the current DEP Commissioner, Robert Golledge, last November to protest what they called “a dangerous precedent.” A delegation of environmentalists, including James McCaffrey, Director of the Massachusetts Sierra Club, met with Golledge in January to urge him to re-affirm the no net loss policy and to revise the state’s Wetlands Regulations to require no net loss of wetlands for all projects, including variances. While not offering any firm commitments to the environmental community regarding the policy, Golledge invited the group to submit proposed regulatory standards.

The variance overturned a decision by Administrative Magistrate Mark L. Silverstein that the state’s “no net loss of wetlands” policy required replacement of the lost wetlands. In the decision, Commissioner Golledge rejected “the conclusion... that there is a fifteen-year-old ‘no net loss policy’ which would bind the Department to require some future mitigation.” Despite the document signed by his predecessors, Golledge added, “I can find no evidence in the record of any ‘no net loss policy’ of either the Wetlands Program or the Department currently in effect so that interested parties would expect its application in permitting decisions.” Even if there were such a policy, the Commissioner stated, he would waive it in this instance. This is the first variance awarded under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act since 1990 that did not require at least 1:1 replacement for lost wetlands or wetlands resources; most have required 2:1 replacement.

The Friends of the Blue Hills sought a preliminary injunction to stop the draining of the reservoir. “MWRA’s clear purpose is to destroy the Reservoir’s habitats *before* this Court has the opportunity to review DEP’s variance,” the brief argued. “The [Wetlands Protection] Act does not permit anyone, even MWRA, to kill first and answer questions later.” The injunction request was denied, but Friends of the Blue Hills have decided to continue litigating the loss of wetlands. Many documents relating to the tank project are available through their web site, <http://www.friendsofthebluehills.org/BHreservoir.htm> ❖

Sue Bass, a long-time member of the Sierra Club, is president of the Mystic River Watershed Association and a director of the Belmont Citizens Forum.

The state’s website still declares that “wetlands resources...are protected by a ‘no net loss of wetlands’ policy.”

Inner City Outings Connect Boston-Area Young People with the **Outdoors**

by William K. Hart

Thirteen sleepy-eyed high school students stood in the basement of Saint Peter's School in Dorchester and carefully assembled peanut butter and jelly sandwiches on a cafeteria table scattered with trail mix, granola bars, string cheese and fruit. On this morning just before Thanksgiving the students, unlike most of their classmates, had foregone warm beds and extra Saturday sleep to head out with Sierra Club Boston Inner City Outings (ICO) members for a day-long hike at the Blue Hills Reservation just south of Boston. For both the students and volunteers it was a much-anticipated chance to get out of town and take some fresh air on what looked to be a beautiful fall day.

Every month, Boston-area Sierra Club members volunteer their time with the Club's Inner City Outings Program. The program, created in 1971 by Club members in the San Francisco Bay area, works to provide low-income, inner-city youth with opportunities to explore the world outside the limits of their urban environments. Since then the program has expanded to around 50 cities nationwide. By creating opportunities for young people, the ICO program encourages curiosity for the outdoors and an awareness of the environment that often goes neglected in the city.

Throughout the year Boston ICO ventures everywhere from the National Seashore on Cape Cod to Mt. Kearsarge in New Hampshire for outings that include hiking, swimming, sledding, apple picking, camping and snowshoeing. Two groups from East Boston spent an afternoon sailing in Boston Harbor aboard the 125-foot Schooner *Liberty*. Earlier in the year many of these students had escaped the sweltering Boston heat to spend a Saturday canoeing on the Ipswich River. Few had ever canoed before but all took to the river incredibly well and soon had the art of canoeing mastered. Even a group of



Photograph by William K. Hart

ICO Volunteers Lead First-Time Canoers Up the Ipswich River

8-year-olds from East Boston quickly learned their way around the canoes — though the ICO leaders did most of the paddling while the students spotted “tortugas” (turtles).

With lunches packed and extra jackets, gloves and hats borrowed from the ICO's extensive stash of outdoor gear (donated from REI, Hilton's Tent City and Patagonia) the St. Peter's group loaded into vans and headed for the Blue Hills to hike the Skyline Trail. At the trailhead one student was chosen to lead the group up the trail and one was designated as the trailer to make sure everyone kept up. Fallen leaves obscured most of the trail so the group worked together to spot the blue trail markers painted in succession on tree trunks and rocks.

The halfway mark of the trail's loop was also the highest elevation and the location of a small weather station. After reading up on the meteorological records for the station — which included a 186 -m.p.h. wind gust during the hurricane of 1938 — the group headed down the trail to an old observation tower. With the mid-day sun high in the sky and the dry fall air, the tower opened up to a spectacular view of the Blue Hills rolling towards the ocean. As the hills sloped away in the distance, the skyline of Boston rose along the horizon so clearly that the

St. Peter's hikers named many of the tall buildings that rose above the Back Bay.

The view was the highlight of the hike and made for an unusual and exciting perspective on the city of Boston. While many inner-city students may end up spending their entire lives having never left the confines of cities and the highways that connect them, these students woke up early and braved the cold to explore their world outside of the city. The opportunity to appreciate the outdoors is rare in the inner city, but for the last 35 years the Sierra Club's ICO program has been the link between the pavement and trails for thousands of eager young people. For many in the St. Peter's group who had never hiked the trail or seen the city from an airplane, the view was an unprecedented and eye-opening experience that reminded everyone, even the ICO leaders, of how small a city block really is.

For more information about volunteering or making a contribution to Boston ICO, please visit our website at <http://sierraclubmass.org/ico/icosite/> ❖

Will Hart recently graduated from Bucknell University and moved to Boston. He has been a volunteer leader with the ICO for the past year.

BOOK REVIEW:

The Republican War on Science

by Chris Mooney
Basic Books, © 2005
\$24.95 (cloth)

by Elisa Campbell

Most Sierra Club members probably won't find the idea that the Republican Party is waging a war on science a startling concept. We've all heard about evolution versus intelligent design, stem cell research, attacks on scientists studying global warming, etc. Mooney's book is a thoroughly researched and readable exploration of the origins, evolution (sorry – I couldn't help it) and ramifications of that "war." I'm sorry to report that it's even worse than you thought.

Mooney is a journalist who covers the relationships among science, policy and politics in the Nation's Capital. *The Republican War on Science* is divided into four parts: Where it Begins, The Business of Science, Scientific Revelations, and The Antiscience President. He shows how right-wing politicians and their supporters have been working to undermine science by distorting scientific terms and practices, demanding impossible levels of "certainty" before allowing regulation, attacking individual scientists, and suppressing scientific research when they don't like the results. They "pack" the membership of scientific advisory committees to push research in their preferred directions. They misrepresent results. And, a favorite tactic of the Right: they exaggerate the amount of disagreement among scientists to make a controversy appear where none (or little) exists. Controversies undermine the public's confidence in the validity of science as input into public policy decisions.

Mooney traces the origins of scientific influence in government to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration. During the Nixon administration, as the environment became a major concern, the power of science, scientific research, and the agencies and independent institutes that did

much of the research, increased dramatically. Then, in the Reagan administration, the power and convictions of the Religious Right emerged as a major force, although government scientific agencies mostly remained independent of that kind of political pressure. That was the era of "Creation Science."

During Gingrich's power as Speaker of the House, the Republicans began calling for policy to be based on "sound science." The phrase sounds innocent, but they used it to hide their plan to privatize the science on which policy is based. In what Mooney calls "a stunning act of self-lobotomy," they abolished the Office of Technology Assessment, which had been Congress' independent science advisory body, and turned to lobbyists and privately funded think tanks for science advice.

Battles raged. You may remember the ozone hole controversy and the role of chlorofluorocarbons. Then came the "greenhouse effect" and global warming. Senator James Inhofe of Oklahoma, Chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, described global warming caused by human activity "the greatest hoax ever perpetrated on the American people." Inhofe used his committee as a forum for scientists to dispute global warming, in order to generate the perception of scientific uncertainty, so he could then focus on the "uncertainty" in the name of "sound science." In the meantime, the Competitive Enterprise Institute filed a lawsuit attempting to prevent dissemination of the U.S. Climate Action Report (written during the Clinton administration) as "junk science." They claimed the computer models in the report were flawed. According to Mooney, "To the Right, 'sound science' means requiring a higher burden of proof before

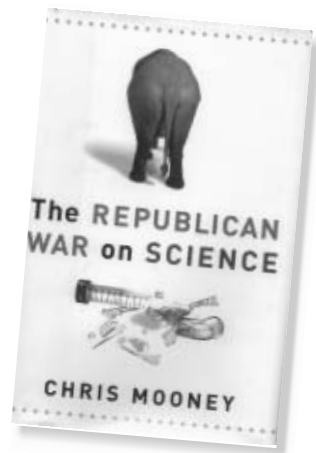
action can be taken to protect public health and the environment."

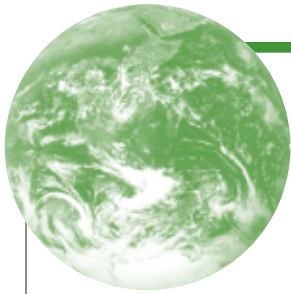
After discussing several other issues, Mooney concludes: "Ironically, the dramatic triumph of science itself has inadvertently created strong incentives for politicization and abuse. Americans have great faith in the scientific enterprise, but throw up their hands in despair and confusion when scientists appear to disagree on key issues ... Finally, all of these assaults culminate in a severe blow to science itself. By failing to respect the integrity of science, and instead repeatedly undercutting it and employing it opportunistically, the Bush administration erodes public confidence in the scientific endeavor and leaves it crippled and undermined. This fosters outright relativism about the value of science as opposed to other ways of knowing – outright 'faith,' for example."

In his final chapter, Mooney makes several recommendations, including reviving the Congressional and executive offices dealing with science policy, and strict conflict-of-interest and disclosure policies for scientific advisory committees. He believes that it is necessary to fight the Right in order to make improvements. He also calls on journalists to improve their science reporting by recognizing that the typical journalistic form of "balance" – quoting a person on each side of an issue – is neither accurate nor appropriate for reporting about science.

Mooney believes our future depends on scientific knowledge as an underpinning for public policy. He calls upon us to become engaged in this "war" on the side of science. This book gives us all the reasons we could need to join him. ❖

Elisa Campbell is Editor of the Sierran.





Sierra Club Members at COP in Montreal A Chance of a Lifetime to Promote the Importance of Global Warming

by Blossom Hoag

My husband Ethan and I were among about 20 Sierra Club members from across the United States who attended the COP 11/MOP 1 meeting of the United Nations in Montreal this past December. COP/MOP? COP stands for Conference of the Parties, and MOP the Meeting of the Parties. Both work with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change treaty. The United States is included in COP since we signed the treaty, but not included in MOP because we never ratified it. The U.S. government has been actively obstructing the effort, and continued to do so in Montreal. The Conference's goal was to negotiate a process for moving ahead. It was supposed to end on December 9 at 2:00 p.m., however, the negotiations — which had been going on around the clock for most of the session — continued until 6:00 a.m. the next morning when the U.S. finally allowed planning to begin for 2008, when the Kyoto Protocol ends.

Why was the U.S. Sierra Club there? Our sister organization, the Sierra Club of/du Canada, invited and funded us to participate in order to demonstrate that U.S. citizens and their local and state governments take global warming seriously. At the meeting we wrote letters to editors and met with official delegations and reporters.

Several of the Canadians were drafting language for the negotiations. Elizabeth May, Executive Director of the Sierra Club of Canada, gave TV interviews and constant updates to us, kept student coalitions fired up, led side events and worked behind the scenes on language for the next protocol. The current and future presidents of Sierra Club of Canada, Emilia Clark and Louise Comeau, were also there working hard behind the scenes. Our own U.S. Sierra Club President, Lisa

Bill Clinton and the U.S. Sierrans celebrate after his speech.



Renstrom, also actively participated.

The most noted speaker of the day was Bill Clinton, who had been invited to speak by Elizabeth May. He braved two snowstorms to make an appearance and deliver an absolutely moving speech. He condemned the current U.S. administration for its lack of leadership and called on all the nations of the world to work together. His appearance was a crowning accomplishment for Sierra Club of Canada and may have helped turn the tide for the U.S.

In the meantime, Seattle mayor Greg Nickels has circulated a letter that commits cities and towns to reduce carbon emissions by 20% by 2012. This groundbreaking letter has been signed by 195 mayors in 38 states. (Seven cities and towns in Massachusetts have signed on and

made the commitment; if you would like help in getting your city or town signed on, please contact the Chapter office at 617-423-5775.)

In the end, the US did not stop progress from being made (which was clearly its objective). We are sure our presence and efforts made a difference. Next year, COP12/MOP2 will be held in Nairobi — start saving your pennies to go. We must not let the current administration speak for us and continue to ignore the growing problem of global climate change. ❖

Blossom Hoag is a member of the Chapter's Executive Committee, Chapter Energy Committee and Greater Boston Group Executive Committee.

For More Reports

See the Sierra Club's website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/cop11/>

President Clinton's speech is on the Sierra Club of Canada's site: <http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/postings/clinton-speech-12-2005.html>



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Wastewater Treatment on Cape Cod: Taking Responsibility Locally

By David Dow

Water quality in the coastal bays on Cape Cod is threatened by land use activities in our watersheds. Excess nitrogen, especially from fertilizers and septic systems, has resulted in periodic fish kills, loss of eelgrass beds and collapse of the bay scallop populations. To solve this problem we need to find better methods than septic systems to treat our wastewater, and reduce fertilizer usage.

Change is not optional. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) have established limits for the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of nitrogen in water bodies. For example, DEP has proposed a target reduction of 40-70 percent for the inlets of Waquoit Bay.

The Cape Cod Commission (CCC) is in the process of revising their Regional Policy Plan; one of the changes involves making the water quality section compatible with the TMDL process. Another county proposal is to create a regional wastewater treatment cooperative to help develop a regional solution to this problem. It will be expensive: Chatham has estimated that it will cost over \$200 million for that town alone. The cooperative would provide a basis for seeking state/federal financial support or private grants to help defray some of the costs.

It is important to understand the context of these proposals. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's (MWRA) rate payers have had to pay the bulk of the costs to clean our coastal waters by building the new sewage treatment plant at Deer Island and ocean outfall which discharges into Massachusetts Bay. These rate payers in the greater Boston area pay much more for water use and wastewater treatment than the citizens of Cape Cod who rely primarily on individual septic systems to process our wastes.

It will take a big conceptual leap for those of us on Cape Cod to move



Photo courtesy of the NOAA/ Department of Commerce

towards meeting the TMDL targets and to address wastewater treatment on a holistic basis. Sierra Club members and their neighbors will have an opportunity to do the following: comment on the CCC Regional Policy Plan and DEP TMDL targets; participate in the town discussions on how to meet the TMDL targets; and join the debate on whether their town will join the regional wastewater treatment cooperative. We are drawn to Cape Cod by the environmental amenities and opportunities for outdoor recreation. Failure to act will further threaten our property values and degrade the natural resources that make this a special place from which we draw inspiration.

The Cape Cod Group plans to use the April 22 John Muir Lecture and Dessert Reception at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Falmouth (840 Sandwich Road in East Falmouth) to address the regional wastewater challenge. We have the opportunity to become better environmental stewards by acting locally and planning regionally. ❖

David Dow is the acting Chair of the Cape Cod Group.

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Sierra Club Outer Harbor Island LNG Voyage

Sunday May 21, 1-5 pm (boarding at 12:30 at Long Wharf, Boston)

The rocky cliffs of Acadia National Park, Maine? The breathtaking bluffs on Cape Bretton, Nova Scotia? This spectacular scene is found right here in Massachusetts, located on Outer Brewster Island, the crown jewel in the Boston Harbor Islands National Park System.

by John Lewis

A voyage to the rocky edge of the Atlantic Ocean is always full of interesting surprises. There are many species of birds, seals, and fish, and in the shallow waters close to the islands are thick beds of seaweed that are home to a large population of creatures. A rich diversity of life abounds within the Harbor Islands State Park, which has within its boundaries the Harbor Islands National Park. One of these islands, Outer Brewster, is the proposed site of a very large liquefied natural gas (LNG) reception and storage facility. AES, an energy company from Virginia, states in its propaganda for legislators that Outer Brewster is a barren island and, therefore, of no importance. AES proposes an LNG tanker dock that would be almost as long as the island itself and sited on its north side, fully exposed to the whims of the North Atlantic Ocean. Much dredging of submerged rocky outcrops would be required, and potential security zones could be arbitrarily extended to include Boston Light, the rest of the Brewsters and adjoining islands.

The Chapter's Greater Boston Group is sponsoring a four-hour cruise to the outer islands on May 21 to promote the need to preserve and protect these islands from development. Our comfortable, chartered vessel will make a slow circumnavigation around the outer harbor islands and we will stop — but not disembark — off of Outer Brewster to take special note of its geology, natural history, and beauty. There will be people aboard who will share their knowledge about marine animal life, park issues, energy policy, North Atlantic sea conditions and birds.

This voyage promises to be a very special opportunity to experience the wild beauty of the outer harbor islands, learn why they should not become home to an LNG reception and storage facility, and socialize! Light refreshments and a cash bar will be available on-board. Tickets are \$25 per person, payable to the Sierra Club/GBG. Sign up now using the enclosed registration form. For questions, leave a message at 617-227-8898 or email Deborah.Holt@SierraClub.Org. ❖



Photograph by Sherman Mors



Photograph courtesy of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay

SIERRA CLUB OUTER HARBOR ISLAND LNG VOYAGE REGISTRATION FORM

Sunday May 21, 2006 1-5 pm (boarding at 12:30 pm)

Tickets are \$25 per person, paid in advance

Yes, I want to attend this event and enclose a check in the amount of \$ _____

(Make check payable to Sierra Club/GBG)

Contact Name: _____

Contact tel#: _____

Contact email address: _____

No, I cannot attend this event but I would like to make a NON TAX DEDUCTIBLE contribution to the Greater Boston Group in the amount of \$ _____.

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Questions? Contact Deborah.Holt@SierraClub.Org or leave a message at 617-227-8898

Sierra-Endorsed Candidates Make Big Gains!

Longtime Sierra Activist Craig Kelley Wins City Council Seat



by Phillip Sego

The Massachusetts Sierra Club's efforts in municipal elections resulted in big wins. The Chapter endorsed candidates in municipal and town elections in Boston, Newburyport, Cambridge, Somerville and Watertown. Our most exciting victory: longtime Sierra activist Craig Kelley won a seat on the Cambridge City Council.

Craig has spent most of his life as an environmental activist. He started as a canvasser for Greenpeace. Later, at Boston College Law School, he served as Chair of the Environmental Law Society. On graduation, he earned the Susan B. Desmaris award for Public Service Achievement and Leadership for his work on environmental issues at school. Craig went on to become an environmental consultant. He has been a leader in the North Cambridge "Stabilization Committee" since 1996, and played a major part in revitalizing Sierra Club's Inner City Outings program. Over the past several years, Craig has helped raise funds to preserve the Alewife floodplain, promote environmental issues, and develop affordable housing throughout Cambridge.

At the Sierra Club, he has been an elected member of the Greater Boston Group, working on a range of issues including the urban ring and other transit issues.

Craig is a regular contributor to a variety of journals and papers, including the *Cambridge Chronicle*, the *Massachusetts Sierran*, and *The Ride* (a bicycle magazine). He has also written and published an environmental novel and co-authored a book on environmental compliance.

The Chapter's Political Committee is in the process of reviewing candidates for endorsement for the 2006 legislative election. If you're interested in helping – or if you have comments about your legislator, please contact phil@sierraclubmass.org. ❖

Phillip Sego is Chair of the Chapter's Political Committee.

www.sierraclubmass.org

for current information about
events and announcements

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Update on the Parks Protection Package

By Philip Saunders, Jr.

Massachusetts has literally thousands of wonderful parks, parkways, forests and reservations. For many they make the difference between living with nature and without; between having a congenial place to walk, jog or hike and having to dodge traffic; and between having a place for kids to play and not.

Parks Under Attack

These public lands we count upon and often take for granted are under siege. They are beset by developers and chronic underfunding of the agencies in charge, which can lead to mismanagement and not-so-benign neglect.

An example is a current proposal for development of a 40.7 acre site within the Middlesex Fells Reservation, located in Medford, Melrose and Stoneham. The development would add an estimated 8,000 daily trips on the Fells Parkways, potentially requiring loss of parkland, road widening, adding turning lanes, striping, crosswalks, tree cutting, removal of medians and signaling multiple intersections.

Parks Protection Package to the Rescue

The Parks Protection Package (PPP) addresses these problems, providing defenses for public lands. The PPP consists of three bills before the legislature:

- The Article 97 No-Net-Loss Bill (S. 539) would require that public lands acquired for natural resource purposes not be converted to other uses without demonstration of lack of a feasible alternative and replacement with equivalent land set aside for public use.
- The Old Growth Forest Bill (H. 1381) would protect old growth forests by establishing a system of permanent old growth forest reserves in state forests, parks, and reservations.
- The Parkways Bill (H. 4283) would help protect the scenic, cultural and natural resources of parkways by

mandating creation of policies to ensure effective maintenance and management of these public lands.

For more background on the PPP, go to www.sierraclubmass.org/Politics and Issues/Parks Protection Package.

At this writing (early January), the Article 97 No-Net-Loss Bill (S. 539) is in the Senate Ways & Means Committee and the other two (H. 1381 and H. 4283) are stuck in the House Ways & Means Committee. The respective Chairmen, Senator Therese Murray and Representative Robert A. DeLeo, need to hear from their constituents and fellow legislators in support of the bills.

You can:

- **Contact your state Representative and Senator** and ask them to support the PPP bills. If they tell you the bills are still in committee, ask them to write to Senator Murray or Representative DeLeo. Phone calls to legislators are good. Letters are better. Face-to-face is best.
- **Volunteer** to work on passage of the PPP. Email: phil@philipsaunders.com ❖

Phil Saunders is a Sierra Club volunteer, working with the Legislative Action Committee to get the PPP bills enacted.

To find your Representative and Senator, go to:

<http://www.wheredoivotema.com>

Make A Difference

We send out an appeal in March to each of our members, asking for contributions directly to your Chapter. You will not receive any contributions requests from national Sierra Club in this time period, as we want you to concentrate on your local Chapter.

These contributions really do make a difference to us, and are an important part of our Chapter's budget.

When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's work in your own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, and to promote the enjoyment of nature.

Please be as generous as you are able—remember, these funds directly affect your way of life in your neighborhood.

Thank You. You can mail your check to:

Sierra Club, 100 Boylston Street # 760, Boston 02116



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From the Director

(continued from page 2)

Unfortunately, the state has severely faltered in its land protection strategy. An important part of any conservation or smart growth program is acquisition of new properties. While environmentalists and government officials alike agree that development is gobbling up land across the commonwealth at an alarming rate — nearly 40 acres a day according to a Mass Audubon study — the administration appears to be at near standstill on spending to acquire new properties. Secretary of Environmental Affairs Stephen Pritchard should be commended for nearly doubling the state's spending on land protection over that of two years ago, but double a small number is still small: \$34 million compared to nearly \$70 million four years ago. Inflation, of course, makes the difference even greater.

Governor Romney's recent State of the Commonwealth address was not reassuring. He talked about creating a "\$30 million fund to reward those municipalities that are opening their doors to new housing, particularly in town and city centers." "Opening doors" could be code for "relaxed permitting" — alarming news for land protection advocates. Rewarding communities for building new housing is a laudable program, but it must be accompanied by a properly funded land acquisition strategy. Communities cannot grow wisely without also having the funds to protect the ever-dwindling open space in their cities and towns.

Creating a world-class parks system in Massachusetts is a gargantuan task requiring adequate funding commitments from both the legislature and the governor if we are to overcome the management and fiscal crisis contributing to the ongoing deterioration of the system. While we are moving forward in the planning department, we are barely holding ground with regards to protecting open space. The Governor and the legislature, working together, can and must do better. ❖

Your Support Makes the Difference!

by Mary Ann Nelson, Chapter Chair

A very special thank you to all who volunteered and made contributions to the Chapter in 2005. Your generosity allowed us to do more in 2005 to protect the environment in Massachusetts. Each year we tell you what we've accomplished and what we plan, and we ask for your support—because it really does make a difference.

Please help this year by responding to the Chapter's annual appeal and report which will be arriving soon.

Young Women's Sexual Rights

by Elisa Campbell

Last November, at Smith College in Northampton, Ann M. Moore, PhD., spoke about the "Sexual Rights of Young Women: Coercion in Brazil and Sub-Saharan Africa." Dr. Moore is with the Alan Guttmacher Institute, which for years has worked for sexual and reproductive health and rights, prevention of the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancies, and preservation of the right to terminate a pregnancy throughout the world as well as within the United States.

Using data collected from surveys and interviews, Dr. Moore showed that young women in both places are often persuaded against their will or even coerced into their first sexual experiences. For example, in Brazil, young women are supposed to "resist" but to yield eventually; if she doesn't say "no" the man may think she is "easy"; if she refuses, he may accuse her of having a lover. As one woman said of the men, "they want to be victors." There is also a taboo against women talking about sex; if a woman expresses a preference for something, or a dislike of some act, she is often accused of being a prostitute. How else would she even know about sex?

The African research was done in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Uganda and Malawi. Overall, one out of four sexually active young women said they had been "not willing at all" the first time. Some were literally coerced, while others were pressured into agreeing or made to feel guilty because they had accepted gifts or money.

Overall, Dr. Moore's research demonstrates that young women continue to be at a significant disadvantage. Public policy must deal with the different gender norms and provide effective education to help women protect themselves and defend their own rights.

Dr. Moore's presentation was co-sponsored by the Chapter's Population Program and the Smith College Project on Women and Social Change. To get involved, contact Anita King, at 413 268-9212. ❖

Elisa Campbell is acting Chair of the Pioneer Valley Group.

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Hiking for Parks

by Elisa Campbell

We continue to work to defend our state forests and parks from inappropriate use and to advocate for adequate budgets. It's not all work – it's also fun. We had a delightful hike in Lowell Dracut Tyngsboro State Forest in early January, enjoying the brilliant sunshine on the snow and the deep-blue sky as we explored the LDT Forest. We're also still collecting pictures of State Parks and Forests with short commentary on their delights and their problems for the Sierra Club website. To help with either, please contact Elisa Campbell, at ecampbell@sierraclubmass.org

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAPE COD GROUP SEEKS ★ OUTINGS LEADERS!

For more information, contact the Outings Chair at Deborah.Holt@SierraClub.org.

ADVENTURES & CLIMATE CONCERNS IN ARCTIC NUNAVIK

March 29

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Professor Henry I. Smith, EE, MIT
Stata Center, MIT, Main & Vassar
Streets, Cambridge, MA

Contact Blossom Hoag for more information at mb.hoag@verizon.net or 617-567-4749.

CLIMATE CHANGE IN MAINE: REDUCING RISKS, REDUCING COSTS AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

May 10 and 11

Hosted by Maine Global Climate Change, LLC and co-sponsored by the Sierra Club Maine Chapter and Northeast Regional Committee

The focus of the conference is to motivate more businesses, industries, other organizations and individuals to take steps to address climate change by sharing progress and commitments to reach 2010, 2020 and post 2020 reductions. Engage key sectors (transportation, construction, electric generation and transmission, forest and agricultural sequestration) to discuss needs and barriers in reducing emissions contributing to climate change and initiate a dialogue among key stakeholders (fisheries, forestry,

tourism, health, emergency management, transportation infrastructure, municipalities, insurance) on issues associated with adaptation to the potential impacts of climate change. For more information about these upcoming events email Joan Saxe at jsaxe@suscom-maine.net or call 207-865-3648.

NORTHEAST REGIONAL COMMITTEE: "COOL CITIES" TRAINING

May or June, Friday to Sunday

Blue Mountain Educational
Center, Adirondacks, New York

Space is very limited. Contact Blossom Hoag for more information at mb.hoag@verizon.net or 617-567-4749.

NATIONAL SIERRA CLUB BAXTER STATE PARK SERVICE TRIP

Late August

The trips are a wonderful way to experience the rare northeastern wilderness and to help make that experience available to future generations. We will gather on day one at the Abol Narrows Administrative Facility on Abol Pond. We will work four days between Monday and Friday and will have our day off and Saturday to explore the park and possibly climb Mount Katahdin, weather permitting.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/national/brochure/standard/06345A.asp>.

Email: johnbeirne@verizon.net



Spectacle Island Becomes a Park

by John Lewis

Saturday, June 24, Spectacle Island will be opened to the public as part of the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreational Area. The various issues, some physical and some legal*, will be resolved at least to the point where this island will be open to the public. Only a 20-minute ferry ride from Long Wharf in Boston, Spectacle Island is a beautiful area with great views and interesting walking paths where you can swim, bird-watch, and see interesting exhibits in the new visitors' center. Their telephone number is 617-223-8666.

Go!



* The Spring 2005 issue of the *Sierran* carried an article about these issues. You can find it on the Chapter's website.

John Lewis is Chair of the Greater Boston Group and has been active in the Sierra Club for more than 30 years.

Preserve the Future

Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during their lifetime, but you can preserve the environment for generations to come by remembering the Sierra Club in your will.

There are many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, please contact:

John Calaway, Director of Gift Planning
Sierra Club, 85 Second Street, 2nd Floor,
San Francisco, CA 94105 (415) 977-5639
e-mail: planned.giving@sierraclub.org



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photo: Dave Baker

Massachusetts Chapter Outings

Please contact leaders for more information and to sign up for the following outings.
Outings marked with an E are educational in addition to being recreational.

LEADER'S CHOICE BEGINNER SNOWSHOE (QUABBIN RES., MT. HOLYOKE RANGE OR MT. TOBY)

March 25

Time: 10:00 am

Contact leader Elisa at
campbell@oit.umass.edu or
413-256-4247

HIRAM FOX WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA FOREST HIKE, CHESTERFIELD (E)

April 22

Time: 10:00 am

Contact leader Elisa at
campbell@oit.umass.edu or
413-256-4247

BIRCH HILL WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA FOREST HIKE, ROYALSTON (E)

April 29

Time: 10:00 am

Contact leader Elisa at
campbell@oit.umass.edu or
413-256-4247

MIDDLESEX FELLS HIKE, WINCHESTER

May 13

Time: 10:00 am

Contact leader Corey at
coreymathews@yahoo.com or
617-417-7212

WILDFLOWER HIKE, MT. MONADNOCK, JAFFREY, NH (E)

May 14

Time: 10:00 am

Contact leader Mena at
aschmid@rcn.com or 617-388-5331

DOG TOWN HIKE, GLOUCESTER (E)

May 28

Time: 10 am

Contact leader Deborah at
Deborah.Holt@SierraClub.org or
617-227-8898

MT. GREYLOCK STATE RESERVATION HIKE, CHESHIRE

May 28

Time: 9:00 am

Contact leader Elisa at
campbell@oit.umass.edu or
413-256-4247

ESSEX COUNTY WILD EDIBLES WALK WITH RUSS COHEN HAVERHILL (E)

June 6

Time: 6 – 8:30 pm

Contact leader Heidi at
HeidiRoberts@Comcast.Net or
978-927-4157

MIDDLESEX FELLS HIKE, MELROSE (E)

June 11

Time: 10:00 am

Contact leader Deborah at
Deborah.Holt@SierraClub.org or
617-227-8898

WILD EDIBLES WALK IN THE FENS WITH RUSS COHEN, BOSTON (E)

June 22

Time: 6:00 – 8:30 pm

Contact leader Deborah at
Deborah.Holt@SierraClub.org or
617-227-8898

Spring Cleaning

by Kristine Zeigler

As winter recedes and the brave buds of spring beckon, we begin our annual cleaning rituals to rid our homes of the items that have lost their usefulness. Here are some ideas for clearing out unwanted household goods in your home while helping your Massachusetts Chapter of the Sierra Club:

- **Host a yard sale or garage sale for the environment.** Direct the proceeds to the Massachusetts Chapter. Serve tasty Sierra Club coffee for the early birds!
- **Promote waste reduction in your town and recycle your own stuff.** Your trash really is another's treasure! Post your unwanted goods on a community website such as Freecycle.org. Massachusetts has over 50 Freecycle groups. Send the group an email and leave your items on your front porch for pick-up by other members. Also a great way to find furniture, children's clothing and books. Membership is free.
- **Reduce those junk mail piles and save on the water it takes to recycle paper.** Here's how to reduce the volume of mail you receive:
 1. Register with the Direct Marketing Association's Mail Preference Service (\$5 on-line; 39 cents plus paper via mail): <http://www.dmaconsumers.org/cgi/offmailinglist#regform>
 2. Call or email customer service departments and request that they stop sending unwanted catalogs.
 3. Call and ask to be removed from the central mailing list that credit card companies draw from: 888-567-8688.
 4. Whenever you fill out a form or place an order, write "Do not rent or exchange my name."

The Chapter's Fundraising Committee meets the second Sunday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at MIT's Stata Center. For more information, email Kristine at kzeiglermass@yahoo.com ❖

Kristine Zeigler is a member of the Chapter's Fundraising Committee.

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GROUP & CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

GREATER BOSTON GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

March 14
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: Sierra Club Office

Upcoming Meetings:
April 11, May 9

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

April 9
Time: 12:30 – 4:30 PM
Place: Sierra Club Office

All members welcome and encouraged to attend. Please call the chapter office at 617-423-5775 for more information.

ISSUE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

CHAPTER POLITICAL COMMITTEE

March 8
Time: 6:30 PM
Upcoming meetings:
April 19, May 10

Sierra members who wish to work on electoral and endorsement activities are most welcome! Please contact Phillip Sego, Chapter Political Committee Chair, at phil@sierraclubmass.org for more information.

FUNDRAISING/ MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

March 12
Time: 10:00 – 12:00 PM
Place: Stata Center Cafe, MIT, Main & Vassar Streets, enter doors opposite parking lot
This committee meets the second Sunday of each month. Come with your ideas, time and energies in crafting strategies to engage current donors, recruit new members and increase revenues for the

Massachusetts Chapter. Please check the chapter website, www.sierraclubmass.org, for any changes or call the chapter office at 617-423-5775 if you have any questions.

NORTH/SOUTH RAIL LINK COMMITTEE

March 21
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: Sierra Club Office

Upcoming meeting: May 16
This committee meets to discuss and strategize progress on the Rail Link which extends the Northeast Corridor national passenger rail service from South Station to North Station, New Hampshire, Maine and beyond, as well as connecting the commuter rail system from Rhode Island to New Hampshire. All members are welcome to attend and participate. Please contact Louise Lewis, Chair, at 617-266-5890 for more information.

ARLINGTON, BELMONT AND CAMBRIDGE RESIDENTS NEEDED:

Belmont Uplands - 40B Application (Residences at Acorn Park) Belmont Zoning Board of Appeals Hearings
March 15 and April 11
Place: Homer Municipal Bldg – Art Gallery 3rd Floor

The Belmont Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) held public hearings on a Comprehensive Permit Application for the Belmont Uplands in January and February. The Town plans to hold monthly hearings throughout 2006 to allow the public to comment and to determine what additional information is needed. See the Town of Belmont's meeting calendar for dates beyond April at <http://www.town.belmont.ma.us/home>

Background

The Belmont Uplands is a 15.6 acre privately-owned parcel in the town of Belmont next to Arlington and Cambridge. It is home to a unique silver maple forest, abuts the Alewife Reservation and is vital to the Reservation's ecology. Most of the surrounding land is public, belonging to the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

All three towns have voted to oppose this project; however, since it is a Chapter 40B project for affordable housing, it is not subject to town zoning bylaws. The Sierra Club and local environmental organizations have been fighting to preserve the Uplands. You can see earlier articles in *Sierran* (Summer 2005 and Winter 2003/4) on the Chapter's website: <http://www.sierraclubmass.org/sierran/sierran.html>

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