

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

SIERRA

Volume 14 • Number 1

Spring 2008

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

THE ENVIRONMENTAL BOND

Letter from the desk of James McCaffrey, Director

The Patrick administration has filed a landmark Environmental Bond Bill which will serve as the cornerstone of the Commonwealth's long-term investment in our environment over the next five years. The \$1.4 billion bill represents an unprecedented commitment by the administration to fund environmental and conservation priorities. Included in the proposed funding is \$665 million in borrowing authority for infrastructure and parks assets. This number includes \$250 million to repair and rehabilitate bridges owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation, as well \$213 million for other spending on state parks, urban reservations, harbor islands, hiking and biking trails, swimming pools, skating rinks, and campgrounds.

The 2008 Environmental Bond Bill is the result of a long process and combined efforts of both state government and non-government organizations. Environmental Secretary Ian Bowles held multiple meetings with the environmental community throughout the early drafting stages. By reaching out to the advocacy community early and often, the administration has earned overwhelming support from the Sierra Club and more than 150 other organizations for the final language as filed by Governor Patrick.

Importantly, passing a bond bill to fund environmental protection programs does not take away from other urgent needs in the commonwealth. Instead, the bonding process is used to leverage the state's borrowing power in order to provide additional funds outside the annual state budget that funds "day-to-day" operations for state agencies. Authorization of a bond bill by the legislature essentially creates a "line of credit" that allows the executive branch to borrow money at low interest for programs specified in the bill.

About once every five to seven years, the governor and legislature seek passage of a "bond bill" to support long-term capital investments, ranging from farmland preservation to hazardous

continued on page 7

ON THE COVER: Paper Birches, from Boston's Arnold Arboretum. Photo by Erik Gehring

MASSACHUSETTS

SIERRAN

Vol. 14 No. 1 • Spring 2008

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The Massachusetts Sierran

(USPS 059-370)
is published quarterly by
Massachusetts Chapter
Sierra Club
10 Milk Street, Suite 632
Boston, MA 02108

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www.sierraclubmass.org
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The Massachusetts Sierran is published three times per year: March, June, and October.

The deadline for copy is normally eight weeks before publication. The deadline for meetings and announcements is four weeks before publication.

Please submit all copy to Elisa Campbell at editor@sierraclubmass.org. Please submit all announcements and meetings information to announce@sierraclubmass.org.

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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Cape Wind Gets Good Review

by Phil Dowds

Mineral Management Services (MMS) has released its Cape Wind Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). As of this writing in January, the chapter is proceeding with its detailed review — but if we were hard on a deadline, and had to throw a banner head at the story, it would be “*Cape Wind: No Big Problems!*” Building on the analyses of the Army Corps of Engineers and many other parties, MMS finds virtually all anticipated environmental and socioeconomic impacts to be either “negligible” or “minor.” For some coastal and marine birds, the impacts of the wind turbines are projected as “negligible to moderate” — an equivocal range that represents inconclusive data rather than any real fear of species decimation. In fact, MMS finds no major impacts of any kind. (Well, not quite: MMS predicts a turbine will provide a major visual impact if you moor your boat to one.)

That seven years of exhaustive investigation have yet to disclose a significant downside to Cape Wind will not surprise many of those following this controversy. More surprising, perhaps, is what MMS found when it evaluated a range of alternatives to the Cape Wind proposal.

Among the alternatives considered are two other placements of the turbine array (shallow water locations northeast and southwest of Nantucket), and three modifications: phased implementation, a half-size project, and putting the turbines closer together. Overall, the two alternative locations were judged to have equal, or possibly slightly more impacts, than the Cape Wind Horseshoe Shoals site. Of the three modifications considered, only the half-size version was judged to have consistently less impact than the current Cape Wind proposal.

Most interesting is that seven other water-based windfarm sites were rejected without much study due to problems of technical infeasibility. In other words, good locations for windfarms are elusive; put the windfarm “somewhere else” is easy to say, but hard to do.

The MMS document, however, is just a statement, not an approval. Other public agencies must provide permits of many kinds before Cape Wind construction can begin. In making permitting decisions they will rely in part on the findings of MMS. One consideration not yet resolved, and apparently unaddressed in the DEIS, is the amount of rent the developer

should pay for access to, and use of, federal waters. Monitoring the actual performance of the project, and mitigations of undesired impacts, remain important to establish, because a “successful” Cape Wind implementation can help open the door for more windfarms along our coasts while a “failed” Cape Wind could set us back years, if not decades.



Photo courtesy of <http://www.mms.gov/PhotoGalleryPages/WindPark2.htm>

Comments about the draft (written, and oral testimony at hearings) will be received by MMS through mid-March 2008. Those who want a close encounter with the 718-page DEIS can trace it through the MMS website at <http://www.mms.gov/>; the website also describes hearing locations and dates and how to submit comments. ❖

Philip Dowds of Cambridge was recently elected Chapter Chair for 2008.

Power Shift

by Craig Altemose

Massachusetts Power Shift (MAPS) aims to be a world-changing event, bringing 3,000 Massachusetts citizens of all ages to Boston the weekend of April 11-14 to mobilize around implementing bold and comprehensive climate solutions here in Massachusetts.

MAPS is the brainchild of a new state network of student activists, Mass Youth Climate Action (MYCA). It started in August 2007 at the Sierra Student Coalition's annual leadership gathering. Among the 45 student activists from around the country in attendance were 6 student activists from Massachusetts. After achieving climate victories at their independent institutions (Williams, Harvard, Northeastern, Wellesley, Clarke, and Tufts) these activists decided it was time to combine their forces and

reach out to other students across the state to push for meaningful change at the state level. One month later, they held a meeting at Northeastern University with students from schools across the state. At this meeting they founded MYCA, a coalition of student groups across the state that includes school branches of the Sierra Student Coalition, MassPIRG, and unaffiliated schools.

In November, these same student activists led strategy sessions for the Massachusetts break-out session at Power Shift 2007 in Washington, DC. Conference participants — including around 500 students from Massachusetts — took part in organizing workshops, listened to keynote speeches from Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Representative Edward Markey, and engaged in the largest lobby day

on climate change in US history. It was a powerful and inspiring event. The Sierra Student Coalition led dozens of workshops, had students participating in panels, contributed funding to the event (as did the Sierra Club separately), and many of the national leaders helped plan this first ever National Youth Climate Conference.

MAPS is modifying the Power Shift four-day model to apply it to Massachusetts. As opposed to Power Shift 2007's youth focus, MAPS aims to bring Massachusetts citizens of all ages together in a meaningful and influential setting. Citizens will learn relevant and important organizing tools, break-off into district/town/city strategizing sessions around Green Jobs, take part in an exciting rally, and participate in a lobby day at the state house in favor of the Global Warming Solutions Act and other important climate tasks. Very interested, but still not confirmed, keynote speakers include Massachusetts Senator John Kerry and Representative Edward Markey.

We encourage all Sierra Club members from Massachusetts and beyond to attend this very exciting summit. For it to be a true success, every passionate and committed citizen who cares about the effects of climate change needs to come and be heard, to lend their voice to the growing chorus calling for swift and meaningful action! For more information, including how to register, please check out www.goymca.org/maps. Anyone interested in contributing to the planning process for MAPS, please contact Craig Altemose at craig@ssc.org. ❖

Craig Altemose is on the Executive Committee of the Sierra Student Coalition and the lead organizer for Massachusetts Power Shift. He is also on the Steering Committee of Mass Youth Climate Action, which is a coalition of SSC, MassPIRG, and unaffiliated schools.



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The Public Lands Preservation Act: *Your Help is Needed!*

by Philip Saunders, Jr.

The Massachusetts Senate passed the Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA, S. 2388) in November. The bill has gone to the House where it died in recent legislatures. Your help is needed to make sure it doesn't die there again.

The PLPA is a priority for the Massachusetts Chapter. If enacted, the bill would cut back and maybe even eliminate the loss of parks, playgrounds, reservations, conservation land, and other natural resource land due to what has been referred to as "free-lance poaching by legislators and local officials."

Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution requires a two-thirds vote of each branch of the legislature to change the use or otherwise dispose of public land acquired for natural resource purposes. Its purpose is clear: the land was acquired for natural resource purposes and using it for something else is not a trivial matter. Nevertheless, few actions have been more trivialized. The legislature regularly passes and signs bills

which authorize use of public natural resource land for something else, typically a building site for some public or private project.

The Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA, S. 542, aka the Article 97 bill, aka the No-Net-Loss bill) would establish government policy that no public lands acquired for natural resource purposes be converted to other uses or otherwise disposed of unless analysis demonstrates no feasible alternative and replacement land of equivalent acreage and market value is provided.

Tell your state representative that you want the Public Lands

Preservation Act (S. 2388) to become law. Let him or her know by mail, email, phone, or, best of all, in person. Specifically, ask your representative to contact Speaker of the House Salvatore DiMasi and the chair of whatever committee the bill is in at the time.

As of this writing (early January) the PLPA is in the House Committee on Ways and Means. Check the Sierra Club website for current status and more information, including how to find your representative. ❖

PLPA information on the web: www.sierraclubmass.org

On the left side, click on "Politics & Issues"

In the middle of the page, click on "Public Lands Protection Act"

In the middle of the page, click on
"For more information on the bill, click here"

At top of page, click on "Public Lands Pres. Act"

Belmont Uplands: the Fight Goes On

by Ellen Mass

Advocates for preserving the Belmont Uplands are working for passage of the Environmental Bond Bill. They hope that the Bond could provide funds to purchase the Uplands.

In the meantime, Dave Brown, a noted wildlife tracker in New England, surveyed the Uplands region during the early winter snow fall. Brown searched first in the bottomland area of pools that are somewhat isolated, in a small cattail marsh and wooded shoreline of Little Pond, and to the south in a large old open field ending at Little River. He found tracks and other signs of red fox, cottontail rabbit whitetail deer, river otter, eastern coyote, gray fox, and fisher.

Brown regularly conducts wildlife assessments and tracking programs in the Quabbin region of central Massachusetts as well as locations in Northern New England. In his report, he stated, "In none of those

wildernesses is there a greater density and variety of wild mammal sign than at Alewife and its contiguous natural areas... The current update supports the conclusion presented originally in the full mammal tracking survey of 2002, that the uplands area is core wild mammal habitat for the Greater Alewife ecosystem. Any significant development in this area can be expected to have profound impact on this function... It is the opinion of this surveyor that the planned development will greatly diminish if not effectively end the function of Alewife Reservation and the surrounding ecosystem as an *urban wild*." The full report can be found on www.friendsofalewifereservation.org.

Ellen Mass is President of the Friends of Alewife Reservation.

Green Colleges

In the November/December *Sierra* (the national Sierra Club magazine), the club named 10 colleges as the “greenest” institutions of higher learning in the United States. The author, Jennifer Hattam, pointed out that colleges are often “the biggest purchasers and employers in many communities,” so they “can create demand for ecofriendly services and products.” Some can develop technical solutions to problems; all can provide an example. Plus, when people take sustainability seriously as they begin their adult lives, they are likely to continue to do so.

We were pleased to see that two of the honored universities are in Massachusetts: Tufts and Harvard. So we include more information about both here in the *Massachusetts Sierran*.

Tufts University Continues its *Green* Focus

by Elisa Campbell

The Sierra Club chose Tufts University as its ninth “cool campus.” The club also called Tufts an “OG” (original green) school because of its long-standing history of interest in environmental concerns. Tufts was the first university to have its own environmental policy. Tufts also helped originate the Talloires Declaration which is a campus sustainability declaration signed by the presidents and chancellors of more than 300 colleges and universities throughout the world. In addition, the university has signed both the Kyoto Protocol and the Climate Change Action Plan developed by the New England governors and the premiers of Canada’s eastern provinces.

To meet its goals under Kyoto and the Climate Change Action Plan, Tufts has instituted several programs. The Tufts Climate Initiative provides information through its web page about carbon offsets and related topics, and also gives students a place to sign up to have the electricity used in their residence hall room or apartment generated by wind power. The student pays \$10 per semester.

Tufts is particularly emphasizing waste reduction. Building on a recycling program that was established in 1990, Tufts Recycles works to recycle as much of the waste generated on campus as possible. At the beginning of the second semester, for example, their web page included information about what to do with an old computer for those students who might be returning to campus with a new one.

Tufts ECO (Environmental Consciousness Outreach) is an environmental group run by Tufts undergraduates. In the fall they ran a competition among dorms for reducing energy usage (called “Do It in the Dark”) and began investigating the possibility of converting campus diesel-powered vehicles to biofuels. Of course last spring they participated in the Step it Up rally.

Tufts University also has many outstanding academic and research centers that focus on environmental issues. These include: University College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts Institute of the Environment, the Global Development And Environment Institute, the Center for Environmental and Resource Policy, and the WaterSHED Center, as well as graduate programs in many fields. ❖

Harvard University: *Towards a Greener Campus*

by Spring Greeney

Harvard has made great strides towards greening its campus, both in internal operations and scholarship. The University leads among institutions of higher education in ownership of green buildings: 20 already LEED-certified (the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design green building rating system) and more planned for the future campus expansion. Further, the school encourages efficiency retrofits through its Green Loan Fund, a \$12 million interest-free loan program that boasts a return rate of greater than 25 percent. The fund is managed by the Harvard Green Campus Initiative (HGCI), an administrative body created in 2000 to help facilitate such on-campus change. The group tracks the University’s energy usage and emissions, encouraging behavior change among students, faculty, and staff through its educational and outreach programs. Their efforts are not insignificant: HGCI saved Harvard an estimated \$7 million last year alone, and the existing LEED buildings reduce University emissions by 90 million pounds of CO₂ annually.

Harvard also encourages interdisciplinary collaboration and research on environmental issues, an effort spearheaded by the University Center for the Environment (HUCE). Home to the undergraduate “Environmental Science and Public Policy” major, HUCE funds student and faculty research as well as a generous fellows program. The Center plays frequent host to lecturers from a variety of perspectives, including such notable figures as environmental historian William Cronon, Saudi Aramco CEO Abdallah S. Jum’ah, and climatologist John P. Holdren.

This move towards campus sustainability is very much a collective endeavor, as demonstrated by the number of people participating without “environment” in their job title. Harvard Custodial Services, for example, has recently switched to green cleaning products; the undergraduate library offers a discount to students printing double-sided; and Harvard’s Trash and Recycling Services not only recycled greater than half of campus refuse in October 2007 but also boasts a service truck refitted to run on kitchen grease. The vehicle fills up on the remains from French fries and popcorn chicken behind iconic Annenberg, an undergraduate dining hall. And the

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Greener Harvard

(continued from page 6)

students eating these French fries also play an active role, voting in 2005 for an opt-out renewable energy term bill fee and passing a campus resolution in 2006 that called on Harvard College to cut its carbon emissions by 30 percent.

Through innovation, scholarship, experimentation, and participation, Harvard has committed itself to reducing its environmental footprint and finding ways for others to do the same. That the University's efforts have not gone unnoticed will hopefully spur greater change in the coming years. ❖

Spring Greeney is a Sierra Club member and a sophomore at Harvard College.

From the Director (continued from page 2)

ous waste site cleanup. Certain daily operations, like hiring staff and running parks facilities, must still be paid for through the regular budget process. But without a bond bill, many environmental programs would face major cuts that affect our communities, our economy, and the quality of our lives. Bonding is an integral part of adequately funded state government programs, as evidenced by the fact that the last environmental bond bill (passed in 2002) has nearly exhausted the \$750 million it was authorized to spend.

All is not perfect in the bonding process this year. A transportation bond bill has also been filed, which contains dangerous language that could undermine protection of our historic parkways system throughout the commonwealth. On the other hand, the environmental agencies submitted acceptable parkways language in its bond bill. The Sierra Club is part of a coalition of groups working hard to ensure that language in the transportation bond bill mirrors the parkways protections present in

the environmental bond. Legislative Parks Caucus Chair Mike Rush has also circulated a sign-on letter to the legislature asking his colleagues to do the same. As we go to press, Transportation Secretary Cohen has agreed to support the language proposed by the environmentalists.

There is something for everyone in the 2008 environmental bond bill, including land acquisition, agricultural preservation, monitoring and cleanup of solid waste and hazardous sites, clean air and water programs, and major funding to address the needs of our state forests and parks system. Your community, the environment, and quality of life for all will benefit from its passage. By nearly doubling the amount of the 2002 bond, this bill indicates the administration supports a significant investment in protecting the commonwealth's natural environment.

The environmental bond bill could use your support too. Please reach out to your legislators today and ask that they do everything they can to support passage of a strong environmental bond bill. ❖

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Maple Syrup Month.



The Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Action Plan: *Acting at the National Level*

by David Dow

Sierra Club members have the opportunity to work on issues at a regional and national level. In March 2007 I joined the Sierra Club's Environmental Quality Strategy Team (EQST) which oversees the activities of eight national committees, including the Gulf Restoration Network and the Water Committee. In November 2007 the EQST met in New Orleans with representatives from our national committees and the Delta Chapter (Louisiana) to view first hand the recovery from Hurricane Katrina and to support these activities where possible.

Dr. Nancy Rabalias, Director of the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON), gave us a presentation on the Gulf of Mexico "dead zone." This area of low dissolved oxygen in the bottom waters of the northern Gulf is caused by nutrients carried by the Mississippi River. These nutrients stimulate massive phytoplankton blooms in the spring in the river plume; those blooms then die and fall into the bottom waters where bacterial decay uses up the oxygen. The absence of dissolved oxygen then kills organisms on the bottom and displaces the mobile organisms outside of this zone. The "dead zone," which can be as large as Massachusetts, can persist through the summer.

The Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Action Plan is a voluntary program developed by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce the size of the "dead zone" to 5,000 square kilometers (the size of Rhode Island) by 2015. The plan is to reach this goal by reducing the nutrient load from the Mississippi River watershed by 30 percent.

The EPA appointed a scientific Nutrient Task Force (NTF) to evaluate the Hypoxia Action Plan. Since this year's "dead zone" was four times the 2015 target level, in spite

of a 20 percent reduction in nutrient loading from the watershed, the NTF concluded that the 2015 target date was unlikely to be met and that the nutrient load needed to be reduced by 35-45 percent rather than just 30 percent.

The Sierra Club's EQST asked me to draft comments on the NTF report's conclusions and offer some alternative approaches. Our alternative implementation plan features "sticks," such as regulatory Total Maximum Daily Load requirements for dissolved nitrogen and phosphorus in the water, and "carrots," such as incentives to reduce nutrient loading from agricultural and urban land uses within the watershed. The Gulf Restoration Network posted comments on their website for citizens to use as models for their own comments, while the Water and Marine Committees added components to their 2008 work plans to address the "dead zone" issue. The reduction in

nutrient loading from the Mississippi River watershed should diminish the size of the "dead zone" and eventually lead to its elimination.

A bill was recently introduced in the US Senate to re-establish the Mississippi River Basin Executive Board — a group coordinating tribes as well as federal and state agencies — and the EPA's Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Program Office with the charge of developing an implementation plan to reduce the size of the "dead zone." The Clean Water Network is holding a workshop in Memphis in February 2008 to organize the NGO (non-governmental organizations) community to work on this problem. Hopefully the Sierra Club will be a key player in this endeavor. ❖

David Dow is a member of the Sierra Club's national Environmental Quality Strategy Team and is active in the Cape Cod and Islands Group in Massachusetts.



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Greater Boston 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. In this issue of the *Sierran*, you will find candidates' statements and ballots (on page 10) for the Greater Boston Group. Massachusetts Sierra Club members who are members of the Greater Boston Group may vote for the Executive Committee. 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 02118**. Ballots must be received by 5:00 PM, Tuesday, April 1, 2008 in order to be counted.

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.

Candidate Statements *(Ballots are on page 10)*

CINDY DELPAPA I am currently serving on the GBG and would be pleased to continue with another term. Urban issues are complex and I think the Sierra Club, through the GBG, can be and should be a voice for measured and holistic approaches to addressing the many challenges facing the greater Boston area. I am particularly interested in 'smart' growth, water, and non point source pollution.

ERIK GEHRING I am a writer and photographer who lives in Roslindale with my wife Julie and dog, Anna. I have been a devoted environmental activist since 2001. I joined the Sierra Club in 2002, and became active in the Energy Committee, given my strong support for renewable energy in general and the Cape Wind project in particular. Climate change is by far the biggest threat we face. Every action that we take needs to be evaluated through this lens — will it reduce our greenhouse gas emissions?

CHRIS HALLGREN I've been a Sierra Club member for over 10 years and would call myself an active member for the past six years. I served on the Greater Boston Group's Executive Committee since 2004. I'm an outdoor enthusiast who enjoys hiking, biking and skiing. But it is my interest in issues related to energy, transportation and sustainable consumer practices that leads me to the Sierra Club. In the future I hope to spend time working with GBG Executive Committee to generate campaigns that will inspire other members to get more involved and take action on the issues that they find important.

GIL WOOLLEY I have been continuously active in the Sierra Club since 1973 at Group and Chapter levels and on National committees mostly on Transportation and Toxics issues. I think that the Group should again become actively involved in environmental issues in the Greater Boston region, specifically in advocating for more and better public transportation, the environmental injustice in siting hazardous and polluting facilities in low income

areas, and the taking of park and conservation land for other purposes.

JOHN DEACON As Transportation Chair for the Group, I have concentrated on the creation of a modern regional passenger rail network, by means of the North/South Rail Link through Boston. If elected, I will continue to work with the GBG in support of the Rail Link and other environmentally and economically sustainable alternatives to automobiles.

I support the Club's efforts to maintain a sustainable Commonwealth, including deferred park maintenance, loss of open and wild spaces, loss of farmland, and threats to established park and conservation lands from projects such as the proposed siting of an LNG facility on Outer Brewster Island.

MARY ANN NELSON No statement received.

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BALLOT

Massachusetts Chapter Executive Committee Election

Vote for no more than five candidates.

- | | |
|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> John Deacon | <input type="checkbox"/> Cindy Delpapa |

BALLOT

Massachusetts Chapter Executive Committee Election

Vote for no more than five candidates.

- | | |
|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> John Deacon | <input type="checkbox"/> Cindy Delpapa |

Chair's Column

by David Heimann

As I write this, it is just after New Year's and we are settling in to our new office space at 10 Milk Street, right next to the Old State House. By the time you read this, we'll be well settled in and the weather will be getting warmer. So by all means come by and visit, see the facilities, and chat with staff and volunteers. After all, as a member, this is your place as well!

We send out our annual Chapter appeal for funds in March; you may have already received it or will receive it shortly. While you likely receive a number of solicitations from the national Sierra Club, this is the one and only appeal you will receive from the Massachusetts Chapter itself. I urge you to respond generously to it. With available funds declining in environmental organizations including the Sierra Club, your help to the Chapter becomes even more important.

If this is March, can spring be far behind? While I enjoy all seasons, spring is the time of rebirth, a wonderful time to explore the environment we campaign so hard to preserve and protect. Enjoy the mountains (acid rain, wind power, public lands) and the seashore (wind power, LNG facilities, shoreline access, beach erosion). Take a whale watching cruise (Right Whale). Take a walk through Boston, Salem, Lowell, Worcester, Springfield, and our other wonderful cities (sprawl, public transportation, environmental justice, Cool Cities). Even more so, enjoy the world as the weather gets warmer (global warming)!

Most of all, become involved in the Chapter; it's your chapter after all. In most national environmental organizations your dues finance a professional staff to run the group and do all the work. However, the Sierra Club, in addition to employing conservation/lobbying staff, also draws considerable strength from volunteers like you and me who not only help set the agenda but also run much of the organization too. Take a look at our web site, www.sierraclubmass.org; click on "Volunteer"; see the list of

activities you can help with (or come up with your own), and either send in the online form or call the office at 617-423-5775. We'll get back to you quickly!

I hope the year is going well for you, and that it is going well for our one and only planet. Have a wonderful spring! ❖



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We Rally for Energy and Environmental Justice

by Robert Murphy

Energy prices keep rising. Nations struggle to control fossil fuel supplies. Scientists are worried about a long list of environmental problems, including global warming.

On January 1st, the Sierra Club's Cape Cod and Islands Group (CCIG) joined with others to bring a variety of energy issues forward in 2008. A bagpiper led a holiday parade through the village of Woods Hole on Cape Cod. It was a colorful procession with dancers, musicians, and street entertainers.

Woods Hole is both a scientific center and a center for government agencies. The New Year's Day activities have become an unusual combination of politics, spirituality, entertainment, and education. The theme for the day was "Energy, Peace, Justice."

Speakers at the rally included David Heimann, the chairman of the Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter; Philip Dowds, the chairman of the Chapter's energy committee; and David Dow, who has long been one of the Sierra Club leaders on the coast of Massachusetts. The event was co-sponsored by the CCIG, the Barnstable County Human Rights Commission, the Cape Cod Council of Churches, and other organizations that are helping to shape the environmental justice agenda in the communities that they represent.

New Year's Day gatherings in Woods Hole have become a tradition for both the Sierra Club and for residents of Cape Cod and the nearby islands since the Sierra Club held the first of its January "Toast to The Coast" events in 2001. Community people gathered at the ocean's edge to make their New Year's Day resolutions to help protect each other and



The Toast to the Coast Holiday Parade

Photo by Phil Dowds

the coastal environment. Since then, the January events have become a bit larger each year; over a hundred people were present for this year's activities.

Brenda Swain, director of the Falmouth Service Center, was the principal speaker for the "Energy, Peace, Justice" program. The Falmouth Service Center is a human services center that provides low-income families with assistance in obtaining fuel assistance, food stamps, and other essentials. As energy prices rise, many families find it increasingly difficult to pay for transportation and for heating and lighting their homes.

The Sierra Club's CCIG works with the Falmouth Service Center and other agencies to help educate low-income people about fuel assistance and home energy conservation. Starting in September, basic information is distributed through food pantries, health centers, senior centers, and community dinners. In recent months, over 2,000 energy brochures have been distributed. Several Sierra

Club members have volunteered to help the clients for whom applying for fuel assistance, home energy conservation, and food pantry aid is a challenge.

The energy message presented by the CCIG is very simple: In today's world, some families use enormous quantities of gasoline and fuel oil while others live in poverty. The poor have a right to a better life, but all nations must control their fossil fuel consumption or the whole planet will suffer. To solve problems like global warming, it will be necessary to create a more equitable, more sustainable world that can balance human rights concerns with environmental protection needs. Community groups can set a good example. When it comes to energy issues, let it be said, "If we want environmental peace, we'll need to work for environmental justice." ❖

Bob Murphy is an environmental justice advocate and serves on the Executive Committee of the Cape Cod and Islands Group.

BOOK REVIEW:

Fight Global Warming Now: *The Handbook for Taking Action in Your Community*

by Bill McKibben

2007

Holt Paperbacks

224 pages

\$13.00

by Katherine Walsh

A social movement begins with acknowledgment of a particular problem. It builds momentum through raised awareness, and if successful, helps plant the seeds of change. When it comes to global warming, one of the most important and critical issues facing us today, the time to act is now. That is the message behind Bill McKibben's newest book: *Fight Global Warming Now: The Handbook for Taking Action in Your Community*.

McKibben, who has been instrumental in raising public awareness about the dangers of global warming through previous works like *The End of Nature* and *Deep Economy*, did not write *Fight Global Warming Now* to further discuss the science behind global warming. Assuming that climate change has been widely accepted as fact, he writes about what we can do to fight it, before its effects become completely irreversible. While the book does provide some facts about global warming, it's more about what needs to change in order to save the climate and about practical ways to organize your neighbors and community to spur a movement.

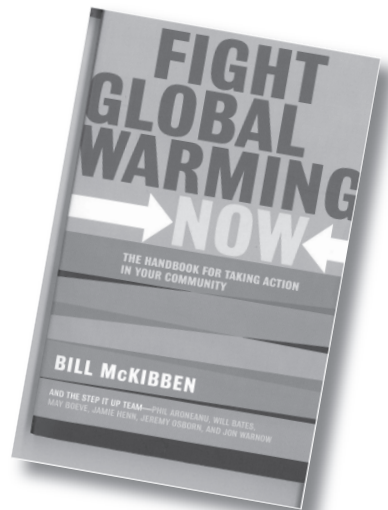
McKibben draws on the experiences of the Step It Up team, which organized an April 14, 2007 rally held by 14,000 organizers in all 50 states to demand that Congress cut carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050. His book presents a new kind of activism, one that proves anyone has the ability to organize, lead, and foster change. The text serves simultaneously as a social action guide and an activists'

diary: *Fight Global Warming Now* outlines eight organizing principals that the Step It Up team developed during its own campaigning efforts, which serve as a framework for building a global movement:

- Make it credible (know enough about the subject to make a convincing argument but don't be intimidated if you're not an expert).
- Make it snappy (it's easier to organize ad hoc because of the Internet and harder to get people to come to meetings, so they emphasize the benefits of short-term campaigning).

the time to act is now

- Make it collaborative (reach out to diverse groups of people, which is important when it comes to something as encompassing as global warming).
- Make it meaningful (everyone is affected by global warming, so talk about issues related to caring for future generations and economic opportunities).
- Make it creative (think about fresh, eye-popping ways to get your message across).
- Make it wired (social networking sites, YouTube and the blogosphere are critical tools for building momentum behind the actions that can help with global warming).
- Make it seductive to the media (learn how reporters and editors



think and get them to pay attention).

- Make it last (working together now builds long term bonds for the future).

Fight Global Warming Now is a quick, easy read. The eight principals are broken into sub sections with pointers for each, from organizing a campaign effort in your local community, to garnering media attention, to harnessing the power of the Internet. Such a structure makes it perfect for quick reference when you begin your own campaign. It's also extremely persuasive. McKibben and the Step It Up team leave you with a desire to get up and get going. *Fight Global Warming Now* outlines areas of focus for making your voice heard, getting people to take you seriously and putting all of the above into action. Resource pages at the end of the book include advice on where to find books, documentaries and research papers for background on global warming and other resources for activism.

In the end, you are left not only feeling like you want to act, but knowing that you have the ability to do it. *Fight Global Warming Now* strips away the feeling of paralysis that results from being overwhelmed. McKibben's book makes activism seem like an imminent possibility, not just a dream for a day when you have the time. Instead, *Fight Global Warming Now* equips you with the tools you need to get started and the confidence that change is possible. ❖

Kate Walsh is a volunteer author for the *Sierran*.

Invest in Your Values: Be a "Green" Investor

by Cheryl L. MacKay

Imagine your savings and investments creating a better world through promoting economic parity and nurturing a clean environment. You can change from investing in institutions and businesses that pollute or harm the environment and redirect your savings into companies with products and services that are leading the way to a greener future. You can consider not only the environmental factors, but also economic, social, and governance concerns.

The Social Investments Forum (SIF) is the only national membership organization dedicated to the concept, practice, and growth of socially and environmentally responsible investing (www.socialinvest.org). According to the SIF, Socially Responsible Investing in 2005 encompassed an estimated \$2.3 trillion out of \$24.4 trillion (9.4 percent) in the US investment market place. That is a dramatic increase from the \$639 billion in 1995. The dollar value on investments is derived from the SIF criteria for environmental performance, employee treatment and product safety.

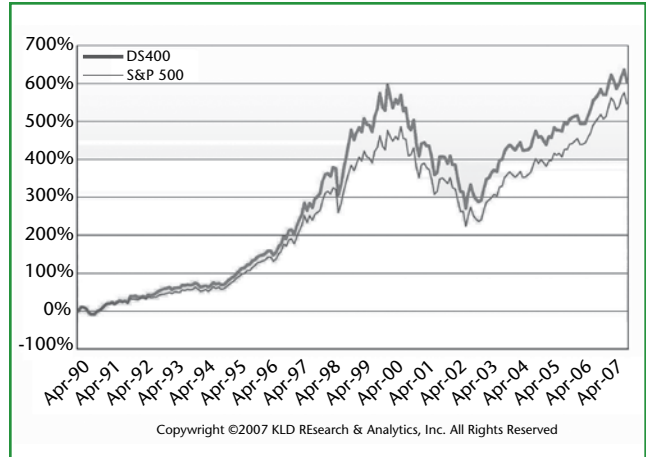
Many individuals may like the idea, but at the same time be hesitant to act on the proposal because they fear lack of return on the investment. Fortunately, investing with socially responsible emphasis does not mean returns are less important. It is now easier to assess performance of socially responsible investing with the broad benchmarks available. Those bench-

marks include the KLD Domini 400 Social Index (DS400) (established in 1990) and the Calvert Social Index (started in 2000). The DS 400 companies have passed multiple social screens and consist of 250 from the Standard and Poor (S&P) 500 Index, plus

150 other firms meeting the industry representation and determined to have strong socially responsible characteristics. The Calvert Social Index contains about 1,000 large companies that have met the criteria for product safety, environmental sensitivity, workplace issues, and human rights. As shown in the chart, being a "green" investor doesn't always mean that you forfeit your returns.

In addition to being able to measure the performance of socially responsible investing, the quantity of available, socially screened mutual funds has significantly increased. In 1995, there were only 55 funds available with \$12 billion in assets; in 2005 201 screened funds existed with \$179 billion in assets.

While a properly diversified portfolio of assets should still be the primary



concern for investors, supporting your social criteria in your investment strategy can be achieved without difficulty. The idea of "green" investing continues to grow today as a great way to reflect your values within your savings. ❖

Cheryl MacKay is a Financial Advisor for Merrill Lynch out of their Boston Office (cheryl_mackay@ml.com, 617-946-4326). One of her specialties is "green" friendly investing.

A "GREEN LIVING" tip from the Sierra Club's website:

If each U.S. household installed one low-flow sink faucet or aerator, it would save more than 60 billion gallons of water annually. epa.gov/watersense



For more tips, see

<http://sierraclub.typepad.com/greenlife/2007/06/what-to-watch.html>

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Asian Long Horned Beetle

One of the threats to our forests comes from people moving firewood from one region to another. Why? Because many non-native insects and diseases can be in that firewood, and survive the trip. According to Faith Campbell of The Nature Conservancy, the emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle, gypsy moth, beech bark disease, and the sudden oak death pathogen can survive in firewood. The *Sirex* woodwasp is likely to be transported in pine firewood. All of these pests are dangerous to our woodlands.

The solution to this problem is simple: don't take firewood with you to campgrounds or second homes more than a few miles from your home. Buy local! ❖



Emerald Ash Borer

Photos from Department of Conservation and Recreation

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NON-SIERRA CLUB EVENTS

CHANGING NATURE:

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM

January 12 – March 30

Talk by the Artist: Wednesday, March 12, 6 – 7:30 PM

Hunnewell Building, Arnold Arboretum

125 The Arborway, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Join Massachusetts Sierra Club Executive Committee member Erik Gehring as he presents unique images of the Arnold Arboretum's "Changing Nature." This event is free. For more info visit www.erikgehring.com

MASSACHUSETTS POWER SHIFT

April 11 – 14

Boston University

See the article elsewhere in this *Sierran*.

Massachusetts Power Shift (MAPS) will focus on securing the passage of the Global Warming Solutions Act and on empowering citizens to return to their communities and advocate for local Green-Collar Jobs. Registration fees can be waived for people in the Boston area who are willing to put up out-of-towners in their houses for free. If you are interested in helping to plan/recruit this event or for more information, please contact the lead organizer of MAPS, Craig Altemose, at craig@ssc.org. (SSC is the Sierra Student Coalition.)

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Massachusetts Chapter Outings

BEGINNER SNOWSHOE OR HIKE

March 8

Time: 10:00 AM

A beginner snowshoe exploration of either the Quabbin, the Mt Holyoke Range or Mt toby, depending on conditions. Dress for the weather with layers so you can remove them as you get warm and put them back on as you cool down. Wear good boots; bring snowshoes, lunch and water. Lack of snow turns it into a hike; rain or ice instead of snow cancels. Sorry, no dogs. Contact Elisa at 413-256-4247 or campbell@oit.umass.edu

QUABBIN FORESTRY

April 12

Time: 9:30 AM

We'll explore the forest on the western side of the Quabbin Reservation with the Chief Forester. A chance to see this special place and ask questions about the forest and the forestry there. Some of the hike will be off-trail, so be prepared with good boots and to fend off bugs and ticks. Sorry: no dogs. Contact Elisa at 413-256-4247 or campbell@oit.umass.edu

WILDFLOWERS ON MT HOLYOKE

May 10

Time: 9:00 AM

Explore the slopes of Mt. Holyoke and enjoy the spring wildflowers with Karen Searcy, who has studied them for years. Sorry, no dogs. Contact Elisa at 413-256-4247 or campbell@oit.umass.edu

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

GROUP & CHAPTER MEETINGS

All meetings are at the Massachusetts Chapter Sierra Club Office, 10 Milk Street, Boston, unless otherwise noted. Committees are Chapter committees unless otherwise noted.

CHAPTER TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE AND NORTH/SOUTH RAIL LINK SUB-COMMITTEE

April 24

Time: 7:00 PM

Upcoming Meetings: June 19, October 16, December 18

The highways that are built to sustain our sprawling suburbs add to our pollution and energy problems, and increase our dependence on an auto-centric way of life which is unhealthy, anti-social, and unsustainable. The Big Dig has drained fiscal support away from maintaining the deteriorating highways that we already have and from expanding our public transit infrastructure, beyond a few ill-conceived projects like the "Silver Line" bus and the "Urban Ring" busway. Join us and help the Sierra Club encourage public transit and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly neighborhoods. Contact John Kyper, Transportation Committee 617-445-8662, jkyper@sierraclubmass.org

BOSTON INNER CITY OUTINGS

Regular meeting schedule is the 3rd or 4th Tuesday of every other month, check web calendar.

Boston ICO is a community outreach program that provides opportunities for urban youth and adults to explore, enjoy and protect the natural world. We are looking for leaders! We lead monthly, day and overnight trips in Massachusetts and neighboring states including canoeing, hiking, snowshoeing, biking, apple picking and camping. We will be planning spring and summer trips and will hear updates from our leaders. For more information: www.sierraclubmass.org/ico/icosite/index.html

GREATER BOSTON GROUP EXCOM

March 11

Time: 6:30 PM

Future Meetings: April 8

Address correspondence to the attention of the Greater Boston Group at gbg2007@sierraclubmass.org

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