

TheMackinac

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE SIERRA CLUB'S MICHIGAN CHAPTER • WINTER 2008

Sierra Club Leads the Fight to Stop Animal Factory Pollution

CELEBRATES RECENT MDEQ
ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

by Anne Woiwode, Chapter Director

For nine years, Sierra Club has fought to reverse Michigan's worst-in-the-nation environmental and public health policies on concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). The Michigan Chapter has led the way in creating techniques for tracking CAFO pollution, aiding law enforcement efforts, and advocating for essential policy changes. Despite ongoing barriers, which include cuts to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's (MDEQ) enforcement budget and need for greater legal authority, recent victories give hope that CAFOs will soon be required to meet the same environmental and health standards of other polluting industries.

IT'S A BIRD: When Lynn Henning first saw the aerial photographs taken by a Lighthawk volunteer pilot and photographer, she knew things were going to change. Sierra Club's CAFO Water Sentinel had already taught herself to use satellite photos, drain maps, plat books and her farming background to find evidence of water pollution from the CAFOs she monitored. But Lighthawk's photos allowed her to pinpoint illegal activities and show MDEQ exactly where a water quality violation was occurring and why. Lynn has identified hundreds of violations from these photos, located dozens of previously hidden CAFOs, and trained



RYTA JACK

Sierra Club advocates for cleaner, more sustainable livestock practices in Michigan that reduce ground and surface-water pollution, grow rural economies, and cut health risks to farm families and animals.

citizens and regulators in several states to do the same.

SHUT 'EM DOWN: On November 9th, two massive hog barns in rural Mornci will be empty, ending a four-year saga of unspeakable air pollution for three families. State Line Farms built its 4,000 hog operation between two homes and across the street from a farmhouse, drawing the first air pollution complaints within months. MDEQ cited the CAFO with air quality violations six times since 2005, but no remedial steps worked. Under a recent MDEQ consent order, State Line must shut down for at least a year, and can only reopen if they obtain what would be the first air pollution permit for a CAFO in Michigan.

JUST SAY "NO!": In St. Joseph County this fall, local leaders successfully argued that a water quality permit for the proposed Bustdorf Dairy CAFO should be denied because the harm caused to the community by the facility's pollution would not be offset by the possible benefits. The Bustdorf CAFO permit was the first ever denied by the MDEQ. The agency based its decision on compelling documentation of negative economic and social impacts, and their growing experience with these facilities.

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Factories, Stopping
the Michigan Coal
Rush, Chapter
Elections, and More



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THE MACKINAC

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TheMackinac

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86.5% of Sierra Club Endorsed Candidates Win Elections



RIITA JACK

In the Spotlight

Sierra Club Staff Tackle Tough Issues, Work with State Agencies for Progress

by Jean Gramlich, Michigan Chapter Chair

I am so proud of the expertise and accomplishments of our staff on conservation issues.

Our years of work fighting animal factory pollution are finally paying off. Gayle Miller has tirelessly lobbied the legislature on many conservation issues, including CAFOs. Lynn Henning has risked her safety doing water testing near CAFOs to prove to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) that runoff from the farms does, indeed, pollute the nearby streams. Because of the work of amazing, dedicated volunteers, we now have thousands of aerial photographs showing illegal sewage lagoons and even locations of CAFOs that we and the MDEQ didn't even know existed. Lynn's expertise in interpreting the photos and about animal factories in general has grown enormously over the past few years, and she is now regularly sharing her knowledge with concerned citizens all around the Great Lakes area. Because the MDEQ has been dealing with severe budget cuts over the years, Lynn's information has been invaluable to the department. The MDEQ has denied a permit for one



JOHN KLEIN

Aerial photos like this help Sierra Club stop animal factory pollution. With them, we can identify poor siting choices, hidden CAFOs, illegal sewage pits, illicit pipes draining into public waters, risky dead animal management, and improper waste application to crops and fields.

CAFO and cited dozens of violations at CAFOs throughout the state with help from these techniques.

In another instance of Sierra Club working with the state to protect our environment in an era of budget cuts, Marvin Roberson built alliances with anglers and other outdoor groups to influence the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' (MDNR) decisions on proposed oil and gas drilling sites on state land. Marvin carefully mapped the areas in question and noted where nearby streams could be polluted. MDNR accepted Marvin's input and many streams were saved.

WHAT CITIZENS CAN DO ABOUT CAFOS

by Rita Jack, Clean Water Program Director

If you've been reading this publication a while, you know we've been working a long time to stop CAFO pollution. CAFOs are concentrated animal feeding operations, or animal factories. How can you help? Here are some ideas:

- Change how you choose your food. Michigan has some of the most diverse agriculture in the country, plus many farmers markets, food co-ops, and farms who will sell directly to you. Buying your food from them helps small family farms that must compete with CAFOs. You can also choose
- restaurants that don't serve CAFO-produced food. Find all these places at www.eatwell-guide.org or at www.localharvest.org, just enter your zip code.
- Start or join a LocalVores group, or follow the 100 Mile Diet (100milediet.org). Eating locally also helps reduce your carbon footprint.
- Volunteer to test water downstream from CAFOs—we'll teach you how. CAFO Water Sentinel Lynn Henning has been testing water for 9 years, and it's the most powerful tool we have. Email lynn.henning@sierraclub.org or call 517-605-7740 to learn more or get involved.
- Talk to your lawmakers about the problems caused by animal factories, including water and air pollution and threats to public health. Some of our most important work over the next year will be to push for tighter CAFO regulation in the legislature.
- Donate money to help support Sierra Club's efforts to stop animal factory pollution.
- Watch the Sierra Club website for more tools and resources for CAFO activists, coming soon!

In the Spotlight

Nine Reasons Why Animal Factories Are Big Trouble, and Why Sierra Club is Fighting For Cleaner Alternatives

By Lynn Henning, CAFO Water Sentinel

1 CAFOs damage the environment. Animal factories produce and spread over 2 million tons of untreated manure on Michigan land every year, which is 25 times more concentrated than human waste (which is required to be treated). These animal wastes are believed to be a significant contributor to the Saginaw Bay beach muck and the dead zone in Lake Erie.

2 CAFOs cause water pollution. Animal factory pollutants can reach groundwater and surface water from manure spills, leaking lagoons, illicit field tile connections, over application of waste to farmland, runoff after precipitation, and more. This sewage can contain antibiotic-resistant bacteria, hormones, cleaning agents, milkhouse wastes, ammonia and heavy metals. It can lead to harmful algae blooms, fish kills, closed beaches due to high *E. coli* levels, and contaminated drinking water.

3 CAFOs cause air pollution. Over 168 gases are released from CAFO waste, including hazardous chemicals like ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, and methane, as well as greenhouse gasses. Air borne particulate matter found near CAFOs can carry disease-causing bacteria, fungus or other pathogens. These emissions can come from confinement buildings, waste storage lagoons, and concentrated animal sewage spread on farm fields.

4 CAFOs threaten human health. The American Public Health Association and the Michigan Medical Society have called for a moratorium on CAFOs because of their public health impacts. Exposure to even low levels of

hydrogen sulfide (found in animal waste) can cause coughs, eye and nasal irritations, and headaches, more prolonged exposure leads to nausea, dizziness, and blistering of the lips. Increased nitrates in the water can cause blue baby syndrome.

5 CAFOs destroy local communities. When a CAFO moves into an area, property values drop, the local economy slows, citizens move away, and the rural character of the community is damaged. An animal factory also hurts local taxpayers and government by its increased traffic of heavy machinery and subsequent road and bridge damage, the maintenance of which is paid for by the community.

6 CAFOs waste water. Animal factories use enormous amounts of clean, fresh groundwater and turn it into polluted waste. A 1,000 head dairy CAFO can use water in excess of 150,000 gallons daily—not counting water to keep cows cool, separating systems, washing of equipment, or irrigation to crops.

7 CAFOs can cause antibiotic resistance. Animals housed in CAFOs are more stressed and prone to illness, which leads to an increased blanket use of antibiotics in these facilities' food and watering systems. 70% of the antibiotics used in the U.S. are fed to animals, and bacteria not killed by the antibiotics become stronger. These resistant bacteria can spread to humans and other animals when CAFO waste is applied to the land or contaminates groundwater and surface water. In turn, medicines can become less effective against harmful bacteria and lead to serious human health threats.



RYTA JACK

Hogs raised outside of animal factories are less stressed and require fewer antibiotics to stay healthy. Pasture-raised animals also produce less air and water pollution than those raised in CAFOs.

8 CAFOs are not sustainable. Animal factories would not exist without the huge government subsidies that you pay for through your taxes. These handouts enable CAFOs to sell their product at unrealistic low prices, which drives smaller family farmers out of business. And the bigger (and more polluting) the operation, the more money they get. CAFOs receive public subsidies from universities, development right easements (tax credits), bonds, economic development grants, and methane digester grants.

9 CAFOs use excessive amounts of fossil fuels and electricity. Motors, pumps, irrigators and fuel needed to run the facility release enormous amounts of carbon dioxide, sulfur oxide, nitrous oxide, particulate matter and more into the air. These pollutants can impair human health, add to global warming, and increase acid rain in the ecosystem.

Animal Factories Cause Human Health Problems

by Kathy Melmoth, Registered Nurse and CAFO Activist

For the last seven years, the number of reported health problems from breathing air contaminated by nearby concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) and farm fields spread with liquid manure has increased each year. Yet CAFOs and their manure pits have increased in size and number in Lenawee and Hillsdale counties, where I live and work.

After exposure to CAFO emissions, men and women report wheezing, difficulty breathing, need for oxygen, and the onset of asthma requiring medical supervision and prescription drugs. Other frequent complaints include: severe and chronic headaches, nausea, loss of appetite, dizziness, burning eyes, bronchitis, laryngitis, sore throat, sinusitis, and excessive fatigue.

One mother said she had to keep her 16 year old daughter inside the house after she developed severe allergies that started at the same time a hog facility 800 feet from her house expanded its operation. Her daughter had “constant asthma” from April to October from breathing the emissions. And she went from over-the-counter medication to needing prescription drugs to control her symptoms.

People living near CAFOs also express a lot of anger and feelings of depression. Some report feeling “devastated” and “betrayed.” One woman at a recent CAFO permit hearing exhibited symptoms of panic, and described herself as “desperate” after she and her family could not get away from the stench of liquid manure. They do not live near a CAFO, but when truck



BRITA JACK

Sierra Club’s volunteer water monitors test water and air quality near animal factories to determine if pollution levels violate laws and put nearby families’ health at risk. The data is used by state officials for enforcement action against the CAFO polluter.

after truck arrived to spread concentrated animal sewage from a CAFO in Ohio on a field next to their home in Michigan, they found themselves overwhelmed by the stench and unable to escape the fumes. For many days, the liquid manure was dumped on this field daily and was not incorporated into the soil, causing this family great distress for weeks. Nobody in authority took responsibility or was able to help the family.

Water is another health concern. At least one case of cryptosporidiosis was diagnosed in a child who lived near a dairy CAFO, but there is no required testing of drinking water wells or groundwater at or near CAFOs for pathogens by state health departments.

In Michigan, no agency takes responsibility for addressing the health complaints of neighbors near CAFOs. Instead, all complaints must go through the Michigan Department of Agriculture, an agency that focuses on assessing CAFO compliance with (voluntary) agricultural practices. It is not an agency that can assess public health impacts.

Report Exposes EPA’s Failure to Enforce CAFO Compliance with Clean Air Laws

by Gayle Miller, Legislative Director

Under the Bush Administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has worked to deregulate and provide exemptions for CAFO polluters. The Bush EPA struck a “back-room deal” with the CAFO industry, exempting them from compliance with air quality laws in exchange for agreeing to be available for an open-ended study. Recently, EPA moved to eliminate the

requirement that CAFOs publicly report dangerous discharges of air pollutants, like ammonia, which can cause illness in animal factory neighbors.

Reacting to the EPA’s efforts to weaken regulations, Michigan Congressman John Dingell fought back. He asked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the EPA’s CAFO enforcement efforts. According to Dingell, the re-

port (released in September) exposed the EPA’s proposed new exemptions as “nothing more than a favor to Big Agribusiness at the expense of the public health and communities living near these facilities.”

Sierra Club is hopeful that the GAO report will empower a more environmentally friendly Administration and Congress to take firm and decisive action on CAFOs. It’s high time that one of the nation’s most severe environmental problems gets the attention and regulation it so desperately needs. You can read the GAO Report online at www.gao.gov/products/GAO-08-944.

Democracy in Action

Sierra Club Helps Pass New Energy Laws

CELEBRATES GREAT FIRST STEP TOWARD CLEANER ENERGY AND MORE JOBS IN MICHIGAN

Sierra Club is pleased to report that Michigan finally has a new energy law requiring utilities to add clean, renewable energy, such as wind and solar power, to their energy portfolio. Utilities are also required to help customers save energy by offering incentives to make efficiency upgrades to homes and businesses.

Sierra Club lobbied for clean energy in Michigan for nearly four years. Scores of our citizen lobbyists worked hard to educate lawmakers about the wisdom and cost-effectiveness of truly clean energy. We should all celebrate this success.

Years ago, Michigan was a leader in energy efficiency. But the Engler administration changed all that. Until these energy bills passed, we languished far behind many other states. This fall's passage of the energy package puts Michigan on a path toward cleaner, affordable energy options that are good for the economy and good for the planet.

After an upcoming rulemaking process, Michigan's utilities will begin to offer financial incentives to help all of us make our homes and businesses more energy efficient. Want to install new



windows? Buy an energy efficient refrigerator? Install attic insulation? Rebates, tax credits and discounts will help you afford the changes. Your energy bill will go down, the value of your home will go up, and the energy you saved becomes new energy at the lowest possible price.

To learn more, you can read the Sierra Club's press statement about the energy bills on the Chapter website (www.michigan.sierraclub.org/news/index.html#Sept18Energy). We will let you know how to take advantage of the energy efficiency program as soon as it is ready to roll.

Comprehensive Legislation Overdue to Stop Animal Factory Pollution

SIERRA CLUB CALLS ON STATE LAWMAKERS TO PROTECT MICHIGAN FAMILIES AND WATER

by Gayle Miller, Legislative Director

Virtually all of the scientific evidence shows that animal factories cause serious harm to the environment and human health. Despite the science, however, Michigan's legislature has twice tried to weaken the meager laws governing the state's more than 200 Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs).

In 2006, House Republicans introduced a package of bills to legalize discharges of CAFO sewage into waterways, eliminate the State's ability to regulate CAFOs, and punish citizens for reporting CAFO polluters. In 2007, Senate

Republicans introduced a nearly identical package.

Thanks to the Sierra Club's work at the Capitol, and support from the Governor, both of these miserable packages ultimately died. Unfortunately, new legislation to better control CAFO pollution has languished due to intense opposition by the Michigan Farm Bureau.

To help solve the CAFO pollution problem, Sierra Club is strongly advocating for legislative action in three key areas: 1) CAFO operating standards are far too low and often nonexistent; 2) the

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's enforcement budget is woefully inadequate; and 3) the State lacks the authority it needs to take swift and definitive action to close down the worst CAFO polluters.

While the scientific evidence condemning animal factories continues to build, Sierra Club will work harder than ever in the coming months to move comprehensive legislation in the House and Senate to solve this urgent environmental problem. Until then, Sierra Citizen Lobbyists, grassroots organizations, healthy food groups and family farmers will continue to build the public support we need to win on this issue.

To become a citizen lobbyist or get involved in the Sierra Club's CAFO campaign, you can contact me at 517-484-2372 or gayle.miller@sierraclub.org.

Great Forests, Wild Places

Sierra Club Tracks Public Input Opportunities on Proposed Sulfide Mine

HOPES TO STOP KENNECOTT EAGLE PROJECT AND DEFEND WATER QUALITY IN UPPER PENINSULA

by Rita Jack, Clean Water Program Director

Chauncey Moran and his family live on the Yellow Dog Plains in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, where their drinking water "well" is a flowing pipe stuck in a hillside. A pending United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) underground injection control permit for the proposed Kennecott/Rio Tinto Eagle Project mine in this area poses a major threat to this family's drinking water and other groundwater in the plains. The permit would authorize the mining company's underground disposal of all wastewater from mine operation, including polluted mine dewatering water.

The proposed mining activities could both reduce groundwater levels and contaminate it with toxins. All surface waters downstream from the proposed

infiltration field are threatened as well, since streams on the Yellow Dog Plains arise from the groundwater that seeps up to the surface and flows together. US EPA is expected to release its draft decision on the permit, details on the public comment period, and public hearing date later this fall.

As readers saw in the Autumn 2008 *Mackinac*, more opportunities for public participation are also coming up for the non-ferrous mining permit issued by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) earlier this year. The Kennecott Eagle Minerals Corporation already received their air quality and groundwater discharge permits from the MDEQ, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources approved the 40-



CHAUNCEY MORAN

Sierra Club and allied groups have been fighting a proposed nickel mine in a sulfide mineral deposit in Marquette County for five years. If it goes through, the sulfuric acid by-product could pollute families' drinking water, like the pipe "well" pictured here, as well as ground and surface waters.

year public-lands surface use lease, pending the company's receipt of all other permits. However, Kennecott/Rio Tinto must submit amendments to their permit application based on changes to their proposed activities, which requires additional public input opportunities.

Learn more and get involved at www.michigan.sierraclub.org.

NEW SIERRA CLUB PROGRAM HELPS CITIZENS IDENTIFY AND NOMINATE SPECIAL PLACES FOR PROTECTION IN MICHIGAN'S STATE FORESTS

by Marvin Roberson, Forest Ecologist

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is offering members and supporters a chance to help the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) identify and designate the most special places in our state forest system for protection.

Michigan has approximately four million acres of state forests, which are home to wildlife, rivers, vernal pools, and other gems. Recently, the MDNR started designating the most distinctive areas of Michigan's representative ecosystems as "High Value Conservation Areas." A significant part of this effort is a public nomination process that empowers citizens to identify and nominate special places in our forests for protected status.

To help citizens identify and nominate forest areas most

deserving of protection, the Michigan Chapter is initiating a new program. In the coming months, we will provide public trainings on the MDNR's requirements and process, ask for volunteers to scout out their favorite familiar areas that might be appropriate for designation, and provide help in completing the necessary nomination form for submission to MDNR.

The Michigan Chapter's Forest Ecologist, Marvin Roberson, will conduct the training and assist with the MDNR nomination process. Chapter Coordinator Amanda Hightree will help coordinate volunteer involvement. Learn more or take advantage of this opportunity to help protect the places you love by calling 517-484-2372 or emailing amanda.hightree@sierraclub.org.

CleanEnergySolutions

Holland Needs Clean Wind, Not Dirty Coal

by Jan O'Connell,
Energy Issues Organizer

If I asked you to picture Holland, Michigan in your mind, what would you see? A cozy community on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan? A town reflecting its strong Dutch heritage of windmills, tulips, and cleanliness? Maybe you see a vibrant city center, nationally known as one of the most successful downtown revitalization projects?

I'm guessing that you wouldn't imagine Holland proposing to more than double the size of their downtown, municipally-owned, coal-fired power plant (the James DeYoung Plant). Especially since the current plant's emissions contributed to Ottawa County's violation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's soot rules in August and exceeded ozone standards earlier this year.

Holland can do better. The city has an opportunity to decrease its dependence on dirty coal, increase its energy efficiency, and grow its clean energy sources, like wind power off Lake Michigan. But the Holland Board of Public Works (HBPW) seems determined to push through a 78 megawatt expansion of the DeYoung plant without an integrated electric generation plan. Moreover, HBPW has repeatedly shown little concern for public opinion or the environmental implications of its fast-tracked, internal agenda.

Twice this fall, HBPW sought hasty action by the Holland City Council with minimal public notice and information. The Council approved a contract to seek federal funding that could obligate Holland to a \$150 million carbon capture and sequestration project tied to the proposed coal plant expansion. Although the project had been under discussion at HBPW for a year, the public got just



LEE SPRAGUE

In October, Sierra Club and allied groups delivered a 350' petition with 27,000 signatures to Governor Granholm, asking her to reduce CO2 emissions in Michigan. If any new coal-fired power plants are constructed, they will increase carbon dioxide—a major climate change pollutant—and compete with clean, renewable energy like wind power.

days to respond.

In the second case, with just 18 hours of public notice, HBPW asked and got City Council's approval to purchase an option for land and a \$1 million study of wind potential at a site in the Upper Peninsula, even though Holland is located in one of the best wind areas in Michigan. Unfortunately, HBPW's rush to commit city funds with virtually no transparency raise serious concerns about even positive

projects like wind farms.

In mid-November, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality is expected to open a 60-day public comment period on the HBPW air permit for the proposed coal plant expansion, with hearings expected in mid-January. Your voice needs to be heard, wherever you live in Michigan. To learn more or get involved, contact me at jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org or 616-956-6646.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE BAY CITY AND MIDLAND COAL FIGHTS?

by Tiffany Hartung, Conservation Organizer

Draft permit applications are expected to be available for public comment in early 2009 on both the proposed Midland LS Power/Dynegy 750 megawatt coal-fired power plant and the Consumers Energy 800 megawatt coal plant expansion in Essexville. Local groups MidlandCARES and Citizens Exploring Clean Energy are working with area citizens to create a clean energy economy for the Tri-Cities area.

It's important that the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality hears the public's concerns about these huge, proposed coal-fired power plants. You can help by attending a public hearing and/or submitting public comments. If you live in the Tri-Cities area and would like to join this effort, contact Sierra Club's Tiffany Hartung at tiffany.hartung@sierraclub.org or 248-549-6213.

CANADIAN TAR SANDS OIL: AN AMERICAN PROBLEM

Tar sands oil, extracted in Canada and sent to Michigan and other U.S. sites, releases 2 to 3 times more carbon into the atmosphere compared to regular oil, greatly increasing climate change emissions. Moreover, the open pit and strip-mining extraction techniques used to mine the tar sands causes significant damage to the Boreal Forest ecosystems and their ability to absorb excess carbon from our atmosphere.

Even though tar sands oil is mostly mined in north-east Alberta, it is being piped in, refined in new or expanded facilities, and consumed here in the United States. The Marathon Oil refinery in Detroit is proposing to use tar sands oil, and the petroleum coke byproduct of the processing may end up being burned in new coal plants in the state.

Michigan Chapter Chair Jean Gramlich and Energy Issues Staffer Jan O'Connell recently met with Sierra Club of Canada's Executive Director to discuss our common interests. You can learn more at Sierra Club of Canada's website, www.tarsandstimeout.ca.

Sierra Club Leads the Fight to Stop New Coal Plants in Michigan

TURNED-OUT HUNDREDS TO COMMENT
ON PROPOSED WOLVERINE POWER PLANT

by Anne Woiwode, Michigan Chapter Director

With more coal plant proposals than any other state ever, Michigan is at the center of the national fight for clean energy and reductions in climate change.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Air Quality Division kicked off the first of four public comment periods on proposed coal plant air permits in late September. Two evenings of hearings on the proposed Wolverine Power Cooperative 600 megawatt coal plant attracted hundreds to the Rogers City High School on October 29th and 30th.

Dozens called on the MDEQ to deny the permit because of the air pollution proposed, including local resident Jean Veselenak's testimony on her concerns about the added mercury from this plant. The Little Traverse Bay Band of the Odawa Indians pointed out that because their members consume more fish than other populations, they will be uniquely and negatively affected by a decision to permit more mercury emissions.

A hospice nurse warned the permitted pollution could cause more respiratory diseases, and the Ecology Center explained further negative health effects. Representatives from Midland CARES and Citizens Exploring Clean Energy of Bay City expressed their concerns about environmental impacts of the eight proposed plants in Michigan, including the ones in their communities.

Supporters of the coal plant proposal offered few comments on the proposed air pollution. A group of local community college students with hard hats and signs demonstrated in favor of the plant. Surprisingly, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation sent a letter of support, despite Governor Granholm's strong endorsement of renewable energy as a job creator instead.

At the hearing, MDEQ announced that a flaw in the public notice for the proposed Wolverine permit requires re-noticing, with the new public comment period now expected to extend into 2009.

Stay informed! Visit www.michigan.sierraclub.org/issues/cleanenergy/coalfiredpowerplants.html. To learn more or get involved in this or other coal campaigns in Michigan, contact Energy Campaign Manager Lee Sprague at 616-570-1281 or lee.sprague@sierraclub.org.

Coal isn't the only dirty power threat that Michigan is facing. Nuclear power is rearing its ugly head with the proposal of DTE Energy's Fermi III nuclear power plant. Read Sierra Club's Issue Primer on nuclear power on the Chapter website, and get involved by calling 517-484-2372 or emailing gayle.miller@sierraclub.org.



JAMES MARVIN PHELPS

Your 2008 Elections

Time to vote again—now in the Michigan Chapter Executive Committee Elections!

by Lydia Fischer, Nominations Committee

The following candidates are running for five At-Large member positions on the Michigan Chapter Executive Committee from January 2009 through December 2010, and one At-Large position (left vacant by the resignation of David Holtz) from January 2009 through December 2009. Their willingness to serve illustrates the strong commitment to grassroots activism that makes Sierra Club the most effective environmental group in the country.

The Chapter's ExCom consists of nine At-Large members—representing all Sierra Club members in Michigan—and nine representatives from the different local Groups in Michigan. These leaders determine Chapter priorities, set implementation policies, ensure financial stability and solvency, and generally monitor and evaluate Chapter and Club activities.

We commend these candidates for offering their experience and energy to further Sierra Club's environmental efforts in Michigan. Please show your support of them by taking a few minutes to vote today in this election. You can find your ballot on page 11. Note that you should vote for no more than six candidates. You must write your Sierra Club membership number on the outside of the envelope in which you return your ballot. (Your membership number is above your address on the back cover of this newsletter.) For your vote to count, your ballot must be returned to the Michigan Chapter office by December 19, 2008.

Please note that due to space constraints, we asked the candidates to limit their statements to 150 words or less.



LORNE BEATTY

I have been a Sierra Club member for twenty five years. As an active member of the Crossroads Group, I have served as fundraising, media, membership and outings chairs, as well as, group rep., treasurer and vice chair. I have been an at-large member of the Michigan Chapter ExCom for

the past four years, I have served on the Chapter Development Committee (fundraising) and I recently became the Chapter Outings Chair.

I am proud to support and be a part of the current environmental priorities of the Chapter, I am committed to financially support and encourage others to contribute to the Chapter's environmental work. I will continue to assist the Chapter with Outings and building alliances with some of Michigan's sportsmen's groups. I am again asking for your vote as an "at-large" candidate for the Michigan Chapter ExCom.



LEIGH FIFELSKI

To me, being an environmentalist means protecting children against rising asthma rates and lead poisoning. It means standing up for the people, not corporate special interests. That's why I consider myself an activist.

In 2004, I was hired as an organizer for the Sierra Club BEC Program. I helped to nurture and grow a community of people who organized the Green Cruise, EnviRUNment, and Cool Cities campaign. Today, I am no longer

employed by the Club but I serve on the Political Committee and volunteer with the Central Michigan Group.

As an organizer and volunteer I know the power of communicating with members both on the ground and online. That is why I will work to strengthen the Sierra Club's communications to members through its website and online social networking tools. I want to make sure the members are being heard and have the proper training to get involved as well.



CAROL GRAHAM-THOMPSON

I am running for the ExCom for the Michigan Chapter because I think I can help make a positive difference in the environmental health of our state. There are so many important issues out there! We have a huge challenge in front of us. Yes, Michigan's Sierra Club needs to be, and has

been, a leader in dealing with environmental issues. I know my past work with the Sierra Club at the state and local level and my work as a teacher and parent give me a solid background to help where I can. I have been serving on the Strategic Planning Committee for the Chapter, of late, and that outcome will help us all keep our eyes on the prize. Let's go!

JEAN GRAMLICH

The Earth, the nation and the state face major challenges in the next few years, and the Michigan Chapter must be in the forefront to educate others to value the environment and to protect the earth from those who would exploit and pollute with no thought for the health of our communities or the legacy we



leave for future generations. I want the opportunity to continue and strengthen our citizen activism in the political arena where many important issues are decided and to raise more funds to support our work in the legislature and the courts.

I have served on the ExCom for several years, the last two years as Chapter Chair. I also sit on the Legislative and Strategic Planning Committees. I am on the SEMG ExCom.

Locally I work as a master gardener, conservation steward and land conservationist.



TOM KARAS

As I complete my first term on the Executive Committee of the Mackinac Chapter I have a much broader understanding and respect for this organization. In the last two years we have come together to form an alliance of environmental groups to oppose more coal plant proposals than any other

state, and the Sierra Club has been in the lead all the way. I have particular responsibility in the opposition to the Wolverine coal proposal in Rogers City and have been able to devote full time attention to grassroots organizing thanks in part to my work with the Chapter. However the next two years will be even more demanding as these proposals work through the permitting process, I wish to continue helping to guide this fine organization.



DOROTHY NORDNESS

I've been a member of the Huron Valley Group for about eight years. I became active in our conservation group four years ago, and have chaired that group for the last two. I have been a lobby leader, and frequently attend our local excom meetings, reporting on conservation issues and contributing to the direction the local group takes.

My particular interests include healthy ecosystems, clean water, ending factory farming control, and the links between these issues and local sustainable food production. This year I actively promoted Ann Arbor's first annual Local Food Festival, successfully getting both financial and volunteer support from our local Sierra Club group and others. Supporting this exciting venture was a positive way to channel energy into a movement that promises healthy land and water resources while fighting factory farms.

I anticipate building on these interests if elected to the Chapter Executive Committee; I hope for your support and your vote.



ROBERT SIMPSON

I am a retired radiographer, teacher and Air Force NCO who has been involved with enviro causes since the early 80s. I serve on S/C's national Radiation Committee and have held many positions for the Nepessing Group. Several important issues involve us here in Michigan, but the building of nuclear and coal fired power plants overshadow the others because of their implication beyond our state. We cannot be effective in advocating renewables for developing countries while we are still involved with these dangerous and polluting activities. We have a chance here to curtail these projects and I promise to do my best to aid Lee Sprague's committee in the Coal Campaign and involve my national contacts against nuclear.

clear and coal fired power plants overshadow the others because of their implication beyond our state. We cannot be effective in advocating renewables for developing countries while we are still involved with these dangerous and polluting activities. We have a chance here to curtail these projects and I promise to do my best to aid Lee Sprague's committee in the Coal Campaign and involve my national contacts against nuclear.

**SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN
CHAPTER 2008 EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE BALLOT**

Vote for no more than six (6) candidates. The second set of boxes is for the second member of a joint membership only.

LORNE BEATTY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LEIGH FIFELSKI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CAROL GRAHAM-THOMPSON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JEAN GRAMLICH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOM KARAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DOROTHY NORDNESS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ROBERT SIMPSON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Clip out and mail your ballot to: Michigan Chapter Sierra Club, attn: Chapter Elections, 109 East Grand River Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906. Write your Sierra Club membership number on the outside of your envelope to validate your ballot (membership number is above address on the back cover of newsletter). **Your ballot must be received on or before December 19, 2008.**

Group Info & Outings

Local Sierra Club groups host outings, political and conservation activities, and general meetings throughout the state. Outings and meetings are open to the public—everyone is welcome! If you live in an area that does not have a local group and you're interested in starting one, please call Chapter Coordinator Amanda High-tree at 517-484-2372.

Most outings begin at the trailhead, and some have fees associated with them. All participants in Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. [To read the liability waiver before you participate, please visit www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms or contact the Outings Department at 415-977-5528 for a print version.] You can find more details on outings and recent additions online at the groups' websites or at www.michigan.sierraclub.org.

November

11/19 CG A Visit to Pigeon River Country. 7pm.

11/20 SEMG Brighton Rec Hike. 10am. Moderate 5 mile hike.

11/22 CG Winter Ducks. 1pm.

11/22 SEMG Morning Hike at Maybury. 11am. Moderate 3 mile hike.

11/23 SEMG Hike Our Heritage. 10am. Moderate 4 mile hike.

11/28 SEMG Proud Lake Turkey Trot. 11am. Moderate 5-6 mile hike.

11/30 SEMG Pinkney Rec Area Hike. 9:30am. Moderate 10-12 mile hike.

December

12/4 SEMG Island Lake Hike. 10am. Moderate 6 mile hike.

12/6 SEMG Maybury State Park Hike. 11am. Moderate 3 mile hike.

12/6 NG Hike Murphy Lake. 10am. Difficult 6.5 mile hike.

12/12 NG Full Moon Hike. 6pm. Easy 4.8 mile hike in Fenton.

12/14 SEMG Stoney Creek Explorer Hike. Moderate 5 mile hike.

12/20 SEMG Kensington 'Skip the Malls' Hike. 11am. Moderate 5-6 mile hike.

January 2009

1/3 NG Hike Clio Bike Trail. 10am. Easy hike.

1/10 SEMG Independence Oaks Ski or Hike. 10:30am. Bring picnic lunch.

1/24 NG Hike Murphy Lake. Difficult 4 mile hike.

1/30-2/1 HVG MacMullen Ski Weekend Trip. Located near Roscommon.



LEIGH FIFLESKI

Sierra Club volunteers help plant cedar saplings to restore forests along the Au Sable River.

TREE PLANTING AND AU SABLE RIVER CLEAN UP HUGE SUCCESS

On September 9th, Anglers of the Au Sable and Sierra Club members came together to pick up garbage and plant cedar saplings along the Au Sable River in an effort to help restore the native diversity of Michigan forests.

More than 300 volunteers participated, helping to completely fill a twelve foot dumpster with debris from the river. Special thanks go out to the Gates Au Sable Lodge for not only hosting this event but also supplying everyone with a friendly barbecue afterwards.

Sierra Club was pleased to see so many first-time attendees at this year's Annual Retreat experiencing beautiful Camp Miniwanca, our eco-network, and amazing speakers. Saturday's keynote—political encyclopedia Jack Lessenberry—proved a real crowd pleaser who didn't shy from any question. It was a wonderfully fun and busy weekend for everyone. The vision that stayed with Retreat Committee Chair Phil Rairigh was the Tipi porch full of people silently fixated on the elusive green flash for Saturday's spectacular sunset.



PHIL RAIRIGH

Two Great Lakes Laws Enacted!

This summer, President Bush signed into law both the Great Lakes Compact and the Great Lakes Legacy Act. Your visits, letters and calls to your Members of Congress made it happen – thank you! These two laws will protect our Great Lakes from diversions and provide \$54 million a year to clean-up toxic hotspots. Great Lakes clean-up also benefits Michigan's economy (read more on the Chapter website).

Great Lakes and Climate Change

by Alfred Beeton, MI Chapter Leader, former Acting Chief Scientist of the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

Consensus is that the Great Lakes will be affected by climate change, but scientists do not yet agree on the nature of the impacts. The Canadian Centre for Climate Modeling and Analysis predicts decreased precipitation, increased air temperature and evaporation resulting in water level decrease of as much as 1.28m for Lake Michigan by 2090. The United Kingdom Meteorological Office's Hadley Centre anticipates a .35m increase in water level for Lake Michigan by 2090 due to lower air temperature and more precipitation. Scientists also speculate about how warming the Lakes would affect their thermal structure and dissolved oxygen levels.

Read Beeton's full article online at www.michigan.sierraclub.org.

GET INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL GROUP

Your local Sierra Club group is run by volunteers who host educational programs and organize actions on environmental issues important to your community and family's health.

CMG = Central Michigan Group

Group Chair: Anne-Marie Rachman, 517-336-7871 or arachman@comcast.com

Outings Chair: Jerry Schuur, 517-351-7796

CUPG = Central Upper Peninsula Group

Group Chair, Outings Chair: John Rebers, 906-228-3617 or john.rebers@michigan.sierraclub.org

CG = Crossroads Group

www.michigan.sierraclub.org/crossroads

Group Chair: Rick Pearsall, 810-227-6298 or rick.pearsall@michigan.sierraclub.org

Outings Chair: Cheryl McConnell, 517-552-1464 or cheryl.mcconnell@michigan.sierraclub.org

HVG = Huron Valley Group

www.michigan.sierraclub.org/huron

Group Chair: Doug Cowherd, doug.cowherd@michigan.sierraclub.org

Outings Chair: Kathy Guerreso, 734-677-0823

KVG = Kalamazoo Valley Group

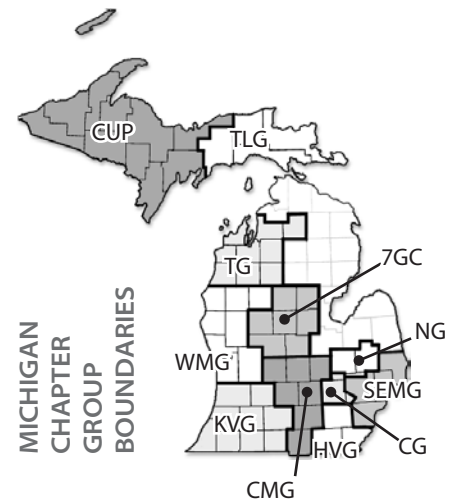
Group Chair, Outings Chair: currently seeking new local leaders, call the Chapter Office at 517-484-2372 for details

NG = Nepessing Group

www.michigan.sierraclub.org/nepessing

Group Chair: Linda Berker, 810-653-8242

Outings Chair: Dave Mansfield, 810-658-0406 or mansfieldd@chartermi.net



SEMG = Southeast Michigan Group

www.michigan.sierraclub.org/semg

Group Chair: Carol Izant, 248-352-6137 or cogknot@yahoo.com

Outings Chair: Phil Crookshank, 313-562-1873 or wanderphil1@yahoo.com

TLG = Three Lakes Group

Group Chair, Outings Chair: Roger Blanchard, 906-253-9316 or rblanchard@lssu.edu

TG = Traverse Group

Group Chair, Outings Chair: currently seeking new local leaders, call the Chapter Office at 517-484-2372 for details

WMG = West Michigan Group

www.michigan.sierraclub.org/westmichigan

Group Chair: Craig Ressler, 616-891-9055 or craig_ressler@yahoo.com

Outings Chair: Sharon Wilson, 616-532-0753

7GC = Seventh Generation Committee

Local Contact: Joel Welty, 989-561-5037 or jwelty@power-net.net

Chapter Directory

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TG, KVG: Open

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Supporting Your Chapter

86.5% of Sierra Club Endorsed Candidates Win Elections

YOU CAN HELP ENSURE THEIR PRO-ENVIRONMENT CAMPAIGN PROMISES COME TRUE IN 2009

By Sue Kelly, Michigan Chapter Political Committee Chair

November 4, 2008 was a day Sierra Club helped prove that what people say and do does matter, and votes really do count. We proved it is worth waiting in long lines to vote. We proved that the power of dedicated volunteers knocking on doors, educating neighbors, and making phone calls can overcome millions of dollars worth of attack ads and dirty tricks to suppress the vote.

Sierra Club members are cheering the victory of pro-environment candidates across the country. Here in Michigan, the election outcomes were dramatic: 64 of our 74 Sierra Club endorsed candidates were successful in their run for office—an unprecedented 86.5% success rate. Check Sierra Club's website at www.michigan.sierraclub.org for a full list of the Michigan Chapter's endorsed winners, including 25 state representatives.

We elected seven pro-environment candidates to U.S. Congress. President-Elect Barack Obama understands Great Lakes issues, climate change, and the urgent need for sustainable energy. After eight long years of policies that shunned sound science, severely weakened environmental protections, and put corporate interests above the environment and human health, Obama promises a new direction. It's an exciting time, with so much hope.

A record number of Michigan candidates ran and won on their commitment to protect our environment. Now these candidates are positioned to carry through on their campaign promises to create a safe and clean energy future, control animal factory pollution, protect our Great Lakes heritage, and more.

But now is not the time to lean back and think we've "fixed" the problem. We can't presume our conservation goals will be achieved just because we have more pro-environment leaders. We did not win the fight to "save the planet"—we won the opportunity to do so. Already, corporate lobbyists, Michigan's struggling economy, and the state's under-funded environmental enforcement efforts are undermining these lawmakers' good intentions.

In the coming year, Sierra Club needs to continue building alliances and growing power to push forward policies that will truly bring change to Michigan. We need to get to know our new state lawmakers and be ready to hit the ground running when the legislature reconvenes in January.

But to be effective, we need your help. Your financial support can ensure Sierra Club has the resources it needs in 2009 to help candidates follow through on their campaign promises to protect Michigan families and our Great Lakes.

Exercise your power to protect Michigan's environment once more this year—donate to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter today.



EXERCISE YOUR POWER TO PROTECT MICHIGAN'S ENVIRONMENT... SEND A GIFT

Enclosed is my/our gift of:

_____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 \$_____ Other

Leave your environmental legacy today—join Sierra Club's *Michigan Legacy Council* by making a larger gift:

_____ \$500: Fens & Saplings
_____ \$1,000: Streams & White Pines
_____ \$2,500: Rivers & Groves
_____ \$5,000+: Great Lakes & Great Forests

I want to support Sierra Club's effective citizen-based advocacy and lobbying programs in Michigan, which is not tax deductible. **My check to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is enclosed.**

I prefer to make a tax-deductible gift to the Michigan Chapter, which supports monitoring, public education, and precedent-setting litigation. **My check to The Sierra Club Foundation is enclosed.**

Please charge my VISA / MC \$_____.

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name: _____

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Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter,
109 E. Grand River Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906.

Supporting Your Chapter

Sierra Club's Michigan Legacy Council

Sierra Club established its Michigan Legacy Council to honor individuals making significant gifts to the Michigan Chapter. Their partnership and commitment to our work leaves a lasting legacy. Please join us in thanking current members:

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\$500-\$999

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JESSICA KARNIS

GREAT LAKES & GREAT FORESTS

\$5,000+

- Anonymous Donors
- Thomas Buhr
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The Sierra Club's members are 700,000 of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together

to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grass-roots environmental organization.

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.