

# Nepessing News

Spring 2013 - EARTH DAY Edition



SIERRA  
CLUB  
FOUNDED 1892

The Nepessing Group represents the Sierra Club in northern Oakland, Genesee and Lapeer Counties

## Group Update

Denny Crispell, Co-chair

If you have been wondering what your local Sierra Club group has been up to, but haven't had time to attend a meeting, you're in luck. Because I'm going to try to sum it all up as quickly as I can, so continue reading. Our Christmas party at Ligon was well attended by nearly 40 members, soon followed by a New Year's Eve party at my place. The Nepessing 2013 Outings Schedule was sent out before the first of the year, which was no small feat. Thank you, Sue Lossing, Lynn Livingston, and all outings leaders. Congratulations to Carol Graham for her election to the Michigan Chapter's Executive Committee. At January's ExCom meeting at Mott, our group's ballots were



counted and Linda Berker, Carol Graham, Sue Lossing, Fred Townsend and Terry Reechko were elected to two-year terms. Next order of business was the election of Chair and Vice-Chair by the

new Executive Committee. I was chosen for Chair and Jack Minore Vice-Chair. Mike Haley and Richard Naber agreed to continue as the group's Secretary and Treasurer. Ellen Waara volunteered to be the next Conservation Committee chair. Thank you all for your commitment of time and work for these important and necessary jobs and positions.

Our group was presented with a thank you letter from the Lapeer Conservation District for our recent donation to their conservation education program. We also donated to the Mott Community College Honorary Chet Wilson Environmental Scholarship Fund. This is how some of the money raised at our Texas Hold 'Em Tournament on Feb 13 through 16 was used. We could not do this if we didn't have volunteers like Mike Haley, Richard Morley Barron, Gloria Bublitz, Amy Sheridan, Mary Downey, Geri & Chuck Ruddick, Laurie Tata, Anne & Richard Naber, Carol Graham, Pam Webster, Chris Harbowy, Miriam Marcus and Linda Berker. Our next tournament will be June 19 through 22. If you are willing to help out, please contact Linda Berker. We had some great winter outings, skiing Mt Holly, cross-country skiing at Corsair, Loud Creek and Ogemaw Hills; hikes at Murphy Lake, AuSable Highbanks, Flushing River Trail, Otter Lake, For-Mar, and

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Flushing Township Nature Park. Remember, life can't be all meetings! The activists in our group were busy. Laurie Tata, Carol Graham and Mike Haley joined the Climate Forward Rally in Washington D.C. on February 17, along with over 35,000 others. Mike also attended a Nuclear Waste Conference at the University of Chicago, followed by another against fracking at the Circle Pines Center near Hastings, MI, on February 22 through 24. Richard Barron and Mike then traveled to Delta College on March 4<sup>th</sup> to testify before the governor's energy forum on behalf of the Nepessing Group. Members that volunteered at the Steelheader's Outdoor Expo in Birch Run included Jack Minore, Terry Reechko, Mike Haley and Laurie Tata. Terry also volunteered at the Fenton Expo that same weekend. The Earth Day and Garden Celebration at the U of M Flint will be on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> this year. If you would like to help out, please call Linda Berker at 810.348.8664 or just show up. We'd love to see you! Bob Simpson and Sue Lossing had some great speakers and

programs. Ellen Waara and finding ways to be an effective activist with a focus on the Pachamama Alliance, Will Hufton from Johnny Panther Quests about his waterway adventures, and John Malcomson from J & J Services about energy saving strategies in your home. At the March meeting, Sue Lossing decided to resign from the Executive Committee due to conflicts with her schedule. She has been an invaluable member of the committee, but we understand: Being a soldier in the battle for the environment means the war never ends. She has earned a well-deserved break. Thank you, Sue, and best wishes. In accordance with our By-Laws, "...the ExCom members shall fill the vacancy by vote until the next election." Congratulations to our new ExCom member, Mike Haley. And to all members who haven't attended a meeting, program or outing, you're missing out! Now get out and hug a tree, pet a dog or cat, and pick up some trash. We call it Explore, Enjoy and Protect!

### Keep Healthy and Fit!

By Jack Minore

Many Sierra folks join the Friends of the Flint River Trail (FFRT) on the regular Sunday rides - May through October at 2:00 PM EVERY Sunday from the Flint Farmers' Market. These are family friendly, leisurely rides of about 10-12 miles in length. No advance registration is required: just "show up and ride". Helmets are strongly encouraged. In addition, the FFRT sponsors "3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday" rides - on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month during the ride season. The first

Saturday ride is May 18<sup>th</sup> on the Southern Links Trail - starting at 10:00 AM from the Columbiaville Trail Head. This trail goes through Otter Lake and on to Millington (and the round trip ride is about 10 miles). Lunch following is optional. Questions may be directed to Jack Minore (jacksonmin@aol.com). The Friends of the Flint River Trail is a Chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition and more information is available on the web site - flintriver.org.



### Nepessing Group Report

By Mike Haley

The Group Representative duties are bi-directional, i.e., to report Group activities to the Chapter (Michigan) and to report Chapter activities to the Group. The Chapter's main thrust was renewable energy in the fall by supporting proposal #3 Constitutional Amendment establishing a renewable energy threshold to be 25% by 2025. All the proposals were defeated by No votes: Prop #1 Emergency Manager Law 52.7%, #4 Quality Home Care Council 56.5%, #2 Collective Bargaining 57.4%, #6 new Detroit bridge 59.3%, #3 Renewable Energy 62.3%, # 5 Limiting New Taxes 68.8%. I was handing out literature on Election Day. Not



one person I talked to knew what fracking was. Some of Chapter's 2013 top issues are: 1 Fracking., 2. A movement in State Legislature to make all Natural Resources decisions be economic driven e.g., Senate Bill 78., 3. To lend support to Humane Society of the United States to repeal Michigan Wolf-Hunting Bill. Let the Passenger pigeon be your guide on this issue more than the Mourning Dove. Would a responsible hunter hunt something to extinction? The Michigan Chapter has a web site, [www.michigan.sierraclub.org](http://www.michigan.sierraclub.org).

### FRACKING!

By Ellen Waara

What is fracking?? This is gross, but it reminds me of injecting chemicals into your mother's face, causing blood to spurt out of her nose. Yes that is dramatic, and so is the impact of pressurized injection of unknown elements into the water table, to break apart the resistant residue of oil reservoirs. Sounds dangerous? You bet it is. This is from the Sierra club Michigan website:

**A new gas rush is taking place in the Great Lakes State.**

What led to all of this? Michigan held a record-setting state lease sale in the northern Lower Peninsula in May of

2010, after word got out to natural gas and oil companies that our state may hold substantial reservoirs 1000s of feet deep in rock layers known as "tight shale." The technique for extracting these fossil fuels is called Slickwater High Volume Horizontal Hydraulic Fracturing, or just "fracking". Millions of gallons of water and thousands of gallons of chemicals are high-pressure injected deep underground into fissures in shale rock, to widen the fissures sufficiently to extract the natural gas. While a similar technique has been used for many years in vertical wells in Michigan's Antrim shale drilling, its use in the Collingwood/Utica much deeper shale deposits introduces new concerns:

- \* The deposits are as deep as 11,000 and more feet down, compared to 1000-2000 feet for the Antrim shale, and these for the most part require horizontal drilling.

- \* The deep drilling requires much more water (millions of gallons), and the process is exempt from Michigan's water withdrawal laws, and the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act.

- \* The drilling companies consider the chemical additives proprietary and are not required to make them public.

- \* Though the wastewater that flows back includes these chemicals, plus naturally occurring dissolved chemicals including hydrocarbons and heavy metals, these liquids are still referred to as benign-sounding "brine". The waste liquids are disposed of in Class 2 deep injection wells and since they're designated as oil and natural gas waste, they have fewer protective

## Earth Day & Garden Celebration!

April 13<sup>th</sup> 10am until 2pm  
U of M Flint

By Ellen Waara

Earth Day symbolizes our daily dependency on Mother Earth. Unless we sustain her health, we all perish.

Sierra Club Nepessing is honored to host a table at the fourth annual Earth Day Event @ U of M Flint April 13th.

We need volunteers to pass out trees, answer questions and share our exceptional hiking, skiing, kayaking and outings calendar with our neighbors.

I participated last year with Linda, Mike and Gloria, and we had a blast. The setting is sweet, the people are warm, and there is something rather sacred about feeling the roots through your fingers as you slip a pine into a baggie to give to a homeowner that will place it in their yard to water and nurture it for years to come.

We are the future we long to preserve. Please come and share this event as you are lead to.

requirements, and the wells are exempt from local zoning. Incidents of surface and groundwater contamination have been reported in other states, including Pennsylvania, New York, Colorado, Wyoming, and many others.

Please digest this information so that you have the ability to educate your friends and family on the fracking issue and dangers. Most people don't admit their ignorance. What we don't understand we are

paralyzed to change. Please participate in small ways to help us preserve our Great Lakes treasures. Our lives depend upon it. Our hands need to serve the Michigan Hand that holds us all.



### Get Outdoors!

The Nepessing Group has some great outings coming up this spring and summer. Why not join us and get some exercise, while meeting old friends and making new ones!

Check out our interactive calendar on line at:  
<http://michigan.sierraclub.org/nepessing/Calendar.html>



Make every day, Earth Day!  
Please recycle!

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*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

[www.michigan.sierraclub.org/nepessing](http://www.michigan.sierraclub.org/nepessing)

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**Board Members and Volunteers**

At-Large	Fred Townsend
At-Large	Mike Haley
At-Large	Jack Minore
At-Large	Carol Graham
At-Large	Susan Carr
At-Large	Linda Berker
At-Large	Terry Reechko
At-Large	Laurie Tata
At-Large	Denny Crispell

**Officers**

Chair	Denny Crispell
Vice Chair	Jack Minore
Treasurer	Richard Naber
Secretary	Mike Haley

**Committees**

Conservation	Ellen Waara
Outings	Denny Crispell
Political	Laurie Tata
Media/Programs	Bob Simpson
Membership	Susan Carr
Fundraising	Linda Berker
Newsletter	Lynn Livingston

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