



REGIONAL GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB

Otzinachson

Empowering Dirty Coal

by Nicole Faraguna



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Celebrate Earth Day!

April 22, 2008

QUOTE

"We could have saved the Earth but we were too damned cheap."

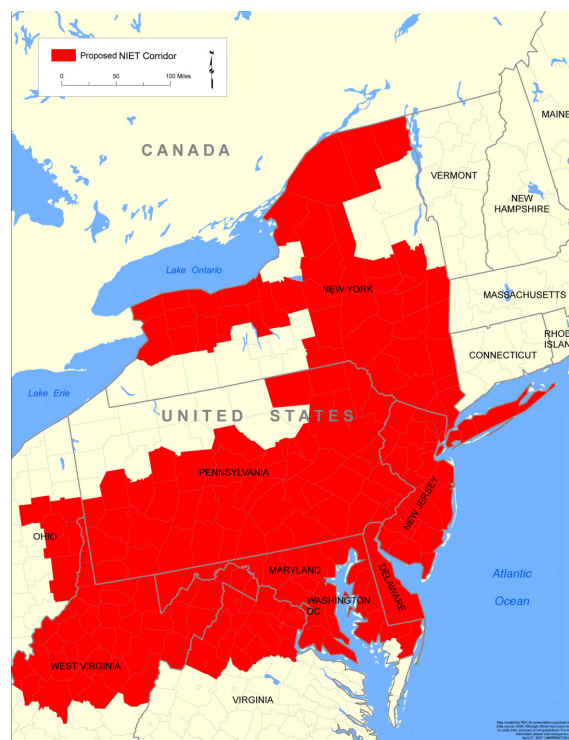
-Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

Even in the shadow of climate change and the ensuing green energy revolution, a dark and dirty force works to derail Pennsylvania's efforts towards sustainable energy; as Pennsylvanians begin to recognize the need for cleaner, renewable energy, "Big Coal" is guaranteeing its place in the Mid-Atlantic and New England electricity markets, devastating Pennsylvania's natural landscapes, air and water quality in the process.

In 2005, amendments to the Energy Policy Act (EPA) provided utility companies with unprecedented leverage to influence the course of state and national energy policies. The Act applies a two-tiered approach, which begins with the United

States Department of Energy (DOE) establishing transmission corridors. In the case of Pennsylvania, a fifty-two county area has been designated as the "National Interest" Mid-Atlantic Transmission Corridor (NIETC). Within this NIETC, utility companies petition the Pennsylvania Utility Commission (PUC) to construct high-voltage (HV) transmission lines. If the PUC rejects the proposal or takes no action for a year, the second tier of the Act enables utilities to appeal to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for eminent domain powers to seize precious lands within the corridor with no regard for natural landscapes or private property rights.

There is also no regard for clean energy policies. These HV lines are in effect a conduit for mid-western and Appalachian-based, coal-fired plants to deliver electricity to Mid-Atlantic and New England states. Unfortunately, from mining to generation, coal is vastly con-



The red shaded portion of the map indicates area designed by the NIETC.

(Continued on page 3)



Message from the Chair: GET INVOLVED

I hate to sound like a broken record, but I again ask that you become more involved with our Group. The Sierra Club is a national organization which prides itself on its grassroots activities. How about giving just a little of your time and help me and the others who are active with the group to do a better job accomplishing the mission of the club to protect the environment on which we are all dependent. Visit our new website and click on Get Involved to fill out a volunteer form....We need your help!

Jack Miller, Chair

Otzinachson in the News

Recently, the Otzinachson's program meeting on Mountain-top removal made the news in two local venues. The speaker and program were featured on the front page of the Sunbury *Daily Item*. The program was also covered on local radio station WKOK.

Members of the Otzinachson Executive Committee were also recently invited to discuss current issues and activities on a Roundtable program for WKOK's *Leaders & Lawmakers*. The program is broadcast Sunday mornings. Air date to be announced. ☞

Otzinachson's New Look

Be sure to check out the Otzinachson's new website at pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/otzinachson. New features include an *About Us* page which provides some history on the Group; the *Issues* page which is intended to help members and residents better understand issues that are impacting the Otzinachson region; the *Newsletter* page which includes an archive of back issues; and as always the hiking schedule is available for easy download on our new *Get Outdoors* page.

Please let us know what you think of the new site and if you have any suggestions on how to improve its functionality and appearance. Email us at otzinachson@yahoo.com. ☞

Otzinachson Leadership

Executive Committee:

Jack Miller, Middleburg; **Chair**
Dave Hafer, Lewisburg; **Vice Chair**
Roy Fontaine, Watsontown; **Treasurer**
Ed Lawrence, Orangeville; **Secretary**
Joe Detelj, Lewisburg; Agriculture/CAFO
Nicole Faraguna, Herndon; Conservation
Sam Pearson, Lewisburg; Energy/Climate Change
David Young, Lewisburg; Environmental Justice

Committee Chairs:

Roy Fontaine, Watsontown; Fundraising
Dave Jansky, Sunbury; Outings
Janet Jones; Program
Debbie Meade, Lewisburg, Membership

There are a number of committee openings available. For a complete list of committees, visit our website at <http://pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/Otzinachson/leadership.html>
If you are interested in serving on a committee, please contact the committee chair (contact information available online).

Attend a Meeting!!

All Sierra Club members & interested non-members are welcome!!!

June 4
August 6
October 1
December 3

All meetings are held at 7:00 P.M. at the First Baptist Church, 51 S. 3rd Street, Lewisburg

If you have something that you wish to bring to the group's attention please contact Jack Miller, Chair, at jmiller1018@yahoo.com at least one week ahead of time.

Check out our new website:
pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/otzinachson



Dirty Coal (cont'd)

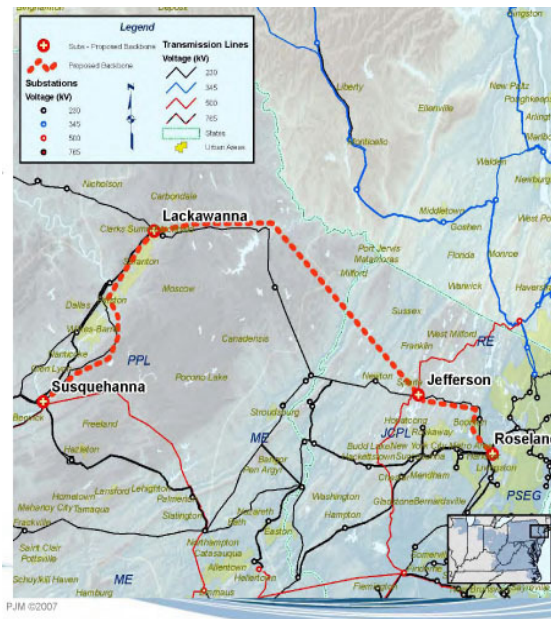
(Continued from page 1)

tributing to global warming (generates 20% of the earth's greenhouse gas emissions), the pollution of our air and water, mountain top removal and deforestation. Coal currently produces 50% of the electricity in the United State, a percentage likely to increase as the industry invests in a record number of new coal-fired plants (The DOE reports 114 facilities nationwide in some phase of planning) ensuring a continuous supply of dirty but industry-profitable electricity to flow along the new power lines.

There are two HV power lines already proposed for Pennsylvania. The southwestern TrAIL line, which will run from Mt. Storm, Virginia into southwestern Pennsylvania, will originate from one of Dominion Power's largest coal-fired plants. The other line, PPL's recently proposed Susquehanna-Roseland power line, will start at the Susquehanna nuclear plant in Berwick. Because of its close proximity to the coal-fired Washingtonville Plant, it is likely that this line would also carry coal-generated electricity. In addition to plans to expand its nuclear energy production at Susquehanna by building a 3rd reactor, PPL is proposing additional coal-fired generation at the Washingtonville site

PPL's \$500 million power line project will construct HV lines over 100 miles of Pennsylvania. An exact route has not been determined though an industry document, the line "will likely cross the Pocono mountains and several state parks". The Otzinachson has passed resolutions opposing the corridor designation and PPL's power line and are working to build a regional coalition to fight the proposal.

PPL claims the power line is necessary due to increased demand; however, Pennsylvania is currently an exporter of electricity. Penn-



The Red dotted line indicates one possible path for the Susquehanna-Roseland line.

sylvanians will be forced to subsidize this multi-million dollar power line (and others just like it) through increased rates so more electricity can be exported to other states.

The NIETC is being challenged on various levels. Most recently, PA Sen. Robert Casey announced that the Senate Energy & Natural Resource Committee has granted his request for oversight hearings. He has also begun a national petition (see right). In addition, the Sierra Club along with ten other organizations has filed a federal lawsuit against the DOE regarding the corridor designation.

The NIETC does not support what is best for Pennsylvania's future. It forces residents to forfeit precious landscapes, clean air, health and safety so utility and transmission companies can transfer dirty coal (and nuclear-generated) power to other states, in order to increase profits. ☒

Sen. Casey has launched a national petition against the NIETC – sign the petition at

<http://casey.senate.gov/actions/>

You can learn more about the NIETC and proposed power lines at conserveland.org/pp/Transmission.

Editor's Bookmarks

Freecycle - www.freecycle.org

It's a grassroots and entirely nonprofit movement of people who are giving/getting stuff for free in their own towns.

PAHikes.org – www.pahikes.org

Great site for finding hiking trails, clubs, gear and more...

Bringing Nature into Play

by Sam Pearson

*"My son said it was the best playdate EVER!"
said one happy parent this fall...*

The other day, my children and I went out to play. We went to two different parks and saw only one other person, plus a small dog. Granted, it's the end of winter and it is still fairly cold. But it's was a gorgeous day. Bright, windy, with a deep blue sky. The trees were thick with potential. A landscape holding its breath and a world to discover outside.

We ended up flying a kite, quite successfully – even my toddler got in on the act. No one was blown away and we finished still in possession of the kite.

The scenario of a deserted outdoors is not uncommon these days. Playing outdoors is one of the best "activities" we can offer our children. Studies show it's the single most effective means of instilling a love of the natural world, an environmental ethos, that will last a lifetime.

Between the music classes, organized sports, dance, and a regimen of play dates, many kids hardly ever get outdoors.

Kids like to play together. Play dates are de rigueur. It's time to take the play date outside and reclaim nature as a playground.

I have written in the past about the idea of the nature preschool, where children get supervised and safe free play outdoors in all seasons with peers on a regular basis. My son has been participating in one for the past year and a half. But if you don't have that option, as few do in our area, what else might you come up with?

Over the past two years a small community group in Lewisburg has been experimenting with regularly scheduled outdoor playgroups –

right through the winter. We will also be rolling out the concept through the local recreational authority (LARA) over the summer this year. We have offered several family hikes geared more toward being outdoors in a great place in good company than to covering ground or putting another notch in anyone's walking stick. (This season's outing is sched-

uled for May 10— see the outing schedule for details on pp 5-6.)

It may seem silly to schedule time for "spontaneous play," but it seems to me that desperate measures are in order.

We meet in public outdoor spaces that are *mostly* not playgrounds. If you are going to find anyone outside these days, they will likely be at one of these purpose built sites, but those settings can so easily stifle more open-ended play options and the impetus to creativity we may all remember from kicking around an empty lot or being the now-extinct free-range child familiar up until about 20 years ago. These sites can be parks or campuses. Some are in between spaces or the undeveloped parts of parks. The places where people who walk in the community know about but the drivers do not. We may move to more of an outings model for the summer, but in winter we've tried to keep our sites inside our community— easy to walk or bike to.

There is some organizing involved and a bit of coordination. Email or a phone tree is essential. The site gets suggested two days in advance, with consideration for weather and major holidays. And we make sure everyone



(Continued on page 7)

Otzinachson Regional Group of the Sierra Club Edward Abbey Hiking Society Spring/Summer 2008 Outings Schedule

Sunday, April 13: Loyalsock Trail

This hike will cover the first section of the LT beginning where it starts on Route 87 and proceed up to Smith's Knob for a fine view. 9 miles, strenuous. Meet at 9:00am at the Turkey Hill on Route 87, just north of the intersection with I-180, Montoursville. Bring lunch and water. Leader: Sue Wright 570-323-2411

Saturday, April 19: Mid State Trail Maintenance

We will work about ½ day on the MST north of RB Winter State Park, covering about 2 miles. Appropriate tools are necessary. Meet 9:00am at the parking area along Route 192 at Halfway Dam. Call Roy Fontaine at 570-220-4707 for information and details.

Saturday, April 26: Loyalsock Trail

We will hike the LT from Sone's Pond to the end of the LT at Route 220, passing the Haystacks. 6.5 miles, easy to moderate. Meet 10:00am at the McDonald's in Hughesville. Bring lunch and water. Severe weather cancels. Leader: Roy Fontaine 570-220-4707

Sunday, April 27: Jacoby Falls

This is a short hike to and return from Jacoby Falls in Lycoming County, an easy 3 mile walk for all. Meet at 10:00am at the Turkey Hill on Route 87, just off Route I-180 in Montoursville. Bring lunch and water. Severe weather cancels. Leader: Merrily Frey 570-326-3907

Sunday, May 4: Old Loggers Path

We will hike the southern section of the OLP from Masten Ghost Town to Pleasant Stream Road. 12 miles, moderate to strenuous, with fine views. Meet 9:00am at the Ralston Post Office on Route 14. Bring lunch and water. Contact Roy Fontaine 570-220-4707

Saturday, May 10: Dale's Ridge Trail

All ages hike, families, children, older active folks, all welcome. We will do a hike between 1 and 3 miles, depending on the composition and energy level of the crowd. Please bring water and snack. The hike is level along Buffalo Creek for a bit and then there is a switchback climb up the ridge. At that point, people with particularly short legs may want to cut through to the farmhouse at the end. Otherwise, there is a much longer wooded walk along the ridge to an overlook and back through the fields. Meet 3:30pm at the parking area on Strawbridge Road. Take route 192 west from Lewisburg for 2 miles. Turn north onto Strawbridge Road. Go about 1 mile to the parking area just before the bridge over Buffalo Creek. Please call to confirm and in event of bad weather. Leader: Sam Pearson 570-522-8159 Sam.Z.Pearson@gmail.com

Saturday, May 10: Hunter Mountain, New York

This moderate 4 mile hike captures magnificent scenery in the Catskill Mountains of upstate New York. Meet at the Denny's parking lot off the Faxon Exit in Williamsport (Golden Strip, E. Third St.) at 6:00 am. A five hour drive (car pooling will be arranged). Bring lunch and water. After the hike we will stop for dinner in Woodstock. Call Richard Sahn 570-435-2401 to confirm attendance and for information.

Sunday, May 18: Old Loggers Path

This hike will cover the entire northern half of the OLP with nice distance and water views. On one of Pennsylvania's best hiking trails, we will cover 14 miles. Rated strenuous for length. Meet 9:00am at the Steam Valley Restaurant on Route 14, just off Route 15, north of Williamsport. Bring lunch and water. Leader: Roy Fontaine 570-220-4707

Saturday, May 31: Bruce Lake Natural Area

We will celebrate Pennsylvania's Hiking Week with a walk to and around a glacial lake complete with visible striations, located in Delaware State Forest, north of Promised Land State Park. 9 miles, moderate. Meet at 9:00am in the McDonalds parking lot located at the Mifflinville exit 242, off Route 80, west of Berwick. Bring lunch and water. Leaders: Catherine McLaughlin/Ed Lawrence. 570-925-5285

Sunday, June 1: Golden Eagle Trail

Rated one of the best hikes in PA, this hike has everything: views, streams, and history—a great nature outing. Moderate to strenuous, 9 miles. Meet at 9:00am at the Sovereign Bank parking lot, Southern Ave., between Market and Hasting (Route 15), South Williamsport. Bring lunch and water. Contact Roy Fontaine 570-220-4707

Sunday, June 8: Johnny Jump-Up Trail

We will hike the Johnny Jump-Up Trail and uphill through a boulder field. 10 miles with two strenuous climbs. Meet 8:00am at the McDonalds just off Route 220 at the McElhattan/Woolrich Exit. Bring lunch and water. Please call to confirm. Leader: Joe Rebar 570-765-8884. If no response, call Dave Jansky 570-988-0544

Sunday, June 15: Molasses Gap Trail

We will hike the Molasses Gap Trail in the Hook Natural area in Union County. 3-4 miles, easy. Meet at 1:00pm behind the Lewisburg Post Office. Bring water. Leader: Dave Hafer 570-523-3107

Saturday, June 28: The Appalachian Trail

We will hike the AT from Old Forge Road to Caledonia State Park, making a side trip up to scenic Buzzard Peak. 11 miles, moderate to strenuous. Meet at 9:00am in the Snyder County Produce parking lot located on Routes 11 & 15, 10 miles south of Selinsgrove. Bring lunch and water. Leaders: Catherine McLaughlin/Ed Lawrence. 570-925-5285

Sunday, June 29: R. B. Winter State Park Loop

We will hike the perimeter of R.B. Winter State Park on a variety of trails. Optional swim at Halfway Dam afterwards. 11 miles, strenuous for length. Bring lunch, water, and sturdy hiking shoes. Meet behind the Lewisburg Post Office at 9:00am or Halfway Dam parking area along Route 192 at 9:30am. Leader: Paul Shaw 570-672-2389 Pshaw@ptd.net

Saturday, August 2: The Mid State Trail

We will hike the MST from the Seven Mountains Roadside Rest access off Route 322 to Poe Valley State Park. 11 miles, moderate to strenuous. Meet at 9:00am behind the Lewisburg Post Office. Bring lunch and water. Leaders: Catherine McLaughlin/Ed Lawrence. 570-925-5285

Saturday, August 30: The Tuscarora Trail

We will hike Big Blue from Route 34 at Sterretts Gap to Greens Valley Road north of the Florence Jones Reineman Wildlife Sanctuary. 11 miles, moderate to strenuous. Meet at 9:00am in the Snyder County Produce parking lot located on Routes 11 & 15, 10 miles south of Selinsgrove. Bring lunch and water. Leaders: Catherine McLaughlin/Ed Lawrence. 570-925-5285

Saturday, September 20: The Chuck Keiper Trail

We will hike the north side of the west end of the CKT, beginning and ending on Route 144, southwest of Renovo. 12 miles, moderate to strenuous. Meet at 9:00am in the parking lot of the Harvest Moon Restaurant located on Route 220, west of Williamsport. Bring lunch and water. Leaders: Catherine McLaughlin/Ed Lawrence. 570-925-5285

Sunday, October 19: The Mid State Trail

We will hike the MST from School House Road north to Little Pine State Park to Barrens Road. 8 miles, moderate to strenuous. Meet at 9:00am in the parking lot of the Harvest Moon Restaurant located on Route 220, west of Williamsport. Bring lunch and water. Leaders: Catherine McLaughlin/Ed Lawrence. 570-925-5285

Sunday, November, 16: Blue Marsh Lake Trail System

We will hike a section of the trail system in the Army Corps of Engineers Blue Marsh Lake Recreation Area, located west of Reading. 8 miles, moderate. Meet at 9:00am in the parking lot of the Elysburg Sheetz, located at the intersection of Routes 487 & 54. Bring lunch and water. Leaders: Catherine McLaughlin/Ed Lawrence. 570-925-5285

Sunday, December 7: Ricketts Glen State Park

Our hiking route will depend on weather conditions. 7 miles, moderate. Meet at 10:00am in the parking lot of the Ricketts Glen Hotel, located 1 mile east of Red Rock on Route 118. Bring lunch and water. Leaders: Catherine McLaughlin/Ed Lawrence. 570-925-5285.

NOTES: This schedule will be revised in the fall.

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Nature into Play (cont'd)

(Continued from page 4)

understands it's not a form of daycare. Each child or group of siblings has to be accompanied by their caretaker and everyone has to sign a liability waiver.

Ground rules help things flow smoothly. For example, we ask that people refrain from bringing their own toys or sports equipment with them, which helps to minimize battles over possession. We try to focus on natural materials and the stuff on site. We do schedule the occasional get together to include sports play or riding toys and then feel comfortable leaving those things home the rest of the time. That's also how playgrounds can creep into the rotation too. Rather than disregarding them completely, they just become one component of the mix – but never as successful as the huge snow-pile or the day of blowing leaves.

If you'd like more details or have suggestions for bringing nature back into play, please email info@LocalActionPA.org or call 570.522.8159. ☐



Menu for the Future

by Sam Pearson

James Beard once said, "Food is our common ground, a universal experience." For centuries food has been used to mark the change of the seasons, to bring together a family at the end of day and as an integral part of many celebrations. In recent years, food has grown to represent a multi-billion dollar global industry and a point of confusion for many struggling to understand the risks and benefits associated with choices such as organic vs. conventional, meat vs. vegetarian, or local vs. global. Food impacts our lives and environment in so many ways, on a multitude of levels. Yet few people of us consider: "Where is my food coming from?" and "What are the implications of my food choices?"

In response to a growing need to consider the larger implications of our food choices and understand food's relationship to sustainability, the Local Action Network (LocalActionPA.org) is proud to partner with the Northwest Earth Institute (www.nwei.org) in the launch of *Menu for the Future*, a six-session group study guide to be released in celebration of Earth Day, 2008. *Menu for the Future* offers people a unique opportunity to gather in small groups to examine the effects of modern in-

dustrial agriculture on both human and ecological health, explore emerging food system alternatives, and discuss how we can contribute to a more sustainable food supply.

To keynote LAN's local food focus for the year, we welcome Ann Quinn Corr who will talk about the history, motivations and projects of the international Slow Food movement. The lecture will take place at 8:30pm on Monday, April 21st, at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Lewisburg. (42 S 4th St. Please enter through the side door off the municipal lot.) A local Slow Food chapter, called a Convivium, is also being rolled out. Visit [www. LocalActionPA.org](http://www.LocalActionPA.org), for more details.

Ann Quinn Corr is author of *Seasons of Central Pennsylvania: A Cookbook* and one of the founders of the Centre County Slow Food Convivium. She lives in State College, where she writes a food column for the Centre Daily Times and teaches in Penn State's Nutrition Department. She also runs a catering business. Contact Sam Pearson (info@LocalActionPA.org/570.522.8159) to learn more. ☐



Nicole Faraguna, Editor
Otzinachson Regional
Group of the Sierra Club
P.O. Box 65
Lewisburg, PA 17837

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Slow Food

sponsored by the Local Action Network

Noted cookbook author and Slow Food State College Convivium founder, Anne Quinn Corr, will give a presentation on the Slow Food movement—based on the principles of high quality and taste, environmental sustainability, and social justice – in essence, a food system that is

good, clean & fair.



When: April 21th, 8:30 pm to 09:45 pm
Where: St. Paul's United Methodist Church
42 S. Fourth Street, Lewisburg

Learn more at www.localactionpa.org or call 570.522.8159.
