



**SIERRA
CLUB**

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

EXPLORE – ENJOY - PROTECT

**Summer Newsletter
Climate Action Edition**
August 2021

2021 MIKE MALONEY ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE AWARD

The Prince George's County Sierra Club is delighted to announce that the 2021 Mike Maloney Environmental Service Award will be awarded to Sacoby Wilson, PhD, for his outstanding work for Environmental Justice. As a member of the faculty of the Department of Environmental Health in the University of Maryland School of Public Health in College Park, Professor Wilson works tirelessly for the cause of Environmental Justice through teaching, writing, publishing a journal, and convening public health professionals to draw attention to environmental inequities that lead to health disparities. We can't create a just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy without simultaneously addressing systemic racism and environmental injustice. Dr. Wilson's work at the Community Engagement, Environmental Justice, and Health Lab and his contributions to the Prince George's County Environmental Justice Commission Report have laid a foundation for systemic change for a more just and sustainable future.

The Maloney award will be presented at the Fall Get-Together on September 25, 1-5 PM. Planning in the COVID era is fraught with uncertainties. Currently, our plan is to have an outdoor in-person celebration at Cosca Regional Park. The festivities will feature a visit from the Park Ranger with chance to get up-close-and-personal with some birds and reptiles who live at nearby Clear Water Nature Center. Small groups can also go on a guided walk with a Master Naturalist. There will be plenty of time to catch up with old friends and meet new people but out of an abundance of caution instead of our traditional pot luck, we ask each household to bring your own food. and tableware. In the event of inclement weather, worsening of the pandemic, or changes in public health recommendations, the event will be held virtually. Please plan to join us to celebrate the work of Dr. Wilson! Register [here](#).

IN THIS EDITION

Reports from around the globe of lethal heat waves and devastating fires make it clear climate change is not some distant threat. It's here, it's now, and it's affecting people we know. We can't just shrug it off as something somebody else needs to do something about. In this edition, Prince George's County residents share what they're learning about how we can make needed change -- right now !

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- [Carbon Footprints -2](#)
- [Electric Cars -3](#)
- [How to Go Solar -6](#)
- [Bowie Solar Farm -8](#)
- [County Programs -9](#)
- [Book Review -10](#)
- [Land Use at BARC -11](#)
- [Nature Corner -12](#)
- [Upcoming Events -14](#)



Climate Lessons from University of Maryland Extension

By Sarah Gingold

Dr. Sara Via, Professor and Climate Exchange Specialist at the University of Maryland Extension, teaches ordinary people about climate change. Her current free virtual lecture series, "[Climate and Sustainability Webinars](#)" presents recent evidence and practical applications on topics including restoring biodiversity, natural climate solutions, and the path to "net zero." At her session on Wednesday, August 4th, over 200 participants heard about "Your Carbon Footprint and How to Shrink It."

While some people claim that individual actions aren't worth doing because they can't make enough

Nine carbon-saving steps you can take immediately with little or no cost:

1. Carpool to work with one other person
2. Get frequent tune-ups for your car
3. Alter driving to use less gas (more gradual starts and stops)
4. Decrease vehicle miles traveled by combining errand trips
5. Cut highway speed from 70 to 60 mph
6. Maintain correct tire pressure
7. Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent or LED bulbs
8. Space conditioning: Turn heat down several degrees; turn A/C up several degrees
9. Use only cold water for washing clothes

Eight immediately available steps that require more cost and effort:

1. Buy low-rolling resistance tires
2. Buy a more fuel-efficient or electric vehicle
3. Caulk/weather-strip your home
4. Install/upgrade attic insulation and ventilation
5. Install a more efficient heating unit
6. Install a more efficient A/C unit
7. Install a more efficient unit for refrigeration/freezing
8. Install a more efficient water heater

From: "The Short List: The most effective actions US households can take to curb climate change." Gerald T. Gardner and Paul C. Stern. Environment: Science and policy for sustainable development. December 15, 2009.

difference, Dr. Via strongly disagrees. About 38% of US greenhouse gas emissions come from households, with higher-income households producing more than their share of emissions because they heat and cool bigger houses, drive and fly more miles, and buy more stuff than lower-income households. Dr. Via shared some of the highest-impact actions that can be taken now by households using currently available technology without suffering a decrease in quality of life.

By doing nine actions that cost little or actually save money, households can cut their energy consumption by about 26%. Adding eight higher-cost actions would save up to 18% more energy. She concludes, "this 44% reduction of household energy consumption would reduce US emissions by 16.7%." That's definitely not nothing!

Measuring and monitoring our greenhouse gas emissions is one of the most effective motivators for changing behavior. To demonstrate how to calculate our household's carbon footprint and the impact that recommended changes could make, Dr. Via used the [Cool Climate Calculator](#) from Berkeley. Check it out! Even if you are already taking lots of steps to decrease your footprint, you are sure to find more actions you can take that can make a difference! Many small steps add up to a large impact!

Community Meeting on our County Climate Action Plan

August 19, 6:30-8:30PM [Register Now!](#)

My next car will be electric

By James Lawson

"Please God, make me good, but not just yet." - Saint Augustine

The future of automobiles will be [electric automobiles](#). Most car manufactures have announced plans to do away with the gas-powered internal combustion engine (ICE) automobile and replace it with an electric vehicle (EV) powered by a battery. In addition, several nations have announced plans to make it against the law to produce an ICE car by a set date.

The ICE automobile has been developed and improved for over a hundred years. The typical ICE will last the life of the car (at least 140,000 miles). ICE technology has evolved, and today, the current ICE technology used in today's automobile gives every driver what they want and need in a vehicle, cost, range, power, and fuel availability. Most automobile technicians can maintain an ICE

Automobile. A modern ICE automobile has an affordable price for each buyer. You can get a low-cost ICE car, or if you can afford it, you can get an ICE auto for over a hundred thousand dollars.

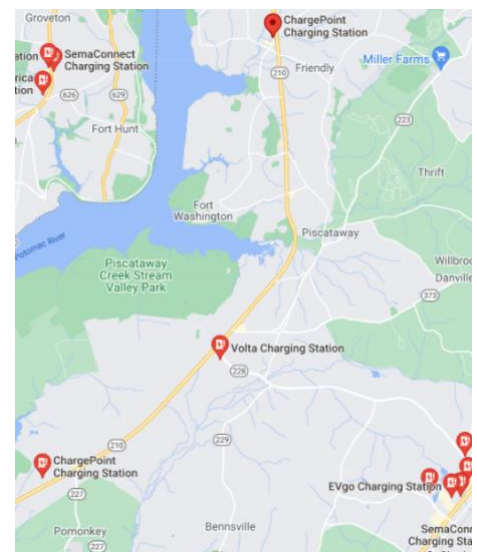
A modern ICE engine is a complex device; It requires a computer, an ignition system, a coolant, and an oil lubricating system. An ICE engine generates greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. An ICE automobile burns gasoline, and a byproduct of this fuel is greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. The ICE is a dinosaur. It will be extinct in two decades to save our planet from global warming.

Replacing ICE cars with electric cars is not as simple as substituting an electric motor for an ICE. To power the electric motor in an electric vehicle, we will need a battery power pack. The energy density of a battery is far less than the energy density of gasoline. Automobile manufacturers will need to reduce the weight of the battery in an electric car to reduce the weight of the car. Manufacturers will need to develop new technologies to recharge the batteries and prevent the batteries from overcharging or catching on fire. Finally, we need a new braking system that generates electricity when we brake and put that energy back into the battery. Battery technology will be significantly better in a few years and there will be [more charging stations](#).

There are [many advantages](#) to having an electric vehicle. EVs are generally cheaper to operate than ICE cars, assuming you have a source of inexpensive electricity. Electric vehicles are more reliable

WHY BUY A CAR?

- Transportation is necessary
- Alternative modes of transportation are inadequate/not feasible
- Driving is fun
- A car is a status symbol
- A car is a toy and toys are fun



There are only a few charging stations near home in Accokeek

and emit no greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. You don't need a complex transmission or a complex engine in an electric car.

Electric cars work for some drivers and do not work for all drivers. If you drive long distances, an electric car may not work for you. If you use your electric vehicle for long trips, you might have problems [finding charging stations](#) in many parts of the country. For example, it is not a good idea to drive to California in an electric car. If you live in an apartment building or a townhouse without a garage, you may be unable to install a charger for your electric vehicle.

Reasons not to buy an electric vehicle

1. EVs are, on average, more expensive to buy than ICE cars
2. EVs cost more to insure
3. EVs are more expensive to repair
4. Many of today's auto mechanics aren't qualified to service EVs
5. It is hard to find EV charging stations
6. It is costly to install a fast charger in your home -- approximately \$1,000
7. Battery issues: Might not last 10 years; replacing battery costs about 20% of EV's purchase price; charge decreases with hot and cold weather; charge decreases over the life of the battery

Reasons not to buy an electric vehicle

Reasons to buy an electric vehicle

1. An EV does not generate greenhouse gases
2. An EV is cheaper to drive per mile than an ICE car
3. EV early-adopters enjoy the driving performance and driver-assist technology
4. An EV is more reliable than an ICE car, with less frequent, and less expensive maintenance
5. An EV tells the world: "I am a conservationist, and my electric car is a statement of my belief"

For most of my life, an electric vehicle would not work for me. At this stage in my life (retired), an electric car could work for 95% of my daily driving. I do not need an automobile with a range of 300 miles before charging. I can install a charger in my garage and charge my vehicle overnight.

My next car will be electric, but not just yet.

The electric vehicle I purchase must be equal in cost, performance, and utility to a similar ICE automobile. The average price of a new car is approximately \$40,000. A top-of-the-line electric vehicle will cost you more than \$70,000. The average life of the average ICE car on the road is 12 years. Therefore, I require an electric vehicle that I purchase to last at least ten years to justify its cost. Find a chart showing retail prices for some popular EVs [here](#).

I intend to wait a few years for the technology to mature. In a few years, there will be more charger stations. In a few years, the price of a home charger will decrease in cost. Electric car technology is improving every year. If I buy an electric vehicle today, it will look primitive compared to the technology available in a car purchase in a few years. In a few years, car manufacturers will have improved driver-assist and self-driving technology. I intend to wait a few years to get this improved technology in my next car.

To get into an electric car sooner, I will consider leasing the car. However, in my opinion, leasing a vehicle is generally not cost-effective. However, suppose I lease an electric car for three years. I will give it back at the end of the lease period and then acquire a vastly improved vehicle with improved battery, electronics, engine, and driver-assist technology.

If we banned ICE vehicles today, it would take 12 years to get the average ICE car off the road. If we take 12 years to move most drivers to electric vehicles, the climate change goals adopted by the world will be unattainable. Instead, the government will have to change motorist behavior to meet climate change goals.

The government should use its power to subsidize research to improve the electric car and battery technology. For example, the government should continue to offer rebates and appropriate money to build charging stations. In addition, the government should waive antitrust laws and allow automobile manufacturers to engage in joint research to improve battery technology and standardize battery charging stations.

There will not be a mass movement to electric vehicles for most of the population until the value equals the value of existing ICE automobiles. It is in the interest of society to do everything it can to accelerate the replacement of the ICE automobile with an electric automobile.

On August 5, President Biden said that by 2030 50% of cars sold in the US should be EVs and that his administration would require vehicle fleets to average at least 52 mpg by 2026. How does that happen, exactly? And what can we do in the meantime to decrease greenhouse gas emissions from transportation?

An editorial in the August 7 Washington Post points out that Biden's plan lacks a simple mechanism for making the value of the EV at least as great as the value of the ICE car for car buyers who do the math, namely, an increase in the federal gas tax. "As electric vehicles become more practical, there has never been a better time for a substantial hike that encourages people to switch..." With higher gas prices, people with ICEs would also change their driving behavior to use less gas, decreasing emissions now, not later.

But how can we make a just gas tax? People who can afford an EV sell their gas guzzler to people who pay the higher gas tax because they can't afford an EV. Is that fair?

Meanwhile, right now, kids can't play outside because the playground equipment is too hot to touch and the air is full of wildfire smoke. What kind of world will they grow up in if we can't make the changes that are needed?
--Janet Gingold

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Save Money and the Planet with Solar

By Joseph Jakuta

Solar power is crucial to our transition to a clean energy future. The youth of today and subsequent generations need us to make this transition now to stave off the worst threats from the climate crisis. As battery technology improves we even have the potential to have resilient microgrids that can decentralize power generation and decrease our dependence on aging and inefficient infrastructure that transmits electricity across long distances.

If hypothetically we would power all of Maryland's current energy needs with solar we would need to cover about 5% of our land with solar panels.¹ Even allowing for a growing contribution from wind and geothermal, converting to solar requires lots of space. Given the need to preserve our agricultural and forested lands, we need to start putting more solar panels up on our houses, businesses, and in brown fields. We'll walk through some good ways to do that.

Here are three great ways to go solar.

1. Pay for Upfront Installation of Solar Panels

If your roof is in good condition and you get good sunlight this is the best option. Buying solar panels outright allows you to do such things as claim "solar renewable energy credits" (SRECs) which you can sell to offset some of the costs of your system. Also, solar co-ops like [Solar United Neighbors](#) enable groups of people to buy and install panels in bulk to cut down on both the cost of panels and contracting costs; solar co-op members can also get help selling SRECs. Buying the panels outright will allow you to get the most savings out of your system and can have a payback period of 10 and a half years. Since they are expected to last twenty years, savings over time can be substantial -- up to \$20,000 over the life of the panels.² And if you move during that time period Zillow is finding that the value of the solar panels increases the market value of the home.



Many Prince George's County neighbors have rooftop solar arrays.

Worried? Don't be. More and more Prince Georgians are going solar every day, so the process is no way near as cumbersome as it once was. It will save you money, increase the value of your house, and make a better future for our planet. Also, if you are in a homeowners' association, Maryland law says they cannot prevent installation of panels.³

¹ Assumes all fuel consumption in BTUs is directly transferable to electricity and nuclear and hydropower is replaced in addition to fossil fuel consumption

² <https://www.energysage.com/local-data/solar-panel-cost/md/>

³ <https://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/maryland/learn-the-issues-in-maryland/homeowners-associations-and-solar-access-in-maryland/>

2. Sign Up for a Solar PPA

If you go the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) route you have solar panels installed on your roof, but you won't own them. Instead, you lease them from the PPA provider. This provides the benefit of not having to pay upfront costs to install and use the electricity (though with low interest loans available to help with upfront costs of loans this may not have the same value as it once did). The other major benefit of a PPA is that the company that owns the panels is responsible for maintenance. While the long-term, savings will not be as great as if you owned your own panels, most agreements will still result in 10-20% savings compared with your regular power provider.⁴ The value of the panels won't translate into increased home values.

3. Join a Community Solar Project



Neighborhood Sun solar farm in Fort Washington

There is a final option available for going solar that doesn't involve placing panels on your own roof and that is to lease a share in a community solar project. For community solar, the solar panels are placed on the roof of a larger building in the community, such as a church or a school, or another location and you lease a share of the panels there. Some larger projects are built on brownfields, such as the one constructed by [Neighborhood Sun](https://neighborhoodsun.solar/solarfarms/panorama-landfill/) on the Panorama landfill in Fort Washington.⁵ This option is very similar to the PPA in terms of your own electric bill and it also often has no upfront costs, the only real difference is that the panels are somewhere else nearby. While it doesn't quite feel like you own the panels, it is a great option, especially for those that are renting, own a home with roofs that are in bad condition, have shaded homes, or cannot power all of their home with onsite solar panels. You can also install some panels on your home and join a community solar project for the rest of your needs. Also, for the truly local community solar projects, there can be benefits of resiliency for the community, bring community members together to work on a project, and provide an additional revenue source to the church or school.

Batteries

One last thing: If you install panels, it is quite beneficial to install batteries too. As more and more solar comes online there will start to be challenges with what they call "the duck curve." Simply put, solar panels don't work at night and on cloudy days. By having a battery system, you can move

⁴ <https://news.energysage.com/power-purchase-agreements-overview/>

⁵ <https://neighborhoodsun.solar/solarfarms/panorama-landfill/>

towards a system that doesn't require power from the grid during night and cloudy days. We can't be truly resilient and 100% renewable without energy storage.

Bowie Opens Solar Farm

By Janet Gingold

As the [County's Climate Action Plan](#) moves forward, we can all get busy making the vision of a more just and sustainable future a reality, using existing resources and current technology. The City of Bowie is making real change, right now.

Throughout Maryland, the renewable energy sector is growing, with more residential rooftops going solar and wind turbines being built in Baltimore. The City of [Bowie's Climate Action Plan 2020-2025](#) set forth a bold vision for Bowie in 2030, including reducing greenhouse gas emission by 50% of 2015 levels, with over half of the energy powering homes and buildings coming from renewables. To accomplish this, the plan called for adopting solar and other renewable energy options for the City's electricity requirements by building a solar farm on City property and by obtaining "as much energy as possible" from renewable sources. The City finished out July 2021 with a new operating solar array on City property just off MD 214.



During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Gary Allen, former Mayor of Bowie and current member of the Prince George's Climate Action Commission, said, "This solar farm serves as a standard of how local governments in Maryland can lead in this work...This installation adds real value to our community. Remember that sunlight is free, virtually infinite and accessible. It does not have to be mined, extracted, and transported even before it is used."

The new 34-acre, 2.5 Megawatt solar facility sits on property that was purchased by the City in 1988 and used for storing Parks and Ground equipment and police training. The project was developed through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Tesla Solar. A PPA enables design and construction by the developer on City property with little upfront cost. The power generated is fed into the grid and offsets power consumption by City Hall, the Kenhill Center, Senior Center and other city facilities. For the [20-year term of the PPA](#), the City will pay a fixed and predictable rate of \$.057/kWh for the power generated by the facility and Tesla guarantees performance of the array with kWh outputs specified in the contract.

Congratulations to the City of Bowie and all who made this important step possible!

Programs to Help Your Transition to Clean Energy

By Joseph Jakuta

The current consensus as to the best way to transition to a carbon free future is to reduce the energy we use and electrify everything that we still need and power that electricity with renewables. Not only will it help our planet, it will also allow you to have a more comfortable home at lower long-term cost to yourself and decrease indoor air pollution.

While we don't have control over everything, many of us do control what type of energy gets used in our homes and cars, and how much energy those consume. Many underutilized state and local programs provide grants, loans, rebates, and technical assistance to help Prince George's County residents convert some of their fossil fuel use in the home to electricity.

EmPOWER Maryland

All Marylanders pay a surcharge on their electric bill to fund EmPOWER MD program. This money stays with BG&E/Pepco and funds a rebate program for efficient lighting and appliances. If you need to replace light fixtures, water heaters, thermostats, or other appliances you should explore this program to learn more about what is available before purchasing. Replacing natural gas water heaters is especially important since they can worsen your indoor air. You can find out more about specific rebates at <http://bit.ly/pgsc-empower> and then click through to the pages for BG&E or Pepco specific rebates.

Home Energy Audits

[BG&E](#) and [Pepco](#) both provide Quick Home Energy Check-ups and \$100 home energy performance audits that can be found by visiting <http://bit.ly/pgsc-empower> and then clicking through to the page for your power provider. A home energy audit is a great way to learn what improvements can be made to your home to make it less drafty, retain more heat, and stay cooler in the summer. Improvements can come from adding insulation, fixing air leaks, upgrading windows, and so on. If you haven't done one recently, this is a great way to understand the most important and money saving ways to make your home more efficient.

BeSmart Home Energy Loans

Marylanders who have a home that is capable of 15% in energy savings as determined from a qualifying home energy audit and have a credit score of 640 or more can get a loan under the BeSmart program. The loans are at an interest rate of 4.99% and up to \$30,000. The improvements can be for insulation and air sealing, ENERGY STAR® heating and cooling systems, ENERGY STAR® hot water heating equipment, ENERGY STAR® appliances, roofing, windows, doors, lighting and controls, geothermal heat pumps, among others. Since many improvements pay for themselves this can be a great way to finance improvements upfront. To learn more and apply visit:

<http://bit.ly/pgsc-besmart>

Clean Energy Grants

If you live in an Energy Resiliency Community (ERC) (Bladensburg - East Riverdale; Forestville; Hillcrest Heights -Marlow Heights; Kentland - Palmer Park; Oxon Hill - Glassmanor; Silver Hill; Suitland - Coral Hills; Langley Park; and Woodlawn - West Lanham), you may be eligible for a Clean Energy Grant from Prince George's County. There are numerous improvements available under this program that will save you money in the long term on energy bills. You can learn more by visiting the application here: <https://bit.ly/pg-ceg-app>

Other Programs

To find out more about programs available to Prince George's County Residents, visit the County's [Sustainability](#) website. And for the 98 different programs available in Maryland, check the [DSIRE database](#) for which ones you might qualify for.

Confused? Prince George's County has an [Energy Coach](#) to help you. And if you don't get a prompt a response from the Energy Coach, tell your County Council to fund more county outreach workers to help residents navigate the transition to renewable energy.

Book Review: Real Actions to Reduce the Chance of Impending Disaster

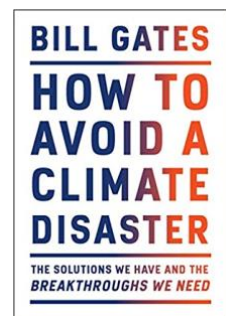
By E. Anne Riley

When I thought of Bill Gates I did not associate him with environmental issues. But he has spent a decade educating himself about a wide range of relevant concerns due to his interests in poverty and energy. His NY Times bestseller, [How to Avoid a Climate Disaster](#), makes specific recommendations of how to get

from 51 billion tons of greenhouse gases to zero. He is optimistic but realistic, bringing his business acumen and a world view to bear on complicated problems. He is very adept at explaining and helping with concepts. He explains: Kilowatt = house. Gigawatt = mid-size city. Hundreds of gigawatts = big, rich country.

He says three of the most important materials are steel, concrete and plastic, not to mention fertilizer, glass or aluminum. Making one ton of steel produces about 1.8 tons of carbon dioxide and by mid-century we'll be producing 50% more. China has already produced more concrete in the 21st century than the U.S. did in the entire 20th century! Concrete is made with cement. Make a ton of cement and you get a ton of carbon dioxide pollution.

He emphasizes the importance of government policies and having a plan of how to actually achieve getting to zero. It won't be easy. He outlines what technology has done and the many huge obstacles to further critical technological development.



In his last chapter, he outlines what each of us can do. In addition to eating less meat and driving an electric car, surprisingly, he believes that **engaging in the political process is the single most important step** that folks from every walk of life can take to avoid a climate disaster. He urges actions be both local and national.

As a consumer, he reminds us that the market is ruled by supply and demand; the latter is where we come in. When we buy the more expensive energy-saving heat pump, for example, we give manufacturers the economic incentive to produce more. Besides the usual LEDs, insulation, efficient appliances, etc., if you are planning housing construction or remodeling you might consider using recycled steel, structural insulated panels, insulating concrete forms, attic radiant barriers, reflective insulation, foundation insulation & smart windows.

We can all contribute to the future by significantly ramping up our awareness, making sustainability a genuine priority, and improving many of our usage habits involving water, lighting, AC, food waste, recycling and food choices. Let's do it and encourage others, for the future of children, creatures and plants.

Land Use Decisions: A New Currency Production Facility at BARC?

By Vijay Parameshwaran

The USDA's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) is a large green space in Northern Prince George's County, and is part of a "green corridor" that includes Greenbelt Park, the Greenbelt Forest Preserve, and the Patuxent Research Refuge. This corridor forms the largest contiguous stretch of forest land on the East Coast between Boston and Richmond.

As this space is Federal land, it is under constant scrutiny for development opportunities, either with new government buildings or with private projects. The latest danger to the BARC land comes from the US Department of Treasury, which has plans to build a Coin Production Facility (CPF) on the site as a part of its Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP).

Building an extensive CPF on the BARC green space has grave environmental and ecological implications. It will be built out into a sprawling 1 million square foot complex, and take up a massive ecological footprint of 122 acres on a pristine green space. The wetlands in the site area will be filled and destroyed. The water from Beaverdam and Indian Creeks would be significantly affected, as it would be diverted to supply processes in the CPF.

The impact of this facility is more than the building; it's also the vehicle-miles traveled associated with it. Because of a lack of public transit access, the only available work commute would be with cars, adding to the carbon dioxide emissions. A 1200-space parking lot would add to the facility's footprint, and additional road work is required in the area to be able to handle increased traffic. Out of several potential locations in the greater DC-Maryland-Virginia metropolitan area, this site was chosen for no other apparent reason than aesthetics.

Finally, the CPF is unlike most buildings. Because currency production is dependent on chemical processes, the project is essentially placing a chemical plant on a pristine green site. The chemicals range from sulfuric acid, to castor oil, to solvents, to caustic soda, which combined, pose significant health and toxicity hazards if not handled properly. The final environmental impact statement (EIS) for this project does not sufficiently address building and operational controls for these chemicals. No on-site treatment is planned; only off-site transport, landfill, impoundment, and incineration. The water from Beaverdam and Indian Creeks could also be contaminated from these chemicals without appropriate handling and controls. The BEP's facilities in both Washington DC and Fort Worth TX have been previously cited by the EPA for chemical waste disposal and air violations, creating a worrying precedent.

So where are we at now? Public commenting on the final EIS ended on July 6, and as we await the decision on whether the project is approved by the Army Corps of Engineers, it is important to communicate with Prince George's County officials, as well as the Department of the Treasury and the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). They should be informed about the hazards of this project, whether it is a necessity, and possible alternative location sites. The NCPC will hold a hearing this Fall on the project where public comments will be solicited; please consider providing your own testimony! More details can be found at <https://www.ncpc.gov>.



Great Egret at Schoolhouse Pond August 2021

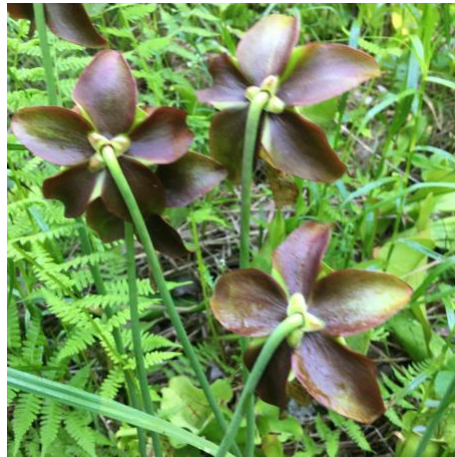
Nature Corner: Suitland Bog

By Sarah Gingold

Pictures by Janet Gingold

If you want an unusual nature experience with little effort, I highly recommend visiting the Suitland Bog. It's actually a fen, not a bog, the difference being that a bog is a big puddle while a fen is a big puddle with water running through it. Quibbling about details aside, it's a really short walk tucked away in a corner of a suburban neighborhood, where a wooded path takes you to a small loop of boardwalk. There you can see many plants that you can't see many places around here because the bog has soggy soil conditions that only some plants can tolerate.

One of the most curious plants that is found at Suitland Bog and not in other local wetlands is the purple pitcher plant. It is purple (go figure) and shaped like a pitcher (really?). Unlike most plants, the purple pitcher plant is carnivorous – it “eats” insects when they fall into the plant’s pitcher and are dissolved by the liquid inside the pitcher, providing nutrients not available from the nitrogen-poor soil.



Sweetbay magnolias are trees that have a high tolerance for wetness; thus, they prefer bogs and fens. They have white flowers with larger circular petals and a lemon-y scent.

The rose pogonia is in the orchid family, and also has a tolerance for wetland conditions of Suitland Bog.



In the bog, flowers are surrounded by diverse ferns and mosses such as the cinnamon fern and the sphagnum moss.



Suitland Bog is one of Prince George’s County’s Special Conservation Areas. Enjoy it and protect it. [Leave no trace](#) of your visit. Removal of plants is prohibited.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Events are planned with your safety in mind. If conditions or public health recommendations change, some in-person events might need to be cancelled or converted to virtual events. When attending in-person events, be mindful that vaccinated and unvaccinated persons might be present.

Prince George's Sierra Club Zero Waste Team meeting. Saturday, August 14, 10AM (virtual).

Register at

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002F9mJAAS&mapLinkHref=>

Hike together at Watkins Park, Sunday, August 15 at 9 AM. (in person) Register at

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002FIstAAG&mapLinkHref=https://maps.google.com/maps&daddr=Hike%20Together%20in%20Watkins%20Park@38.887471,-76.797694>

Prince George's Sierra Club Climate Action Team meeting: Monday, August 16, 5PM. (virtual)

Register at

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000001IXObAAM&mapLinkHref=>

Prince George's County's Third Virtual Community Meeting on the Climate Action Plan, Thursday, August 19, 6:30-8:30 PM. Find out more and register now at

https://umd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJErduqsriopGtJRV8aUD3vo_qIGvBaRcMGq

Prince George's Sierra Club Executive Committee Meeting, Sunday September 11 at 4PM. (virtual)

Register at

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002FJy0AAG&mapLinkHref=>

Prince George's County Climate Action Commission meeting on the Climate Action Plan. Friday, September 17, 1-3 PM. Live-streamed at <https://pgccouncil.us/303/County-Council-Video>

Prince George's County Sierra Club Fall Get-Together and Presentation of 2021 Maloney Award. Saturday, September 25, 1-4 PM (in person). Register at

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000001IXRLAA2&mapLinkHref=>

Prince George's Sierra Club Executive Committee Meeting, Sunday, October 3 at 4 PM. (virtual)

Register at

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002FJy5AAG&mapLinkHref=>

Big Ideas Discussion: Under a White Sky by Elizabeth Kolbert. Sunday, October 10, 4:30 PM (virtual)

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002FMFJAA4>

Maryland Chapter Jamboree at Sandy Cove Retreat—Together Again Outdoors. October 15-17. (in person) Register at

<https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000001IXQrAAM&mapLinkHref=https://maps.google.com/maps&daddr=2021%20Jamboree%20Fall%20Frolic:%20Together%20Again%20Outdoors!@39.542193,-75.968367>

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT



**DISCUSSION
TOPICS:**

- Dive into recommendations for greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions
- Review detailed blueprint recommendations for topic areas

**CLIMATE ACTION IS
AN OPPORTUNITY
FOR:**

Promoting renewable energy for residents and businesses

Enhancing residential green infrastructure and urban tree canopy

Expanding efforts to divert waste from the landfill

Come discuss the challenges, opportunities, and creation of our County's Climate Action Plan!



Angela D. Alsobrooks
County Executive

THURSDAY
AUGUST 19
2021

6:30PM - 8:30PM

TO REGISTER FOR THE MEETING
AND LEARN MORE, VISIT:

mypgc.us/climateactionplan

For more information, contact Mary Abe at mabe@co.pg.md.us or call (240) 539-0511.



CONDADO DE PRINCE GEORGE
DEPARTAMENTO DE MEDIO AMBIENTE



JUEVES 19 DE
AGOSTO DE 2021

6:30PM - 8:30PM

PARA INSCRIBIRSE EN LA REUNIÓN,
O PARA MÁS INFORMACIÓN, VISITE:
mypgc.us/climateactionplan

Para obtener más información, comuníquese con Mary Abe, mabe@co.pg.md.us o llame al (240) 539-0511.

TEMAS DE PRESENTACIÓN:

- Discutir en detalla las recomendaciones para la reducción de gases de efecto invernadero (GEI)
- Revisar las recomendaciones detalladas del plan para las distintas áreas temáticas

LA ACCIÓN CLIMÁTICA ES UNA OPORTUNIDAD PARA:

Promocionar energías renovables para residentes y empresas

Mejorar la infraestructura verde residencial y la superficie urbana arbolada

Ampliar esfuerzos para desviar desechos que terminan en vertederos/ basurales

¡Venga a discutir los desafíos, las oportunidades y la creación del Plan de Acción Climática de nuestro condado!



Angela D. Alsobrooks
County Executive

