



Sprawl Follows The Pipes

How Government Supports Sprawl

A Presentation of the Sierra Club 'Green Paper' on the Monroe County Water Authority

Thursday, February 7th, 7:30 PM - First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Road South

On Thursday, February 7th, the Rochester Regional Group will release and publicly discuss the findings from our study on the relationship between government funding and sprawl in the Rochester region. The paper, titled *Sprawl Follows The Pipes*, is an in-depth look at the operations of the Monroe County Water Authority and how it supports and funds the infrastructure of poorly planned regional growth. The study is the culmination of the Water Explorer's Project which was funded by the Atlantic Chapter of Sierra Club. This membership program is free and open to the public.

Monroe County Water Authority has expressed the belief that it is their "manifest destiny" to expand their water pipes

It is no secret that in Monroe County the administration is not only remarkably pro-business but also strongly pro-development, often to the exclusion of other needs. County government support for private development is one critical reason why our region has experienced an explosion of sprawl in the last 25 years despite the fact we have seen little economic or population expansion. One of the key 'quasi-governmental' agencies supporting these sprawl developments is the Monroe County Water Authority, who have expressed the belief that it is their "manifest destiny" to expand their water pipes

over all of Monroe County plus adjacent regions.

The sprawl we are experiencing translates into the loss of woodlands, the loss of bird and animal habitat, increase in non-point source water pollution, and increased air pollution. The fifty-page Rochester Regional Group study documents how this 'profit at the price of nature' occurs, showing the link between private development projects, local governments and water pipe expansion.

Our Sierra Club RIT environmental intern, Danielle Mettler, spent all summer researching how the Monroe County Water Authority succeeded in taking over water distribution for all of Genesee County.

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Ancient Trees of Western New York

A Talk by Bruce Kershner: Western NY Old Growth Forest Survey

Thursday, March 21, 7:00 PM - First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. South



Award winning environmentalist and forest ecologist Bruce Kershner, who has been documenting old growth tracts throughout Western NY, has published several local books on the subject and has an impressive slide show documenting his findings. He will give Sierra Club members (public invited) an illustrated talk about these survivors of the ancient forests. His pictures include shots taken last summer of the Hemlock forest old growth trees.

Recently the Democrat & Chronicle headlines announced "ECOLOGISTS

FIND OLD FOREST AT HEMLOCK." The story by Corydon Ireland reported that "Buffalo ecologists" [at the request of the Sierra Club] claim that about 415 acres of woods on the southwest shore of Hemlock Lake are untouched, ancient old growth forest." Further, the area which is tucked into the ravines and hanging on the edge of very steep slopes, contains some oaks and hemlocks over 300 years old, as well as some groves of hemlocks where the youngest trees are 165 years old.

From the Chair



by Hugh Mitchell

Let's face it. Monroe County has been Malled and Sprawled. The city

has become increasingly strangled by rings of ugly, faceless suburban shopping malls, new housing projects, and massive parking lots. But sprawl is not inevitable. As the national Sierra Club website points out, "We are not doomed to a future of traffic, air pollution, abandoned city centers [with failing schools] and lost open space." But we do have to ask how sprawl creeps over the rural landscape. We need to recognize that one of the most powerful engines of sprawl is the public sector which supports private profits through funding roads, water, sewers, and other utilities. But how and why? In order to slow or reverse poorly planned suburban growth we need to understand exactly how the octopus of sprawl develops tentacles which strangle the city.

An examination of national sprawl in USA Today, points out, "The availability of water is a major factor limiting or allowing sprawl." With this in mind, two years ago our Rochester Sierra Club Group set out to examine issues related to water. I'm pleased to report that we have now complete a study on the relationship between government support for water pipe expansion and the growth of regional sprawl. (See page 1 article.) Our 50-page study, titled "Sprawl Follows The Pipes" details how the Monroe County Water Authority has expanded their water system over much of the region and in the process has facilitated and supported unplanned or poorly planned development.

One of the findings of the study is that the Water Authority is a mirror of the County administration and they follow the same expansionist philosophy of facilitating private profit. County Executive Jack Doyle has

appointed his close associate John Stanwix to be Director and appointed a bevy of party loyalists to the Authority Board of Directors. That they are key players in Monroe County suburban development should be no surprise since most of the seven member, all-male Board have direct ties to real estate, construction, developers, and county government. The Board is headed by Max Farash, one of the largest real estate owners and managers in the county. Is it any wonder that sprawl follows the pipes?

To learn more about this I recommend you come to our February 7th membership meeting and pick up a copy of the paper. You can also obtain a copy in advance by contacting our Rochester Regional Group at the addresses listed in this Eco-logue.

Environmental Forum Coming

Mark Your Calendar Now. The 4th Annual Sierra Club Environmental Forum will be on Thursday, April 18th.

Rochester Mayor William A. Johnson, Jr. will be the keynote speaker at the annual gathering of the regional environmental community sponsored by the Sierra Club and the Choices & Environment Task Force of the First Unitarian Church. He will be speaking on the cost of sprawl to the environment, the economy, and people of the region. He is expected to emphasize the environmental justice ramifications of sprawl as applied to the poor. Last year approximately 23 groups had booths and displays at the Forum. This year we expect many more, so mark your calendar now and plan to come to the First Unitarian Church, Thursday, April 18th. Displays and booths open at 6:30 PM. The program begins at 7:30.

Eco-logue is published bimonthly by the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club, Post Office Box 39516, Rochester, NY 14604-9516. Subscriptions are free to Sierra Club members living in the Rochester Region, and available at \$10 per year to others.

Clean Air/Clean Water

by Laura Arney

Air quality is not just an issue for people in Los Angeles or Houston, it is an issue for people in New York State as witnessed by the acid rain which affects Adirondack lakes and the people of Rochester who continue to suffer from asthma. This committee is embarking on an effort to improve Rochester air quality by participating in the air emissions permit renewal process which is presently underway.

Title V of the Clean Air Act intends to "improve the compliance with existing air regulations." This is the year for the power plants at Kodak and RG&E to seek re-authorization for their air discharges under Title V. The federal EPA and the NY State DEC have incorporated citizen participation in their regulatory scheme. Furthermore if citizens do NOT participate, it will be assumed that the citizens approve of the measures taken by these agencies. It is in the interest of the environment and democratic government that we be a part of the solution to our pollution problems.

Specifically, we need reviewers, people willing to learn about the issues and the generalities. Study and commenting can be done at home with telephoning and email conveniences. Face-to-face meetings will be limited. Our goal will be to submit written comments on permits to the DEC as a committee. The philosophy of "think globally, act locally" can be put into action. Please call Laura E. Arney at 334-8548 to help this committee make a difference.

Energy Tips

Replace your most frequently used incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lights. They use about a third as much energy.

When buying appliances look for *Energy Star* models.

Outing schedule - Spring, 2002

Date	Destination	Meeting	Special Equipment
February 16	Harriett Holister Spencer Wildlife Area (see article below)	9:00 AM at Unitarian Church	cross-country skis; lunch
March 23	Winter Waterfall Hike (see article below)	Call Peter Debes at 271-4796 for reservation and info	Sturdy footwear with lugged soles required; lunch
April 20	Mendon Ponds Park	9:00 AM at Unitarian Church	Bring bag lunch
May 18	Old Growth Forest	Call Hugh Mitchell at 244-2625 for reservation	Bring bag lunch
June 15	Oatka Creek Park	9:00 AM at Unitarian Church	Bring bag lunch
July 20	Webster Bay Park	9:00 AM at Unitarian Church	Bring bag lunch
August 10	Canoe Trip with Laura Arney (tentative)		

Harriet Hollister Spencer Wildlife Area

This very unique spot offers two very unique features for this part of New York State: (1) a gorgeous view high on the bluff overlooking the south end of Honeoye Lake; and (2) SNOW. Only one hours drive from Rochester, this area rivals the Tug Hill in guaranteeing good snow cover at all times during the winter months, even on days when the vistas in Rochester would seem to make skiing out of the question.

Sprawl follows the Pipes

(continued from page 1)

In her portion of the report, Danielle suggests that the long distance extension of water pipes from Lake Ontario will lead to a significant increase in suburban sprawl over an area now largely composed of bucolic old farms and beautiful small villages.

A copy of *Our Sprawl Follows The Pipes* may be obtained by writing Sierra Club, PO Box 39516, Rochester, NY 14604 or by calling 244-2625. A small, voluntary contribution to cover printing and mailing costs is requested.

Winter Waterfalls:

Winter waterfalls scenarios with their ice sculptures and unusual seasonal appearance are a favorite venue of Peter Debes, which he will be sharing with us on March 23rd. The actual location will remain a bit of a mystery to be determined on the basis of conditions at the time. But be sure to wear footwear with good grips. Call Peter at 271-4796 for information and directions.

Population/Sustainability Committee

The Sierra Club Population and Sustainability Committee meets with the Choices and the Environment Task Force of the First Unitarian Church.

On **Sunday, February 3**, at 1:00 PM, Juanita Ball will speak on the topic "Victims of Sprawl." Juanita has researched and taught classes on urban sprawl. Sprawl affects billions of people worldwide, and has serious effects on energy use as well as loss of open space.

On **Sunday, February 10**, at 10:00 AM, Marcia Peone will give a talk on Reproductive Choice in New York.

On **Sunday, March 3**, at 1:00 PM, Hank Stone will discuss Population and Sustainability: World Population will fall in this century. The question is, will this happen by planning or by letting nature take its course?

All meetings are at the Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Road South.



CALENDAR

Feb. 3	Sunday	12:45 PM	----- Population/Sustainability Committee (see page 3) -----	----- First Unitarian Church ¹
Feb. 6	Thursday	6:30 PM	Kandid Coalition	(see note 4)
Feb. 7	Thursday	7:30 PM	----- Membership Meeting - Sprawl/Pipes (see page 1) -----	----- First Unitarian Church¹
Feb. 10	Sunday	10:00 AM	Population/Sustainability Committee	First Unitarian Church ¹
Feb. 14	Thursday	6:30 PM	----- ExCom meeting ² -----	----- St. John's Meadows ²
Feb. 16	Saturday	9:00 AM	Skiing at Harriet Holister Park (see page 3)	meet at First Unitarian Church ¹
Feb. 20	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Wetlands Committee -----	----- 150 Sunset Drive, Brighton
Feb. 20	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Energy Committee	25 Brook Hill Lane, Apt. E, Penfield ⁵
Mar. 3	Sunday	1:00 PM	----- Population/Sustainability Committee(see page 3) -----	----- First Unitarian Church ¹
Mar. 7	Thursday	6:30 PM	Kandid Coalition	(see note 4)
Mar. 14	Thursday	6:30 PM	----- ExCom meeting ² -----	----- St. John's Meadows ²
Mar. 15	Friday		Eco-logue deadline	
Mar. 20	Wednesday	7:30 PM	----- Wetlands Committee -----	----- 150 Sunset Drive, Brighton
Mar. 20	Wednesday	7:30 PM	Energy Committee	25 Brook Hill Lane, Apt. E, Penfield ⁵
Mar. 21	Thursday	7:00 PM	----- Membership Meeting, Ancient Trees of NY (see Page 1) -----	----- First Unitarian Church¹
Mar. 23	Saturday		Winter Waterfall Hike (see page 3)	Call 271-4796 for directions
Mar. 31	Sunday	1:30 PM	-----	----- Eco-logue mailing party ³

¹First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Rd. South

⁴Call Laura Arney 334-8548 to confirm time & place

²Open to members. Call Hugh Mitchell at 244-2625.

⁵Call Michael at 586-4618 for directions

³Call Ray Nelson, 342-2734 for time and location

Visit our web site at <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester>

Also worth a visit: <http://rochesterenvironment.com>

To add your name to our e-mail list send your address to frankrrr@rochester.rr.com

Call 244-2625 for info about Sierra Club events and voice mail.