

eco-logue

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Vol. 40, No. 3

Rochester Regional Group

Sept-Oct 2010

Fall Festival: Adventures in the Amazon

Saturday, October 16, 2010 • Come to eat, enjoy, and help out!

Join us for our annual Fall Festival! Each year we take a break from our many serious and important efforts, and enjoy some upbeat time together. This event is also a fundraiser that helps support our efforts with the Washington Grove Coalition, Buckland Creek remediation, Great Lakes and conservation/renewable energy lobbying efforts, and others, plus our largest annual public event, the Spring Environmental Forum.

ADVENTURES IN THE AMAZON:

See how a naturalist gets down and dirty in the depths of the Amazon rainforest. Peter Debes, Vice Chair of the Rochester Regional Group, will astonish you with close-up pictures of creatures and plants he has encountered on his trips to lead groups and do research there. He hopes to convince you to love things you always used to hate: spiders, ants, snakes, piranhas, bugs and more. His presentation is geared for adults and children and he is sure to have you riveted to your seat.

SCHEDULE:

4: 00 P.M. SCAVENGER HUNT AND GAMES -- for children ages 3 and older.

5:00 P.M. PASTA POTLUCK DINNER (see below) 5:30 P.M. Celebration of the addition of the lands around Canadice and Hemlock lakes to the State's parklands!

6:00 – 7:00 P.M. Adventures in the Amazon slide show.

ADMISSION:

\$10/person, maximum \$25/family, but if you can help in one of the ways listed below, you'll save \$2 off the admission fee!

Please consider one of these:

• Bring a pasta sauce (think marinara, alfredo,

- vodka cream, pesto... get creative!)
- Bring a salad or dessert
- Help lay out the buffet table
- Help staff the Welcome Table
- Help clean up afterwards

WHERE:

Tay House Lodge, located behind No. 1 Elementary School on Hillside Avenue in Rochester, on the edge of Cobb's Hill Park. A short spur road leads up to the lodge past the School parking lot. There is parking by the lodge, and adjacent lots of the Monroe County Water Authority and school.

RSVP (requested but not required):

Please contact us at (585) 234-1056 and let us know if you plan to come and if you can help in one of the above ways. Even if you can't help, please do join us. We will very much appreciate the support that your presence brings. Especially if you haven't come to any events in the past, please come -- we'd love to meet you!!

Ithaca is Gorgeous and So is Moosewood Saturday, October 23, 2010

Ithaca is gorgeous and so is eating at the Moosewood vegetarian restaurant. Would you like to work up an appetite by taking an amble in Taughannock Falls Park on an easy walk beside the creek to see a waterfall which is higher than Niagara Falls? And, while walking, would you like to learn about the geological history of the area through a lecture by Prof. Bill Chaisson, PhD? How about driving on to lunch at the Moosewood, one of the world's most creative vegetarian restaurants? The Moosewood is located in Ithaca, nestled below Cornell and the hills at the southern end of Cayuga Lake. You can do all this by signing up in advance for this Sierra Club special outing. The \$25 participation fee includes: guide, shared carpool expense, park admission, and wonderful luncheon menu. Estimated time: 6 hours.

1. Contact Hugh Mitchell at 585-244-2625 to reserve a spot.

2. Send \$25 check made out to Sierra Club to: Sierra Club, PO Box 10518, Rochester, NY 14610-0518 by 10/12/10.

3. Meet for carpool & directions: 8:30am, Saturday, 10/23/10 at Lake Riley Lodge, Cobb's Hill Park, Culver Rd. (next to Rt 490), Rochester.



From the Chair: Break the Cycle of Violence Against the Earth By Deb Muratore

I remember watching *The Three Stooges* as a child and didn't find them funny. I couldn't understand why everyone else was laughing and I wasn't. I wondered if there was something wrong with me. I felt confused. I didn't have the words to describe what I was feeling and didn't have anyone to talk to about it. As I got older I realized that the word to describe this was "violence," though it was called slapstick.

Most of us carry psychological childhood scars. Many times we do not even realize they exist and they may remain with us all our lives and we pass these learned behaviors on to our children. It's time to break the acceptable violence habit. As I saw a man throw a cigarette butt out of his car window, I wanted to ask him if his mother was in the back seat and was going to clean up after him. This simple act, though repeated thousands of times a minute, is violence against the earth. We need to call it what it really is and stop the habit.

I've participated in many beach and park cleanups and picked up other people's trash. People need to take responsibility for their violent actions and disrespect of the earth, and stop expecting someone to clean up after them. Disrespect of the earth is violence against the earth. Once we recognize and "name" something we can start to take steps to change. I look at the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico - and now it's in our back yard with the oil spill at RG&E's Russell Station, impacting Lake Ontario - and wonder if the glass is half empty or half full. Right now the glass is pretty dirty. I'm overwhelmed by the destruction, apathy and lack of leadership. I keep hoping that some good will come out of this - a sense of urgency of what we're really doing to the earth, and how we need to conserve energy, use renewable and less polluting energy sources and reduce our consumption lifestyles.

When we don't have words or an alternative view, we think this behavior is acceptable and the norm. We now have the words and it's time to take action.

Executive Committee Nominations Are Now Open

This is an opportunity to nominate yourself or another candidate.

Our Executive Committee (Ex-Com) is composed of 12 Environmentalists. Six members are elected each year, so we now have six openings on the Ex-Com. Why not consider running for office?

We meet for two hours on the first Tuesday of the month from 6:30 to 8:30 at the Harro East building in Rochester. Many Ex-Com members (but not all) choose to join or chair an Administration or Conservation committee. Others serve "at large" and choose to add their voice and vote on environmental issues. We're all friends who help and learn from each other.

In the past, a number of people interested in doing something about conservation, who have not had much prior experience with leadership, have joined the board. It's a great way to work with a group and sharpen your leadership skills. Training and guidance are available both locally and through online conference calls with National staff. If you're interested in learning more about seeking a nomination for the Ex-Com or if you have a Sierra Club friend who you think would make a good board member, please call or e-mail Deb at 585-385-9743 or

deb.muratore@hotmail.com.

Nominations close October 15th.

Thank you from the Nominating Committee: Bette, Carrie & Deb

Support Wind Power: Choose a Green Energy Option

By Bette Heger

The August 8th Democrat and Chronicle article on the state of our power grid included a graphic showing NY using 3% of renewable energy. That's better than the 1% or less rating that many states received, but a long way from Governor Patterson's goal of 45% renewable electricity by 2015. So how can you help? Go Green. If you haven't selected an electricity provider with a green option, please consider making that choice for 2011.

One way to review what options are available to you is to go to the NY Public Service Commission, www.dps.state.ny.us, and select "Power to Choose - Energy Competition" on the home page. Then click on "Power to Choose" and you can enter your zip code to review all of the options available to you and compare some of those green options. If you select "View Sample" next to one of the options, you will be connected to that company's website for further information.

Using a green energy option for your electricity may cost a little more but this is our contribution for moving New York toward renewable energy resources and reducing our consumption of fossil fuels. Let's get off coal and oil!

STAY CONNECTED • JOIN IN • TAKE ACTION

Our Rochester Regional Group is working on ways to help you, our membership, stay connected with us and become more active in the efforts that are important to you. We make every effort to communicate upcoming activities in this quarterly newsletter, yet things happen so quickly -- new information and activities of interest to you come about much more frequently.

STAY CONNECTED: Simply sign up at http://newyork.sierraclub. org/rochester/ to receive our weekly Saturday e-mail. At the bottom left corner of the page, enter your e-mail address to join the Google group. You can also feel free to contact any of our Executive Committee members or Conservation Committee Chairs. Their e-mail addresses are now included on the back page of our newsletter, along with the calendar of events.

JOIN IN: Join our efforts. In addition to our ongoing Committee work, there are many opportunities to work together and to have fun, too. We always need folks for a few hours to help with staffing our information table at community events (Spring through Fall), and there are environmental clean-up days several times a year. Get more involved with one of our Conservation Committees or help with our major event planning like the Fall Festival or Spring Forum. See separate articles in this newsletter for specific ways to get involved now.

TAKE ACTION: Your voice is needed! Our local, state and federal politicians are deciding critical issues that will impact our local environment and community. Often there isn't a lot of lead time, so our weekly e-mail includes Call-To-Action items noting how your call, e-mail or letter can help make a difference.

Need more information? Please contact us! We'll respond to voicemail 585-234-1056 or e-mail (see back page). We promise to be in touch with you promptly!

Letters From Our Members: Let Us Know What You're Doing

Educational Workshop at Monroe Community College

By Mark Graupman

Passion for the environment was the theme on July 19th as MCC hosted 'Greening Your Career Skills,' an educational workshop. The seminar, which presented current thinking around green and its impact on people and businesses, focused on three opportunities to understand more about Rochester's green technology sector.

First was keynote speaker Matt Hurlbutt, of Greater Rochester Enterprise. GRE's mission is to attract new businesses to our area. Hurlbutt's talk included current green technologies and companies in Rochester, as well as future energy innovation leaders in the areas of solar, fuel cell, wind and bio-fuel businesses.

Second was a panel discussion focusing on green design, energy systems and building science. The panel offered their insight into four topics - the impact of green, what's driving change, skill-sets needed and best green tip. These experts in the areas of engineering, management, consulting and education stressed that sustainability is a mindset change for most and environmental concerns need to be the focus as technologies move forward.

The final portion of the morning workshop was break-out sessions, which gave participants the opportunity to learn more about degree options, certifications and retraining for a "green" career. 'Greening Your Career Skills' attendees learned the importance of looking through a "green lens" in all they do.

Annual Environmental Forum: Spring 2011

Join us in planning Rochester's biggest Earth Day event!

We are in the very early stages of planning our biggest event of the year. Please join us! This is a fantastic way to get involved if you are looking for a way to connect with us, to work on an important, visible project, and to take on a well-defined task. We will hold our first meeting on Monday, October 11 at 6:30 pm at 3 Penview Drive, Rochester, NY 14625. The topic of the Forum has yet to be chosen, so this is your chance to really shape the Sierra Club's public education efforts for next year. If you'd like to help, or just explore the opportunity more fully, please contact Deb Muratore at:

585-385-9743 or

deb.muratore@hotmail.com.

Highlights of Success: An Account of the Successful Efforts to Save Hemlock/Canadice Lands

By Hugh Mitchell

This spring, the City of Rochester succeeded in selling 7,200 acres of the upland watershed nature lands around Hemlock/Canadice Lakes to New York State. However, this rare deal did not happen automatically. It was the result of over 35 years of (off and on) lobbying efforts by a great variety of people both in the not-for-profit sector and in government. What made the sale so unique was not just that it was finally achieved in this time of great financial hardship, but that the State was willing to close on the deal at all. Up until now NYS had guietly rebuffed all efforts to preserve these rare wild Finger Lakes lands on the basis that if they agreed to the purchase from Rochester, a great number of other communities around the state would demand equal treatment for their reservoir lands - particularly New York City.

Since the 1970s, Rochester has looked longingly to sell the wild watershed lands to New York because they are very costly to maintain. The motivation to make the lands as self-sustaining as possible resulted in the first major problem for the lakes, which occurred in 1972. That year, the City contracted with a timber company to log the area. I was actually at the City Council meeting when the proposal was presented as "an improvement to the forest by removing less valuable trees to permit a stronger, healthier forest in the future". In fact, the exact opposite happened. The largest and best trees were removed for sale, many of which were located on steep slopes. The result was serious erosion and silting in the reservoirs, which may have later contributed to the demand to build a filtration plant.

In 1988, for the first time in 100 years, Rochester was forced to issue a brief 'Boil Water' advisory



on the Hemlock/Canadice water due to a rare natural storm event that washed millions of gypsy moths into the reservoirs, resulting in problems in the old iron pipes. As a result, the NYS Health Department demanded that the City build a filtration facility based on this violation of the State Sanitary Code. Environmentalists stepped up to question this order not only because the problem was so rare, but also because once the water was filtered, the City might be tempted to open the shores for sale for private development. Our protests helped lead to the creation of a 40-year City agreement with local towns on tax abatements and preservation of the wild lands.

In spring of 2002, some Hemlock neighbors contacted the Sierra Club to report that a new road was being constructed toward the old growth forest slopes on the west side of Hemlock Lake. This area had never been logged. The report turned out to be correct. The City was planning to sell timber from that section to help pay the taxes and maintenance costs of the lakes. In response, the Sierra Club ran a number of educational hikes into this hard to reach section and conducted a lobbying campaign to preserve the old

growth area which was certified to contain some trees up to 300 years of age. We won and, fortunately, the area is still protected by the fact that the only access is through private property.

Most recently, particularly led by the Central & Western New York Nature Conservancy, there was a major new effort to persuade New York to buy these rare and wonderful nature lands. After a great deal of direct and indirect lobbying effort by multiple citizen groups as well as by the City, success was finally achieved. All the people of New York now own Hemlock/Canadice nature lands. What we now need is a coalition to work with the DEC on creating a viable, long term Unit Management Plan for the area which will guarantee preservation, water purity and public use.

Surviving Peak Oil and Liking It By Mike Rudnick

For decades, selected experts have warned that world oil production will eventually peak and then inexorably decline. It appears that time may be now. Learn about and discuss fossil fuels, how they touch and shape our lives, and how we can transition to reduced dependence as they become ever more costly. We'll discuss the connection between cheap fossil fuels, environmental degradation, climate change and a robust economy.

These discussions will take place the third Monday of every month beginning January 2011 at the Pittsford Library Fisher Room, 6:30-8:30 PM. The January meeting is organizational and introductory. Please contact the Pittsford Library or visit the library's website for the exact date in case there is a change in schedule.

The Trials, Tribulations, and Success of Grassroots Activism

When people think of the city of Rochester, they often think of its beautiful parks. Frederick Law Olmsted recognized the unique beauty of the low hills and ridges that form the southern boundary of the city and advised the City of Rochester to preserve these lands as parks. Today, one of these parks, Cobb's Hill, is the focus of a successful effort to protect and preserve a 25-acre patch of classic oak-hickory forest that lies only two miles from the center of Rochester. Named the Washington Grove after our first President, it offers

a variety of paths that wind through majestic oaks, hickories, tulip trees, and other large tree species native to this area. Washington Grove, however, has been undergoing many negative changes. Trails are eroding and becoming wider as more and more people use the Grove. Undergrowth is thinning, and some native species are disappearing due to disease and competition with exotic species. Large oaks are falling as they age, opening up gaps that should permit young oaks to sprout, yet few are replacing them.

I had grown up in a house right next to the Grove and had become concerned about its future. Three years ago, I discussed the idea of removing invasive Norway maples in the forest with a city forester. What followed is a fascinating story of how a grass-roots movement was founded, expanded, experienced strife and controversy, and through a consensus-based process, developed a plan that is now serving as the basis for long-term management by the City of Rochester.

Our first challenge was to form a citizens' group to propose solutions for the Grove. The political difficulties of such a venture immediately surfaced. Like most citizen groups, it was a challenge to involve people in a long-term commitment, and especially to identify common goals among various interested citizens' groups. I was encouraged by long-time Sierra Club activist, Hugh Mitchell, to develop this project as a coalition By Peter Debes, Vice Chair



Peter Debes and student survey a giant oak in the Grove

involving the City, the Sierra Club and neighborhood groups. Hugh tutored me through the steps needed to meet Sierra Club guidelines and the proposal was approved by the Rochester Regional Group Executive Committee.

I then methodically began to seek out interested partners for the Coalition-- securing names from interested neighbors, contacting neighborhood associations, and working closely with the then Assistant Director of Parks, James Farr, who had been involved in previous efforts to protect and stabilize the Grove. From these efforts, an email list of over 50 organizations and individuals with interest in the project was formed. Of these, there emerged ten committed individuals who, over the course of more than two years, have proposed a management plan for the Grove

To develop a working plan we first identified all the stakeholders (or interest groups) who should have a voice in the plan. Examples of stakeholders were: nature lovers, neighbors, mountain bikers, persons concerned about invasive plants, those with scientific interests, dog-walkers, non-machine users, and those concerned about long-term stewardship. A spokesperson for each group was identified and charged with the task of developing a list of the group's interests and concerns. Over many weeks of work and meetings, I helped facilitate the development of an outline of a management plan from these interests and concerns.

Acrimonious debate frequently threatened to undermine the group over issues such as mountain biking and walking dogs' off leash in the Grove. At least one core group member left the group because of his unyielding stance that dogs should be permitted off-leash, despite the fact that the Assistant Director of Recreation stated that this municipal law could not be changed in the Grove. After years of little surveillance, a culture had developed of defying the law with impunity. Many other people were disturbed by the pro-

posal to cut Norway maple trees in the Grove. Signs posted by the Coalition to inform people about meetings and proposed work were destroyed or sabotaged. The Sierra Club was attacked in other posters. In some cases, neighbors found they were at bitter odds with other neighbors about proposals for management.

It is a testament to the love of the Grove by all, and a commitment to help protect it, that the coalition submitted a proposed plan to city officials. The City organized three public meetings to take comments and revise the tentative plan. One of these was poorly organized and actually cast doubt on the entire project. The last meeting, however, was very well planned and conducted and subsequently the city officially adopted many elements of the plan on a trial basis. In May, foresters removed Norway maples from three demonstration plots in the Grove.

Now comes the part many of you have been waiting for-a chance to help! The city is scheduling work days and seeking volunteers to help continue removing invasive plants, trim brush from the fallen Norway maples, and stabilize trails. The original coalition has been reformed and renamed and now serves to support the city's work as the "Friends of Washington Grove." We look forward to the success of this effort and the reality that we can make a difference and help to preserve the beauty of natural places for future generations to enjoy. Call Peter Debes at 271-4796 to volunteer.

Rochester Regional Group Co-Sponsors International Coastal Clean Up Event

By Deb Muratore

It's that time of year again... time to mark off your calendars for 9 a.m. on Saturday, September 25th, to come on out to the Annual International Coastal Clean Up Event in Monroe County. Each year for the past 17 years, several local beaches and shorelines have participated in the Coastal Clean Up, an international event that over 100 countries participate in that not only provides an opportunity for friends and neighbors to gather to clean their beaches, but to catalog all the debris and litter they remove as well. It is this key data-collection portion that allows communities and decision makers to better understand our littering activities and find more effective and efficient means of combating

it. Internationally, this event will celebrate its 25th year, while locally we will be celebrating out 18th year of participation.

Please join us in this very important clean up effort. Below is the list of registered shoreline sites in Monroe County. For more information, we encourage you to visit the Costal Clean Up website: www.RochesterCoastalCleanUp. org, or email jamie@ rochestercoastalcleanup.org.

Registered Clean Up Sites:

Durand Eastman Beach, Ontario Beach Park (Charlotte), Buckland Creek, Braddock Bay, Greece Ponds, Hamlin Beach State Park, Webster Park, and Oatka Creek

6th Annual Great Lakes Restoration Conference

By Robbyn McKie-Holzworth

In September, the Healing Our Waters®-Great Lakes Coalition will be hosting the 6th Annual Great Lakes Restoration Conference in Buffalo. This year's conference focuses on getting the work done to clean up many environmentally troubled areas across our five Great Lakes.

Some of the topics of discussion will be: understanding and communicating the environmental and economic benefits of environmental restoration projects, ensuring sustainable restoration efforts for the future, laying out the legislative priorities and success stories from projects that have already been set in motion.

Healthy Lakes 2010 PUTTING PEOPLE TO WORK TO RESTORE THE GREAT LAKES

Dates: September 22–24, 2010 **Location:** Adam's Mark Hotel, Buffalo, New York

For more information, visit: www.healthylakes.org/conference

Secret Places & Unknown Paths at Durand-Eastman Park

9:30am, Saturday, September 25, 2010

Durand-Eastman Park on Lake Ontario is well-known to many, but often only in a few spots. This extensive park includes many lesser known and remote trails of serene beauty which see limited foot traffic. We will explore two of these remote beauties. The outing will last for about 2 1/2 hours. We will gather at 9:30 am on Saturday, September 25, but please note - it is necessary to call in advance if you plan to join us.

Contact Howard Camp, 473-1410 or 244-2625 to reserve your spot and to get rendezvous details.

Another Way to Get Involved -- Fun and Food!

Members, please join us by representing the Sierra Club Rochester Regional Group at the Locafest on Sunday, Sept. 26, 1-5 PM, at Genesee Valley Park's Round House Pavilion. We will provide the materials, and if you'd like, we will pair you with an "experienced" member to talk to the public at our table. The festival is sponsored by the Center for Sustainable Living and focuses on food-- eating, growing, preserving, cooking, and tasting! If you can spare 1-3 hours that day, or just want to learn more, please contact Linda at lci msw@hotmail.com, or leave us a voicemail message at 585-234-1056. This is our last "tabling" event of the year. Let it be an excuse for you to meet us if you haven't already.

Monroe County Recycling Facility Tours

Sierra Club members are invited to attend a tour of the Monroe County Recycling Facility. Tours take approximately one hour. **Please RSVP by 12 noon on Wednesday, September 7th for the tour of your choosing** to Carrie Senefelder at 585-381-7145 or at csenefelder@gmail. com. You will be provided with a map to the location once you have RSVPd.

OUTING 1

Friday, September 10th 4:00pm

OUTING 2 Friday, October 8th 4:00pm

ADDRESS:

388 Lee Road Rochester, NY 14606

This is the local Sierra Club's biggest fundraiser each year.

Please consider ordering the 2011 calendars for your holiday gift giving

and support the work of your local Sierra Club.

Proceeds from calendars purchased at local bookstores do not benefit the Rochester Regional Group.

Please mail all orders to: Sierra Club, Calendar Sales PO Box 10518 Rochester, NY 14610

Call 585-266-5376 if you would like to order a large quantity or if you have any questions.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB!



Sierra Club 2011 Calendars	Order Form
	ItemCostQuantityTotalEngagement Calendar\$13.95Wilderness Calendar\$12.95
	Subtotal Shipping (\$3 per calendar) Sales tax
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Executive Committee Members

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Find the Rochester Regional Group on Facebook and LinkedIn!

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Fall 2010 Calendar

All Committees are local volunteer groups of the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club

Date	Day	Time	Calendar/Event	Place
Sept. 7, 2010	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
Sept. 10, 2010	Friday	4:00 pm	Monroe County Recycling Facility Tour	388 Lee Rd, Rochester 14606
Sept. 13, 2010	Monday	7-8:30 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Al Sigl Center, Justin Vigdor Room
Sept. 22-24, 2010	Wed-Fri	All Day	Great Lakes Conference	Adams Mark, Buffalo
Sept. 25, 2010	Saturday	9:00 am	Coastal Clean Up	Multiple locations (see page 5)
Sept. 25, 2010	Saturday	9:30 am	Secret Places and Unknown Paths	Durand Eastman Park
Sept. 26, 2010	Sunday	1-5 pm	Locafest	Genessee Valley Park RH Pavilion
Sept. 28, 2010	Tuesday	7-9 pm	Great Lakes Committee Meeting	12 Corners Middle School Library
Oct. 5, 2010	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
Oct. 8, 2010	Friday	4:00 pm	Monroe County Recycling Facility Tour	388 Lee Rd, Rochester 14606
Oct. 11, 2010	Monday	6:30 pm	Forum Planning Committee Meeting (385-9743)	3 Penview Dr, Rochester 14625
Oct. 11, 2010	Monday	7-8:30 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Al Sigl Center, Justin Vigdor Room
Oct. 16, 2010	Saturday	4-7 pm	Fall Festival	Tay House Lodge
Oct. 23, 2010	Saturday	See page 1	Ithaca is Gorgeous and So is Moosewood	See article on page 1
Oct. 26, 2010	Tuesday	7-9 pm	Great Lakes Committee Meeting	12 Corners Middle School Library
Nov. 2, 2010	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
Nov. 8, 2010	Monday	7-8:30 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Al Sigl Center, Justin Vigdor Room
Nov. 16, 2010	Tuesday	7-9 pm	Great Lakes Committee Meeting	12 Corners Middle School Library

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All Executive Committee meetings are open to Sierra Club members.

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