15th Annual Environmental Forum: Protecting the Great Lakes Forever
A Stop on Maude Barlow’s “Great Lakes Need Great Friends” Tour
April 25-26, 2013

Will global climate change and changing weather patterns affect lake levels and our fresh water supply? Will our water treatment plants process toxic hydrofracking waste water later this year? Will our water supply one day be privatized, managed and controlled by an outside multi-national corporation rather than by our local water authorities?

Almost daily we hear of threats to our water supply that rules and regulations simply cannot fully address. We need a unified approach. We need to speak with one voice. We need to protect our Great Lakes as a Commons for our and future generations. We need to hear from Maude Barlow – a top foot soldier in the fight to protect our world’s precious water! Since the early 90’s, Maude has been motivating citizens worldwide to stand up and take action.

Join us for an engaging evening with internationally renowned speaker, Maude Barlow, on tour in support of her publication, “Our Great Lakes Commons: A People’s Plan to Protect the Great Lakes Forever.”

Her report is intended to serve as background and a call to action on a new proposal to designate the Great Lakes and its tributary waters as a lived Commons, to be shared, protected, carefully managed and enjoyed by all who live around them. Maude is also the author of the highly-acclaimed book, Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and The Coming Battle for the Right to Water.

The morning after Maude’s keynote address, workshops will facilitate a deeper understanding of the principles presented, and a conversation about applying them to specific issues in our community’s watershed. Registration required.

Friday Morning Opening Workshop: For all workshop participants. Led by Maude Barlow and Jim Olson (our keynote speaker last year).

Attendees can also participate in one of the following tracks:

Track 1: The Commons and the Public Trust – How is water currently being used? How is it being replenished? What are the current and potential threats? Participants will learn how to use the public trust as a tool to preserve and protect the Great Lakes and develop a Great Lakes Basin Commons Watershed plan.

Track 2: Student Water Steward Leadership Summit - an effort to engage area college students to become effective watershed stewards for our future!

Track 3: Do it yourself! – A hands-on workshop. Learn from local experts engaged in protecting our water through the use of rain barrels, rain gardens, permaculture and producing water-friendly products.

Please join us in protecting our fresh water as a human right for everyone. Community involvement is essential. These are events you won’t want to miss! Throughout this year we will continue to hold workshops and help engage the community in developing a watershed plan to implement these principles.

Please contact us at SierraClubForum@gmail.com if you or your organization are interested in partnering, tabling or volunteering with us on April 25th to conduct this high-profile event!

Please see our website for up-to-date details and registration for the workshops:
www.newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester
Dear Members & Friends,

Most of this newsletter focuses on events and projects of our Rochester Regional Group. You may be surprised at the depth and breadth of the work and accomplishments achieved by a relatively small group. Won’t you join us at one of our events or meetings? The more people-power behind our shared concerns, the greater our impact will be!

In the meantime, here is what Sierra Club is up to at the State and National levels:

On February 12, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Health (DOH) announced that the deadline would be missed for completion of a health impacts study on hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) for natural gas. Therefore, the DEC’s simultaneous year-long process of formalizing fracking regulations is required to start over. So, the good news is that we should be looking at a delay of the decision regarding fracking in NYS. In his letter to DEC Commissioner Martens, DOH Commissioner Dr. Nirav Shah said, “The Sierra Club cautions that moving forward with permitting, after the SGEIS has been completed and before a new regulatory review has been finalized, will be met with fierce opposition. We trust that the DEC will indeed take this opportunity to reevaluate the legality of using an environmental review process as a de facto regulatory program.” We hope you will join us in our emphatic stance against allowing fracking in NYS before regulations are formalized. For up-to-date information and action alerts on fracking, contact asears@rochester.rr.com. See page 7 for local fracking news.

Just four days prior to the biggest climate change rally in the U.S. (see page 6), Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune was arrested in Washington, DC along with Bill McKibben of 350.org and other leaders and celebrities. They tied themselves to the White House gate to protest the Keystone XL oil pipeline, which Washington is poised to decide upon as of this typing. If approved, it would bring oil from the tar sands of Alberta to the coast of the United States for possible export. If approved, the carbon dioxide emitted from just this extraction and burning of energy would make it doubtful that we can stem the ever-increasing tide of climate change. This was a huge step for Sierra Club. Just weeks prior, Brune announced that for the first time in its 120-year history, Sierra Club would sanction civil disobedience because of the urgency of climate change. We are so proud to be a part of an organization that has stepped up and is taking action in ways commensurate with the magnitude of the challenge!

Linda Isaacson Fedele
Chairperson, Sierra Club Rochester Regional Group

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**In the Hot Seat: Global Climate Change and Its Effect On Us**

**Panelists:**

- **Enid Cardinal:** Senior Advisor on Sustainability to RIT President
- **Udo Fehn:** Professor Emeritus in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Rochester
- **Lou Grinzo:** Economist, Computer Programmer, Writer and Energy/Environmental Enthusiast

Closing Remarks by **Bill McKibben**

Your Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club is happy to co-sponsor this event focusing on climate change. We are proud to work with Interfaith IMPACT of New York State, and all of the panelists plus climate change leader and activist Bill McKibben. Don’t miss this opportunity to ask questions of these experts on the leading edges of climate change science, policy, and activism.
BYO Picnic
at Durand Eastman Park
Meet at parking lot near the park office on Zoo Rd.
Saturday, May 18
11am - 2pm

Please join us for a hopefully fine-weather day for a picnic in Durand Eastman Park, near the shore of Lake Ontario. We will avoid the crowds at Highland Park and take in the lovely trees in bloom and birds at this other wonderful arboretum of a park.

Walk through some lovely wooded trails or take a walk on the beach - your choice. This is a chance to relax in one of our best parks and enjoy the company of others who like to be outside too.

Please bring food and non-alcoholic beverages for yourself or a dish to pass if you would like to share. You may also want to bring a seat or blanket to sit on as this is a picnic.

For questions or to RSVP (appreciated, but not required), call Valerie Rice at 585-734-4981.

Join Sierra Club to Pick Up Durand Eastman Park
Saturday, April 13, 2013
9am-noon: Cleanup • Noon: Thank You Picnic

To join our Sierra Club Team to pick up Durand Eastman Park, please e-mail lci_msw@hotmail.com or call 585-234-1056 and leave a message. Please do not register with Monroe County if you want to be on our Team. We are handling registration of our group. We are seeking 50 fun-loving members and friends to join us in cleaning up trash in the park. Sound like fun? Previous participants have all said they enjoyed the immediate gratification that comes with making something more beautiful.

We are happy to once again partner with Monroe County Parks in this effort because the parks belong to all of us. We are also thrilled that this year there will be a focus on preventing pollution and littering in our parks in the first place.

The first three people to join our team will get a free Sierra Club 2013 wall calendar! Each month brings a beautiful new nature photograph. Details re: meeting location and what to bring will be sent to registrants.

About Maude Barlow, Speaker at the 15th Annual Environmental Forum
Maude Barlow is the National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians and chairs the board of Washington-based Food and Water Watch. She is a founding member of the San Francisco-based International Forum on Globalization and a Councillor with the Hamburg-based World Future Council. Maude is the recipient of 11 honorary doctorates as well as many awards, including the 2005 Right Livelihood Award (known as the “Alternative Nobel”), the Citation of Lifetime Achievement which she received at the 2008 Canadian Environment Awards, the 2009 Earth Day Canada Outstanding Environmental Achievement Award, the 2009 Planet in Focus Eco Hero Award, and the 2011 EarthCare Award, the highest international honour of the Sierra Club (U.S.). In 2008/2009, she served as Senior Advisor on Water to the 63rd President of the United Nations General Assembly and was a leader in the campaign to have water recognized as a human right by the UN. She is also the author of dozens of reports, as well as 16 books, including the international bestseller *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and The Coming Battle for the Right to Water.*
Three-pronged Approach to Avoiding Climate Disaster: Conservation, Political Action, Corporate Change

by Hugh Mitchell, Chairperson, Global Warming/Energy (GW/E) Committee

The scientific facts on the worldwide climate crisis are fully available. They say climate is changing very rapidly and is going to get worse. In fact climate change isn’t the only problem. The world is facing an array of interconnected environmental problems such as overpopulation and water and food shortages. What can we do to avoid a ‘hard crash’? Our GW/E Committee has developed a summary design on how to address necessary changes. We call it a ‘Three Legged Stool’ approach.

1. Individual Actions: Start with encouraging everyone to practice Energy Conservation by reducing the use of fossil fuel and changing individual consumption habits by home-based energy saving. We recommend an excellent book on how to reduce personal fossil fuel use by David Gershon, Low Carbon Diet: a 30 Day Program to Lose 5,000 Pounds. But, to be realistic, this approach can only go so far if our energy is still produced by burning fossil fuels.

2. Political Action: Although the federal and state governments are heavily influenced by corporate lobbying funded by such legal fictions as “corporate personhood,” it is still possible for citizens’ voices to make a difference related to the crisis by lobbying for sensible earth-friendly bills which require stringent controls on fossil fuel energy. One approach we are studying is Carbon Tax & Fee, which uses the ‘carrot and stick’ approach to reducing carbon. In this system energy production which releases carbon dioxide is taxed based on the amount of CO2 released. This gives economic incentives to producers to cut back and also rewards citizens with a tax return.

3. Corporate Change: It’s possible for American corporations to lead the world in both profits and in reducing greenhouse gases. Vastly increased profits can come from corporations becoming truly sustainable and free from fossil fuel costs by the use of alternative power. One approach to encouraging change would be for smaller businesses to prove that sustainability and low cost energy work hand in hand for the long term. Unfortunately, as things now stand, CEO performance and corporate welfare are only measured by a positive quarterly balance sheet. What’s needed for a healthy earth and what’s needed for short term profits often clash.

A harder approach to encouraging corporate change is the use of the boycott. For example, Bill McKibben's 350.org is having success in persuading universities to divest their holdings in polluting companies. Many people don’t realize how much power they have over big corporations in terms of how they spend their dollars. Companies abhor the negative publicity of a boycott of their product. We hope that corporations will see that their long-term profits and long-term survival require change because, as Prince Charles says, “to continue with business as usual is an act of suicide on a gargantuan scale.”

Chapter Sponsors Environmental Essay Contest for High School Juniors, Seniors

The Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter's Population Committee has received a grant from Sierra Club National's Activist Network to offer an essay contest for high school juniors and seniors in New York, challenging them to write essays on the topic: Are There Limits to Growth? Population, Consumption and the Environment.

The winner will earn $500 (second place, $200; third place, $100) and the Chapter hopes to publish the winning essay.

If you teach environmental science, general science, social studies, economics or another relevant subject to high school students, let your students know. Or, if you are a parent of a student who might be interested, or if you're a student yourself and you would like to submit an essay, get the details at: newyork.sierraclub.org. The deadline is April 1.

For educational materials on these topics and/or to schedule a classroom visit by a member of the Population Committee, contact Diane Buxbaum at: dbuxbaum@earthlink.net and Buxbaum.Diane@epamail.epa.gov, or Kathy Schwarz at: k_schwarz54@yahoo.com.

“Like” Us!

If you’re on Facebook, be sure to “like” us at www.facebook.com/sierraROC, or just type “Rochester Sierra Club” into the Facebook search bar to find our page. We post info on upcoming activities and events, and share news on environmental topics. Connect with us to stay up-to-date on what we’re doing, and to link up with some like-minded people. And please feel free to message us with questions or requests. We love to hear from our members!
Creating Rochester’s Urban Green Space: Plans Unveiled!

by Linda Isaacson Fedele, Chair

On February 7, about 50 members and others interested in what’s in the works for Rochester’s High Falls area joined us at the High Falls offices of Friends of the Garden-Aerial (FOGA). While FOGA has been busily meeting with city officials and other stakeholders regarding their vision, this was the first time that the plans were unveiled to the public.

The geographical area of focus is clearly under-utilized and under-appreciated. The Pont de Rennes pedestrian bridge gives something of a look at the Falls, but there is no dramatic view of the 96-foot straight drop. And the gorge itself into which the falls fall - the gorge created by the flow of the Genesee River - has been an industrial site, now polluted and requiring remediation. Brown’s Race, the man-made channels (1815) into which river water was diverted to create a “power canal” for the mills, is now dry and much of it covered over.

The FOGA vision is lofty. And irresistible. The three components previously disclosed to the public via FOGA’s website are: an arboretum on the Pont de Rennes bridge, a glass floor for the bridge directly over the falls, a sunken garden in the flowing raceway, and new businesses, residential buildings and increased tourism resulting from renewed pride and excitement about these improvements.

Bejamin Woelk, Associate Director of Administration & Community Engagement for FOGA, outlined the intent to create the first EcoDistrict in New York state here at High Falls. An “ecodistrict” is a neighborhood-sized area that seeks to preserve its natural resources, while encouraging environmentally-friendly, sustainable economic development. There are successful ecodistricts in Malmo, Sweden; Portland, Oregon; and elsewhere. An ecodistrict would choose solar, wind, or hydropower over fossil-fuel-based energy, would incorporate pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly infrastructure, etc.

Our Rochester Regional Group supports this vision because environmental protection and justice are clearly at the heart of it.

FOGA are the same people who brought us the Greentopia Festival. While an environmental purist would rightly argue with details of Greentopia’s implementation (significant sales of bottled beverages, for example), it did provide enough concrete examples of true care for our environment (over 90% of the waste generated at the Festival did not go to the landfill) to more people than ever before in our fine city. If FOGA ensures that their vision for High Falls comes to fruition in an environmentally friendly way, then we will continue to support their vision wholeheartedly. To support the GardenAerial vision for High Falls, please donate to the Sustainable Sunken Garden - the pilot project that could make it or break it. See gardenaerial.org.

Join Our Email List!

Did you know that you can get updates on what we’re up to sent right to your inbox? Join our email list and you will receive an email once a week that will inform you of upcoming Sierra Club activities, keep you up to date on local environmental issues, and give you tips on actions you can take for our local environment. To sign up, visit: http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester/ and scroll to the bottom of the page. Enter your email address under “Subscribe to Rochester Regional Group” and click the “Subscribe” button.
Rochester Area Residents Throng to Climate Rally in DC -
But More Participation Needed

by Paul Sanders

A busload of 45 passionate local residents and students went to the Forward on Climate Rally in Washington, DC on February 17, coordinated by our Rochester Regional Group. The rally, sponsored by the Sierra Club, 350.org, and the Hip Hop Caucus, was scheduled for President’s Day weekend, just before a decision is likely on the Keystone XL Pipeline. It was a great success! Over 40,000 people poured into the streets to send a clear message to President Obama: time to live up to your rhetoric, take us forward on climate, and say “no” the Keystone XL pipeline.

Former White House green jobs advisor Van Jones summed up the fundamental message: “This will define your legacy, Mr. President... If we lose, we lose everything. We’re fighting for the children of all species. This isn’t just a fight about Democrats versus Republicans in the United States. The children of all species forever are going to be impacted by what we do in this town for the next twelve to twenty-four months.” 350.org founder Bill McKibben added: “For 25 years, our government has basically ignored the climate crisis. Now people in large numbers are finally demanding they get to work. We shouldn’t have to be here - science should have decided our course long ago. But it takes a movement to stand up to all that money.” Sierra Club’s own Michael Brune concluded the remarks stating: “Twenty years from now on President's Day, people will want to know what the president did in the face of rising sea levels, record droughts and furious storms brought on by climate disruption... President Obama holds in his hand a pen and the power to deliver on his promise of hope for our children. Today, we are asking him to use that pen to reject the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, and ensure that this dirty, dangerous, export pipeline will never be built.”

The Rally, which was the largest of its kind ever, garnered a tremendous amount of media coverage critical to the survival of the movement. The speakers at the rally showed the diversity of the movement. There were indigenous leaders from across the United States and Canada, clean energy investor Tom Steyer, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse from Rhode Island, and environmental leaders like Michael Brune and Bill McKibben. There were also civil rights activists Rosario Dawson and Rev. Lennox Yearwood.

The local response to the opportunity to ride the bus to DC was strong. Riders included students from RIT, University of Rochester, SUNY Geneseo, parent-child duos, couples, and retirees - some over 80 years old! In addition to the bus-riders, it is estimated that another 50-125 individuals from the Greater Rochester area went to the rally, many by carpool. Volunteers from around the country organized 130 buses to get people to the rally. Folks of all ages attended from Florida to Wisconsin to California.
by Margie Campaigne
Our Zero Waste Committee toured the Monroe County recycling plant run by Cascades Recovery Inc. late last year. Andrew Goldstein, their Environmental Educator, showed us the multi-story overhead doors leading into the facility, where trucks unload, and the slight odor of garbage from unclean containers wafted by. Andy described the unfortunate orientation of the huge open doors facing west, as the prevailing southwest winds play havoc with lightweight containers.

Later, Andy explained the challenge of recycling plastics. Styrofoam is not recycled there, though it is labeled with a ‘6’ and the county now accepts 1 through 7. He showed us an iced tea jug labeled with a ‘7’, meaning ‘other’, and explained that it was actually three layers of different types of plastic. Some plastics have a good market, and are remade into things like fleece garments. Less valuable types are re-melted into architectural lumber.

Andy also explained more about single- vs. dual-source recycling. Single-source is easier on the consumer end, since all recyclables go in one place to be sorted later (mechanically and by hand). One problem with this method is the liquid left in bottles that spoils any high grade white office paper, which otherwise fetches a premium market price. In dual-source (which Monroe County has), the paper might remain dry and more saleable. Aluminum continues to be of high value, and recycling aluminum requires MUCH less energy than smelting it from ore. If you use aluminum, make sure to add it to your recycling! The use of glass is dwindling due to the prevalence of plastic bottles.

Glass is made from silica (sand), the most abundant mineral on the earth. It is, however, so much heavier than plastic that the higher transportation cost is a factor. Glass also breaks, and being so hard, can foul up the facility’s machinery.

We watched from the viewing area as a worker below took a pile of books, one by one, and with a sharp instrument, removed their covers. Covers are to be combined with the cardboard recycling, while the books’ pages were sorted into another bin. Quite labor intensive.

We had a lot of questions answered and saw first-hand how complicated a process recycling is. This is partly why the three R’s of Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle are in just that order. Recycling is great, but only after the options of reducing and reusing products are exercised.

Zero Waste: The Recycling Aspect

by Linda Isaacson Fedele, Chair

In Monroe County, a few towns have taken action to protect themselves from fracking. After becoming the first town in the county to take any action on fracking via its one-year moratorium passed in December 2012, the Town of Brighton passed an outright ban through zoning laws on January 23, 2013. It wasn't the first town to pass a ban, however. That distinction belongs to the Town of Perinton, which didn't pause to pass a moratorium, but went straight for the ban via zoning law changes on August 22, 2012. In Perinton, the grassroots group Citizens Alliance for a Pristine Perinton (CAPP) worked with the town to successfully get the zoning laws changed. The Town of Rush passed a moratorium on March 29, 2012. More recently, the Town of Mendon passed its second one-year Moratorium on Feb. 11, 2013 after the first one expired. These municipalities and many more in the areas surrounding Monroe County have taken action. In all cases, grassroots groups - almost always including Sierra Club members - have formed to push the local governments to act. There are now over 200 municipalities in NYS that are protected by a ban or moratorium, with over 90 others staging for passing some sort of legislation or zoning law changes.

While we wait to hear what Governor Cuomo and the DEC will decide regarding fracking across the state, we are hoping that “home rule” will be upheld to protect the municipalities that have taken action. Home rule is the legal precept that upholds each municipality’s zoning laws over any state-wide land use decision. So far, the gas industry has already initiated lawsuits against Dryden (near Ithaca) and Richmond (near NYC) to challenge their bans against hydrofracking. Initial decisions in both cases sided with the municipalities, upholding home rule and thus the bans, but the decisions may be appealed. More recently, Lenape Resources, a gas company in Alexander, NY, has sued the town of Avon for $50 million, saying that Avon’s moratorium will cause lost revenue for the company. Many local Sierra Club members, and other hearty concerned citizens such as members of grassroots group Frack Free Genesee turned out in the freezing cold at the Livingston County Courthouse in Geneseo on the day the trial commenced (Feb. 11, 2013) to support Avon’s ban and home rule. Some say that the outcome of this case could determine whether home rule will be upheld throughout the state. By the time you read this, a decision may have been rendered.
### Spring 2013 Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
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<th>Calendar/Event</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>6:30-8:30pm</td>
<td>Executive Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Harro East Bldg., 400 Andrews St., Ste 600</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>2:00-4:00pm</td>
<td>Interfaith IMPACT Legislative Briefing</td>
<td>Temple Sinai, 363 Penfield Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>Orion Magazine Discussion</td>
<td>Spot Coffee, 200 East Ave.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>6:30-8:30pm</td>
<td>Global Warming &amp; Energy Committee Meeting</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>4:30-6:30pm</td>
<td>Zero Waste Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Rochester Greenovation, 1199 E. Main St., Contact Frank for ?s: <a href="mailto:fjregan@gmail.com">fjregan@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
<td>5:15pm-9:00pm</td>
<td>15th Annual Forum: Protecting the Great Lakes Forever (See p. 1 for details)</td>
<td>Monroe Community College, The Theater - Building 4, 1000 E. Henrietta Rd.</td>
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<td>April 26</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td>Annual Forum Workshops</td>
<td>Rochester Institute of Technology, CIMS Building, 111 Lomb Memorial Drive</td>
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Executive Committee meetings are open to Sierra Club members. All other meetings are open to everyone.

The Eco-Logue is printed on 100% recycled paper with green plant-based toner.