



**SIERRA CLUB**  
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# eco-logue



*Explore, enjoy and protect the Planet*

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Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club  
P.O. Box 10518, Rochester, NY 14610; 585-234-1056  
<http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester/>



## Explore, enjoy and protect the Planet this Summer!

[www.monroecounty.gov/parks](http://www.monroecounty.gov/parks) - 21 Local Monroe County Parks

<http://www.nyscanals.gov/> - New York State Canals

<http://nysparks.state.ny.us/parks/> - 178 New York State Parks

<http://www.nps.gov/findapark/index.htm> - National Park Service: 27,000 historic structures, 2,461 national historic landmarks, 582 national natural landmarks, 400 endangered species, 392 national parks, 40 national heritage areas

<http://www.fs.fed.us/> - U. S. Forest Service

[http://support.nature.org/site/PageServer?pagename=preserve\\_map](http://support.nature.org/site/PageServer?pagename=preserve_map) - Nature Conser-

vancy, Visit a Preserve

## Get outside and enjoy nature!

### Sierra Club Outing:

#### Stony Brook State Park Sunday, June 6th, 2010

Learn about a fairly well-known and beautiful gem, cut by cascading water through falls and chutes. Our route will enter by the gorge trail and return by the Rim Trail. The Rim Trail offers birds-eye views into the gorge and waterfalls far below but is quite rugged.

9:30 am—meet at parking lot at Lake Riley in Cobbs Hill Park, close to intersection of Culver Road and Norris Drive. Difficulty: Challenging; Estimated time: Hiking—Under 2 hours; Total time—4-5 hours.

## The Truth about the Marcellus Shale Gas

by Hugh Mitchell

In April the Democrat and Chronicle repeatedly published a full page ad sponsored by "EnergyTomorrow" about the proposed Marcellus Shale gas drilling operation which they claim will give an "abundant supply of clean natural gas, billions of dollars and thousands of NY jobs... while protecting our environment". **Hardly!** These claims are vast exaggerations which leave out the real environmental facts about destroying the environment to harvest gold from the Marcellus Shale. **Beware.** A similar large environmental price was seen in the recent methane explosion on British Petroleum's "Deepwater Horizon" oil drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico which caused a major environmental disaster. We should reexamine the rush to drill for gas in the pristine Southern Tier of New York.

Over the last two years the Atlantic Chapter has conducted extensive research on the hazards of drilling into the two mile deep Marcellus Shale layer which contains natural gas and a number of other gases like methane. Here are some of the unmentioned environmental facts.

**Water Use.** Hydrofracking uses over a million gallons of water for each hydrofracking blast in each well. Water is mixed with sand and toxic drilling chemicals which are forced into the deep wells at high pressure to fracture the deep shale layers and release gases which are brought to the surface along with the toxic mix. These so called "flowback fluids" have to be stored in surface ponds, but 82% of this pollution stays underground potentially infecting wells and aquifers. Indeed, because fracking fluids may migrate through geological layers the entire New York City and Syracuse watershed areas have been exempted from hydrofracking. There's too much



potential to pollute the potable drinking water supplies of millions of people. A further problem is encountered when 18% of the toxic mix which makes it to the surface must be stored in toxic waste storage pits waiting for removal. This "removal" is truck transportation to a publicly operated treatment facility.

It should be noted that in Pennsylvania (PA) in just one week the PA Department of Environmental Protection uncovered "a number of serious violations that will adversely impact nearby water resources." Partly as a result of the restrictions on drawing a huge amount of water from the Delaware River Basin one of the main sponsors of drilling, the Chesapeake Energy company, pulled out.

**Toxic Fracking Fluids.** Companies treat the composition of the fracking fluids as proprietary information but it is well documented these chemicals contain many toxic ingredients that can cause human harm. The fracking process itself also brings to the surface other natural toxins such as arsenic, heavy metals, radon and radioactive carcinogens. Related problems include diesel leaks/spills, leaks from the evaporation pits, methane release, air pollution, salting contamination - all of which can pollute the pristine Catskill region. Transporting the heavy gas drilling rigs has crushed local roads leaving local counties to pick up the costs of repair.

**Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.** As has been shown in the Gulf oil disaster where an unexpected methane release caused the explosion

which killed eleven workers, methane release from drilling to the Marcellus layer presents a local hazard from flaring and explosion. It will also cause further damage to the atmosphere by contributing to global warming. Need we be reminded that methane damages the atmosphere more than CO2?

The larger problem of gas use as a transition fuel presents a new level of concern over Marcellus Shale drilling. From the point of view of reducing GHG emissions Ngas is still a fossil fuel. The key issue is whether natural gas, which can burn 10-30% cleaner than coal, can help us move rapidly away from burning coal for our energy production. Although Ngas is less polluting, obtaining it commits us to building a huge, semi-permanent industrial infrastructure to capture and transport the gas from the beautiful Catskill/Southern Tier region. This includes new gas lines through forests, new service roads, new water lines and water pumping stations. In estimating the GHG emissions from the Marcellus Shale a life-cycle analysis of natural gas development needs to be factored in. This includes emissions from transportation, moving millions of gallons of water, mining operations, flaring, blowouts, secondary releases and the manufacture and carting of concrete.

Before New York citizens become mesmerized by the lure of millions of dollars and jobs in natural gas exploration we need to consider the real environmental costs. A better answer than chasing pots of gold from gas lies in pursuing local, state and national campaigns to reduce our need for more power. This will buy time to invest all our efforts in developing real alternative supplies which really protect our environment.

See The **June 9th** calendar listing to learn about one of New York's Most pressing environmental issues at a special showing of award winning 2010 Sundance documentary "**Gasland**".



**FROM THE CHAIR** by Deb Muratore



Tina Clark

I'll sum up the RRG Sierra Club 2010 Environmental Forum in one word - **MAGICAL!**

Thanks to everyone who helped out behind & in front of the scenes: Alison Clarke, Cenie Cafarelli, Dave Feasey, Dave Miller, George Payne, Hugh Mitchell, Jessie Cole, Kit Miller, Linda Isaacson-Fedele, Margie Campaigne, Paul Ciavarrri, Peter Debes, Robert Withers, Sara Rubin and Susan Stinson.

Thanks to The Abundance Co-op and Small World Bakery for providing wonderful vegetarian food. Thanks to the Unitarian Church for hosting us for the 12th year. A special thanks to Tina Clarke for her inspirational talk and all her educational work bringing Transition Communities to all of us. Her two-day workshop afterwards will con-

tinue with other events through out the year – stay tuned for more information or contact Kit Miller at [transitionrochny@gmail.com](mailto:transitionrochny@gmail.com) or call the Sierra Club 585-234-1056.

All this Community Teamwork made for a smooth evening. I was able to walk around to every table, introduce myself & welcome all the organizations. It was great to see many familiar faces. I think about three quarters of the attendees were people I'd never seen before – which means we are reaching out into the community.

I was so pleased to see about 50 people stayed for the discussion groups and were excited and interested! I literally had tears of joy in my eyes by the end of the evening.

**Sierra Club Environmental Award:** The 2010 RRG Sierra Club Environmental Award was given to Christine Sevilla, posthumously, on April 22, 2010 at the 2010 Environmental Forum. Long time friend, Sara Rubin gave the speech which can be read on [www.christinesevilla.com](http://www.christinesevilla.com) in it's entirety. **A Living Project to Preserve a Place in Christine' Sevilla's Memory** Christine's family and friends envision a natural area, including wetlands, preserved in her memory. This vision includes an educational component, like an interpretive trail to help others recognize what Christine saw - an interconnected natural community of flora and fauna, soil and water. Perhaps even an Arts and Music Festival to celebrate what Christine so treasured. Please Join Us In Helping to Bring This Dream to Life. Visit [www.ChristineSevilla.com](http://www.ChristineSevilla.com)

**Rochester Regional Group's 12th Annual Forum**

By Jessica Cole

The Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club held its 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum on April 22, 2010. This year's theme was Transitioning to Sustainable Communities and included guest speaker Tina Clarke, a consultant for the Sustainability Institute and a certified Transition Towns Trainer. In addition, over 50 environmental organizations were represented at the event, allowing them to interact with attendees and raise awareness of their causes.

Tina Clarke's speech had a remarkable impact on audience members. The Transition program focuses on building Community resilience in response to the triple challenge of peak oil, climate change and economic contraction. Attendees who were previously unaware of the transition movement, reported feelings of empowerment and motivation. Many stated that they will begin taking steps to get their own communities involved in the movement.

The forum ended with discussion groups on many topics, including transportation, energy, green jobs, community/spirituality, recycling/waste, water, and food. Group members proposed some great ideas

on how the Rochester region can move in these directions in each area. Some participants are now working to turn those ideas into reality.

It was inspiring to witness how many people in the Rochester region truly want to make a difference. The fact that forum discussions are now turning into activities to better local communities is the truest measure of the forum's success.

For more info on Transition Communities see [www.transitionnetwork.org/](http://www.transitionnetwork.org/) or for upcoming film showing and discussion contact: [transitionrochny@gmail.com](mailto:transitionrochny@gmail.com)

**"Pick Up The Parks" a Huge Success!**

By Ryan Loysen, Recreation & Environmental Education Coordinator, Monroe County Parks Dept., 171 Reservoir Avenue, Roch, NY 14620, 585-753-7281, [rloysen@monroecounty.gov](mailto:rloysen@monroecounty.gov)

Ellison Park, Ontario Beach Park, Greece Park and Genesee Valley Park



The 1st annual Pick Up the Parks Project was a great success due to the great planning committee and the tremendous turnout of volunteers. We had about 250 volunteers overall between the 4 park sites. Thank you all for your donation of time, energy, and care for your Monroe County Parks. They're one of our best "quality of life" resources in our area, and we sincerely appreciate you becoming stewards of the parks. We'll be sure to let you know about future events of this nature.

**And finally, thanks to the 250 volunteers that picked up 3,000 pounds of trash, and tabulated about 600+ human-hours!**  
**That's 12 pounds of trash per person.**  
**That's 750 pounds of trash per park.**

**Want to Make a Difference? Join Us!**



**What We Do:** As you know from this newsletter and perhaps events that you've attended, your Rochester Regional Group is very active. Current and recent past efforts include engaging 120 households in reducing their carbon emissions, protecting Washington Grove in Cobbs Hill Park and Buckland Creek in Brighton, participating in international negotiations regarding the Great Lakes, protecting Canadice and Hemlock lakes, developing plans for more efficient transportation locally, promoting important legislation such as the Bigger Better Bottle Bill, sponsoring films and other educational programs, and more. Did you know that this is all accomplished by a surprisingly small number of people-- *all volunteers* who spend countless hours because we are each passionate about these issues?



**THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND DONATIONS!**

**Spinning Our Wheels, by Frank Regan**

Since the 2008 Transportation Forum our Transportation Committee has been working on various projects to improve transportation options in our region and reduce greenhouse gases. I'd like to say we've met with unmitigated success, but mostly we've been spinning our wheels—a lot of work, few gains. Our efforts to work with many groups to increase bicycling in our area and follow the threads of alternative transportation options in our area have got us (Rochester, NY) the "Honorable Mention" for the Bicycle Friendly Community Award, the establishment of bicycle boulevards in one neighborhood, and a modestly attended alternative transportation fair—probably the largest gathering of such vehicles in our area. Few people seem to care or 'get' the very real connection between how we get around and how that affects our environment.

In my humble opinion, until the gasoline prices reach \$4 a gallon, most are not going to do

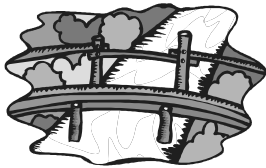
something about the transportation/environment issue because it's too convenient not to. This is despite the fact that when we turn that key on our gas-guzzler mountain tops topple, our atmosphere warms up, and our communities continue to serve the interest of the vehicle, not the public. Recently, our county failed for the second year in a row on air quality due to ozone (from tailpipes) pollution. Nobody in the media is connecting those critical dots.

We've focused a lot of our attention on bicycles, not because we believe Sierra Club members are particularly enthralled with them as a transportation option. It is because there are many opportunities locally to actually get this form of alternative transportation moving: It is relatively inexpensive to redraw traffic lanes to include bicycles, or include signage to slow down traffic in a neighborhood.

What we have discovered since the Sierra Club forum on transportation is that a lot of movers

and shakers on transportation in our region have researched this issue and care deeply about it. They want to improve walking in our communities, bicycling, alternative vehicles, public transportation, encourage high-speed rail, increase transportation for the disadvantaged, connect existing trails with streets, and determine how alternative vehicles will acquire the fuel they need in our area. The movers and shakers need advocates like the Sierra Club to demonstrate the urgency and willingness to support transportation alternatives—alternatives to the unsustainable route we're on.

But, there's little interest. Gas prices are down. We get in our vehicles many times when we could walk or take a bus. We watch oil rigs blow up. We watch wars over oil. We refuse to connect how we get around with these events. When someone rides their bicycles on a busy street to get to work, we honk because they are so slow and we are in such a hurry.



**Wetland Committee Update:**

The urban stream remediation of Buckland Creek on the Brighton School campus at Twelve Corners is presently the main project of the Wetlands Committee. The committee made a presentation to the Brighton school board in March, and school district is now officially backing the project. We have also applied for a state grant to begin restoration. The committee is continuing the effort to publicize the project and raise money to finance it.

Anyone who is interested in contributing to the design of the creek/wetland, public relations or grant research is welcome to contact Sara Rubin at rubin150@aol.com or 442-6890.



**Mark Your calendars for the Ontario Barn Festival!  
September 4th, 2010, 11am to 7 pm.**

The festival will feature all day live music, BBQ, arts & crafts, promotion of solar energy, apple picking, free ice cream and face painting.

**Transitions Project Steering Committee**

The committee will host ongoing public information sessions and seeks 1.) groups to sponsor talks to their constituents and 2.) a centrally located, free site to offer public information sessions. If you can help with either of these requests, or have other ideas to contribute, email Kit Miller at [transitionrochny@gmail.com](mailto:transitionrochny@gmail.com)

**Volunteer Opportunities!**

We need volunteers to team up with already active members to meet and greet the public and pass out literature. No experience or knowledge of specific environmental issues is necessary. If you are outgoing, have a friendly smile and some energy, and enjoy talking with kids and grown-ups alike, please give us a call. You'll get to enjoy the festival or fair on your own before and/or after your volunteer time! If you can spare one to three hours for one or more of the events below, please call us at 585-234-1056 or e-mail [lci\\_msw@hotmail.com](mailto:lci_msw@hotmail.com).

1. Adirondack Mountain Club Outdoor Expo, Mendon Ponds Park, Sat., June 12, 9-4
2. Brighton Energy Fair, see [www.colorbrightongreen.org](http://www.colorbrightongreen.org) for location, Sun., June 13, 9-1pm
3. Ganondagan Native American Dance and Music Festival, Victor, July 24 & 25, 10-4 both days



**Nature doesn't waste anything, Why should we?**

By Frank Regan

After some spit and sputtering, our Zero Waste Committee is off and running. Our committee helped out with Monroe County's "Pick up the Parks" program, the first in a yearly effort to engage the public in cleaning up their parks. Our committee was instrumental in including recycling into the massive clean up. (One group involved said we made them feel 'guilty' for not wanting to recycle.) Unabashedly, we hope recycling will be implemented in every local community pick up event, so we are working up a recycling demonstration for volunteers for this

yearly event and maybe others. Maybe, the city's Clean Sweep.

The top of our to-do list is encouraging our county to recycle all plastics. As you know, we only recycle plastics #1 and #2. Yet, we have invited several guests to our committee meetings who revealed that many of the surrounding counties recycle all plastics. Why not Monroe? Why can other counties find a market for all plastics and not us? Why do we have to do summertime cleanups creating events for picking up plastics, getting them washed, and having someone truck them to a place that does recycle all plastics? Why do we land-fill plastics when we could be using them a resource? We are working on that.

We are working on other stuff related to Zero Waste also. We want to reduce all those phone books that only a few of us are actually using.

We are helping the Center for Environmental Information find ways to keep food waste out of our landfills and create fertilizer—which other surrounding counties are doing. (What is it with our county?)

We're trying to find a way to inform the public on where to recycle all waste and help coordinate the efforts of other groups with ours. Our monthly meetings are a zippy hour-and-a-half of people passionate about doing something good about all that waste.

BTW: What is Zero Waste? As the Sierra Club sees it, zero waste is "...a design principle for the 21st century and producer responsibility-based recycling as the means for achieving a deep transformation of production and consumption." That techno-speak for producing products with little or no waste.



ROCHESTER REGIONAL GROUP  
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**Administration**

Chairperson: Deb Muratore  
Vice-Chair: Peter Debes  
Chapter Delegate: Robert Withers  
Chapter Alternate Delegate: Hugh Mitchell  
Conservation Chair: Hugh Mitchell  
Fundraising: Dina Stein  
Marketing: open  
Membership: Linda Fedele  
Newsletter: Dina Stein  
Political Chair: Robert Withers  
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Webmaster: Frank Regan

**Conservation**

Chair: Hugh Mitchell  
Beyond Coal: Bette Heger  
Biodiversity/Vegetarian: Margie Campaigne  
Global Warming/Energy: Linda Fedele, Bette Heger,  
Margie Campaigne, Robert Withers  
Great Lakes: Robbyn McKie-Holzworth  
Open Space/Parks: Hugh Mitchell  
Outings: Howard Camp

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[lci\\_msw@hotmail.com](mailto:lci_msw@hotmail.com).

## Summer 2010 Calendar

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

Date	Day of Week	Time	Calendar/Event	Place
June 1, 2010	Tues.	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
June 6, 2010	Sun.	9:30 am	Stony Brook State Park Outing	Meet at Lake Riley, see pg 1
June 9, 2010	Wed.	7-9 pm	"Gasland", (1) for movie info (see Marcellus Shale Article on pg 1)	The Heights Theater, 210 E. 14th St., Elmira, NY. (2) for directions
June 12, 2010	Sat.	9-4 pm	Adirondack Mountain Club Outdoor Expo	Mendon Ponds Park
June 13, 2010	Sun	9-1pm	Brighton Energy Fair	Brighton High School Parking Lot
June 14, 2010	Mon.	7 pm	Global Warming Committee (3)	Al Sigl Center, 1000 Elmwood Ave.
June 22, 2010	Tues.	4:30-6 pm	Zero Waste Committee	AAUW house, 494 East Ave, Roch
June 22, 2010	Tues.	7-9 pm	Great Lakes Committee Meeting	12 Corners Middle School (4)
June 23, 2010	Wed.	5-7 pm	Public Hearing Draft NYS Solid Waste Mgmt. Plan, entitled "Beyond Waste" (5)	Sheridan Parkside Community Ctr. 169 Sheridan Parkside Dr. Tonawanda
All Summer dates	"to be determined"		Wetlands Committee Meeting	call for information 442 6890
July 6, 2010	Tues.	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
July 27, 2010	Tues.	4:30-6 pm	Zero Waste Committee	AAUW house, 494 East Ave, Roch
August 3, 2010	Tues.	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Picnic	Locaiton--To be determined
August 24, 2010	Tues.	4:30-6 pm	Zero Waste Committee	AAUW house, 494 East Ave, Roch.
August 31, 2010	Tues.	7-9 pm	Great Lakes Committee Annual Picnic	Location--To Be Determined

- (1) [www.gaslandthemovie.com/GASLANDPRESSRELEASE.pdf](http://www.gaslandthemovie.com/GASLANDPRESSRELEASE.pdf).
  - (2) <http://theheights-theater.com/directions.php>
  - (3) This will be the only Global Warming Meeting for the summer.
  - (4) Great Lakes Committee Meetings: 12 Corners Middle School, 2643 Elmwood Avenue, Roch., NY 14618, Library on 2nd floor.
  - (5) See [www.rochesterenvironment.com](http://www.rochesterenvironment.com) calendar for details
- All Executive Committee Meetings are open to the public.

For Information call 585-234-1056  
or visit <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester>

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