

Susquehanna *Sierran* December 2019



Founded 1892

EXPLORE, ENJOY, PROTECT THE PLANET

== *Election Edition* ==

Susquehanna Group and the November Elections

— Allan Hochberg, Susquehanna Group Political Chair

The Susquehanna Group of the Sierra Club endorsed 7 candidates for the 2019 elections. Endorsement decisions were based on responses to a Sierra Club questionnaire and a review of the candidates' backgrounds and environmental records.

Binghamton City Council:

Tim Ames	lost
Joe Burns	won
Aviva Friedman	won
Dan Livingston	lost
Angela Riley	won
Sasha Valerio	lost

Johnson City Trustee:

Chris Watters	lost
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Bluestone Wind Project, Sanford and Windsor Towns Scott Lauffer

Calpine Corporation's proposed 124 MW wind turbine project is in the permitting process. The Article 10 proceeding (NYS Public Service Law) assigned to the case Sean Mullany, Administrative Law Judge (NYS Public Service Commission). After review he made a recommendation to the Siting Board (NYS Department of Public Services) to proceed. A decision will be made by the Board by the end of 2019, a year after the application was submitted.

Some Positive Impacts

- Wind is an unlimited, renewable energy source.
- Wind is a domestic source of energy and will add to statewide electrical capacity.
- Wind energy is cost effective.
- Project can be built on existing farms.

Some Negative Impacts

- Bald and Golden Eagles, both resident and migrating, are in abundance in the area. The Susquehanna Group submitted comments about reducing their deaths with the use of an automated vision system.
- Residents are concerned about safety, noise and aesthetics.
- Nuisances may include sound, electromagnetic and microwave interference.
- Construction phase may disrupt air, ground and surface waters, wildlife, and residents.



Election of Executive Committee Members

Group Bylaws require annual elections to the Executive Committee, which has 9 members serving 2-year terms. This year we elect 5. Statements by candidates appear below. Using the ballot below, mail your vote(s) to Susquehanna Group, PO Box 572, Endicott NY 13760, **or** email up to 5 choices to kcronin55@gmail.com, using the subject "SG Election." Include your member number (can be found on mailing label).

Doug Gausman

I have been a Sierra Club member since 1982 and a member of the Susquehanna Group since 2014. I have long been interested in protecting the environment and have actively opposed natural gas horizontal fracking in New York. I live close to the Pennsylvania border and have witnessed fracking operations there. I served on the SGSC Executive Committee from 2016 – 2018 and have been attending the Executive Committee meetings this past year as a non-voting member.

I believe global warming is a very serious concern and have supported various demonstrations concerning same. My family has taken steps to minimize our environmental impact such as using solar panels, replacing a wood stove with a more efficient unit, and driving a hybrid car. My wife and I participated in a Standing Rock opposition demonstration against the Dakota Access Pipeline and we have long been involved in supporting the Broome County recycling program.

Jim Taft

A retiree, I'm a Broome County native who after 27 years in Washington State returned in 1996 with wife, 2 boys, and an MA in Social Ecology. Background includes private sector (cabinetmaking), nonprofits (both as staff and director), and government (criminal justice). I host, with my partner, international students. Served 4 years on both Susquehanna Group and Atlantic Chapter ExComs. Considerable grant-writing experience helps me (1) assess and describe the relevance and feasibility of organizational efforts, and (2) budget and find financial support. I like projects, including this newsletter.

Mary Cronk

I have resided in the town of Chenango since 1977. I attended Broome County Environmental Management Council meetings (I was a member for several years). I worked as a system administrator at Cornell University's Central Computing. After retiring 3 years ago I became active with the Cayuga Bird Club and the Northern NY Audubon Bird Club. I am a volunteer docent with the Behind the Scenes program at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. I have been a member of the Sierra Club for many years but not actively participating until recently. I would like to promote Susquehanna Group work as a member of the Executive Committee.

Valdi Weiderpass

I have dedicated my love of nature, my experience, and my education (B.S. in Chemical Engineering, A.S. in Industrial Technology with Electrical Emphasis) to help inform the community about the benefits of the natural world, to influence policies in order to better protect the environment, and to try to save a habitable climate. I have testified in hearings and/or submitted comments against a natural gas trucking/compressor station proposal, against a utility rate increase to enlarge a gas pipeline, in support of a wind farm including how best to protect eagles with an automated vision system, and to improve DEC regulatory oversight of the Li-Ion Battery Recycling facility proposed for Endicott (50 hours on last one alone). I serve on Representative Brindisi's Environmental Advisory Panel. My house gets electricity from a community solar farm. If elected, I will continue for a 3rd ExCom term.

Allan Hochberg

My parents stressed to me the importance of protecting the environment. I've served on the Susquehanna Group Executive Committee and as the Group's Political Chair since 2013. I have also served on the Atlantic Chapter Political Committee since 2015. I've enjoyed assessing candidates through questionnaires, interviews and background information, as well as assisting campaigns of endorsed candidates. An academic and professional background, and work with Sierra Club and other civic organizations, have given me strong interests and training in public opinion assessment and applied research, political analysis and strategy. If elected to another term, I look forward to identifying and assisting environmentally-friendly political candidates, and lobbying on key issues such as global climate change.

Vote for up to 5. Mail this ballot to
Susquehanna Group, PO Box 572, Endicott NY
13760 by 12/31/19, or send email to
kcronin55@gmail.com. Include member
number (from mailing label).

Member # _____

- Mary Cronk
- Doug Gausman
- Allan Hochberg
- Jim Taft
- Valdi Weiderpass

Susquehanna Group

(All of Broome, & parts of Chenango,
Delaware, Otsego, Tioga Counties)

Chair	*Scott Lauffer (607)341-3746
Vice Chair	*George Catalano
Secretary	*Karen Boba
Treasurer	Kathy Cronin
Political Chair	*Allan Hochberg
Chapter Delegate	*Jim Taft
Newsletter Editor	*Jim Taft
Membership Chairs	*Michael Frys, *Chris Harasta
Outings Chair	*Chris Harasta
Conservation Chair	Doug Gausman
Alt. Chapter Delegate	*Joann Lettis
	*Valdi Weiderpass
Webmaster	Jack Davis
	*Member Executive Committee

Annual Potluck & Program

January 21, 2020

6:00pm Doors open, Central United Methodist Church, 17 Nanticoke Avenue, Endicott.

6:30pm Potluck dinner, local foods encouraged, bring your table setting. We'll provide beverages.

7:30pm Program by Scott Lauffer & Kathy Cronin: US Forest Service volunteers, summer at El Dorado NF, California. Assisting visitors and exploring the Sierra Nevada.

Lithium Recycling (1st Large-Scale in USA) Proposed for Endicott Valdi Weiderpass

A recycling facility for lithium-ion batteries (from electric vehicles, tool power packs, and cell phones) is planned for a former IBM site in Endicott. SunGeel Metallica proposes to process 2,200 pounds per hour, 12 hours per day, 50 weeks per year, using a gas-fired rotary kiln to heat used batteries to 1022°F and up, followed by shredding, grinding, and magnetic/screening separation to recover reusable metal powders. Emissions are projected to be well under allowable limits.

A few considerations regarding the facility coming into the Village:

- Accidental fire could release substantial emissions. NYS DEC appears to lack jurisdiction over fire risk.
- More local employment in renewable energy.
- Re-use of vacant industrial space.
- Land-use zoning modifications could be used to improve siting of the facility.

More information is planned for the March, 2020 *Susquehanna Sierran*.



The NYS Bluebird Society has since 1982 helped restore nesting populations of the Eastern Bluebird. An affiliate of the North American Bluebird Society, we support its research studies. We have established 2 main educational Bluebird trails: the Rt 20 Trail runs from East to West in upstate NY; the Rt 11 Trail runs from Canada to Pennsylvania. We conduct educational programs throughout the state to improve nesting success of bluebirds and other cavity nesting species.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Editor for Bluebird News (quarterly NYSBS newsletter)

The Editor would have knowledge of bluebirds, and experience editing/correcting/formatting. This person will work in conjunction with other members to produce a quality and informative newsletter. Attendance at NYSBS Board meetings (2 times/year) is helpful in learning NYSBS concerns, programs and activities. Interested persons should contact current editor Martha Moran to discuss details. newseditor@nysbs.org

State Bluebird Coordinator

This key position works directly with Area and County Coordinators, and with Bluebird Ambassadors who monitor nestboxes and participate in educational programs. The Coordinator updates records of NYSBS volunteers by county, and requests needed educational resources (brochures & fact sheets) to supply educational presentations. Attendance at NYSBS Board Meetings is highly recommended. Ideally this person will become a member of the NYSBS Board. Interested persons should contact NYSBS President Sarah Hodder to learn more about this position. President@NYSBS.org 607-242-8807



Susquehanna Group
PO Box 572
Endicott NY 13760

Address label

The Carbon Capture Tree Doug Gausman

A recent article from Bloomberg Business Week (8/5/2019) features a carbon capture tree called the Empress. This amazing tree grows 10 to 20 feet tall in its first year. This rapid growth enables it to capture up to ten times as much carbon dioxide as most trees. A company in Mesa, Arizona, World Tree, is growing and marketing these trees for planting around the world. They have planted over 1000 acres of the trees. When the trees reach maturity in 7 to 10 years, they are harvested for typical wood uses. The tree will grow again from the remaining stump. It is a promising step forward for our use of nature to assist in removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Birds, Bees and Butterflies Sue Hall

Monarch butterflies are declining. Planting milkweed, the host plant, provides needed food. Bee colonies are collapsing. Bees pollinate many of our food plants. Planting pollinator gardens will help. Many insect sprays kill bees. Birds need insects to feed their young. Even seed eaters feed caterpillars to the nestlings.

Converting lawns into gardens, bushes and trees provides needed habitat and increases carbon dioxide uptake. Lawns require considerable energy to mow, fertilize, and spray. Local food production saves transportation costs, and foods taste better! Kitchen compost can be used in gardens.

Insects use specific host plants, with which they have coevolved, for their young. Our using native plants supports the web of life including insects and birds. Unfortunately most plants in garden shops are alien, some invasive. In the wild they can replace native species. Special nurseries provide native plants.

Houses, roads and parking lots speed precipitation runoff. Creeks and rivers rise faster and flood more often. Rain gardens help slow runoff. We can direct rain gutters to low lying areas planted with water-loving plants. This helps absorb carbon dioxide while creating habitats for birds and other wildlife.

A personal action list: plant native plants, bushes, trees; have less or no lawn; use less or no fertilizer; use less or no herbicide/insecticide; buy local food, plant a food garden, a rain garden and a pollinator garden; create compost.