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A “Clean” Solution to D.C.’s Environmental and Energy Problems Is on the Way

by Marty Silber

In March of 2004 Councilmembers Phil Mendelson (D-At Large) and Sharon Ambrose (D-Ward 6) co-introduced legislation in the D.C. Council appropriately titled the “Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Act of 2004” (RPS). Under the Renewable Energy Standard (RES) set out in this legislation, utilities that do business in the city of Washington must provide a percentage of their energy from clean, renewable sources.

D.C. Citizens United for Clean Energy, a coalition of over 100 businesses, nonprofits and faith and community groups, led by the D.C. Chapter of the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, Chesapeake Climate Action Network, Children’s Environmental Health Network and Union of Concerned Scientists, has been organizing the clean energy campaign of which the

legislation is a part for over nine months.

On May 13, a public hearing took place during which testimony was heard from various stakeholders in the legislation including public interest groups, technical experts, PEPCO, D.C. agencies and health advocates. As the legislation continues to be discussed, Sierra Club members should do their best to reinforce the positive facts that surround the RPS bill and dispel the myths about it so many have accepted. We need to demonstrate that the RES is both feasible and affordable.

Myth #1: The RES will be costly to consumers.

Fact: A renewable energy standard will have virtually no impact on electricity prices. Several studies conducted by the federal government’s own Energy Informa-

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photo by Brenda Moorman



Brenda Moorman (left) led Sierra Club recycling volunteers on a tour of Eagle Recycling Plant in March (see story, page 5).

Letter from the Chapter Chair

Capital Sierran Editors

Chris Craig, Yoma Ullman, Anna Kinsman and Gwyn Jones

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Send membership forms to: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968

Correction

In the Spring 2004 issue of the *Capital Sierran*, a story on the Environmental Film Festival (page 9) referred to David Brower as the founder of the Sierra Club. While David Brower was a director and longtime leader of the club, the club was actually founded by John Muir in 1892.

Move Over Buffy!

Engaging Our Members

by Mark Wenzler

What do the John Kerry campaign, 1,429 ferret lovers and the Christian Coalition have in common? They're all registered members of "Meetup.com," the on-line service that brings people together to share interests with others in their community. Most of you political junkies will know that Meetup is one of the tools Howard Dean used to revolutionize presidential politics. You may not know (or care to know) that 4,315 fans of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" also use it as an organizing tool.

Internet meeting services may be relatively new, but what makes them work is the age-old idea of neighbor talking to neighbor. While "Web-based" organizing is often credited for Howard Dean's early successes, the Internet simply helped his supporters facilitate small gatherings in thousands of homes, bars and coffee shops across the country where neighbors shared their ideas, hopes and dreams of what our next president could be. Unions have been doing this kind of organizing for years. Politicians and environmentalists, it seems, are just catching on.

The national Sierra Club launched its "Engaging Our Members" initiative earlier this year to educate the public about the Bush administration's environmentally destructive policies. Club volunteers will be working around the country this year to engage their neighbors on environmental issues and what we can do to make things better. You can learn more about it at www.clubhouse.sierraclub.org.

Over the coming months, volunteers in the D.C. Chapter of the Sierra Club

will be holding similar gatherings to talk about local environmental issues. These won't be dry committee meetings with agendas, minutes and long speeches (those come later!). Instead, they'll be informal gatherings over coffee, bagels or beer. They'll be opportunities to share ideas on how to make our city a cleaner, healthier place. And hopefully they'll be places where you can meet neighbors who share your environmental values and desire for change.

I can personally attest that great change is possible when only a few determined people come together. The hundreds of clean natural gas Metro buses we see on D.C. streets today began as an idea discussed by a handful of volunteers over pizza and beer in 1998.

There are plenty of opportunities still out there for us to transform our city. How can we get better recycling? What can be done to bring clean, renewable electricity to D.C. residents? How do we make the Anacostia safe for fishing and swimming? What else can we do to clean up our polluted air and prevent the spread of asthma among kids? These tasks don't seem so daunting when we come together and share our creative energy.

If you're interested in attending or hosting a small gathering to talk about environmental issues, please feel free to contact me or chapter assistant Dain Roose-Snyder (Dain.Roose-Snyder@sierraclub.org). Let's not be outdone by the 9,316 knitting enthusiasts currently plotting their next move on Meetup.com!

Conservation

Klingle Road Environmental Review Process Begins with Public Meetings

by Jason Broehm

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) recently began the process of preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) in anticipation of rebuilding Klingle Road for vehicular use. The road has been closed to automobiles since 1990 because of deteriorating road conditions related to storm water runoff.

Last year, the D.C. Council overruled Mayor Anthony Williams, who had announced his intention to convert the road into a hiker/biker path, as advocated by the Sierra Club. By an 8-5 vote, the council supported rebuilding the road instead.

Following the council's directive, DDOT contracted the Louis Berger Group to prepare an EIS document, which will study the environmental impacts associated with rebuilding the old road. The National Park Service

(NPS) is participating in the process as a "cooperating agency." The NPS, which manages Rock Creek Park, is on record as objecting to the road project because of the damaging effects it would have on the natural environment of Klingle Valley and Rock Creek. The Sierra Club and other environmental groups also have objected to the road project for this reason.

On April 27, DDOT and the Berger Group held a public "scoping" meeting to provide information about the EIS process and to receive public comments on the scope of the EIS document. Transportation officials made a short formal presentation, in which they announced five preliminary alternative project designs.

Alternative A, which would involve "no action," is a required alter-

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Photo by Jason Broehm

Members of the public asked questions about the Klingle Road Environmental Impact Statement at the District Department of Transportation's 'scoping' meeting, which kicked off the process. Members (left to right) Lisa Colson, Lisa Swanson, Nadia Steinzor (all members) staff the Save Klingle Valley table.

Help Sierra Club Build Support For Metro's CNG Buses

by Mark Wenzler

A few years ago, the Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) won a major environmental battle when we convinced the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Agency (Metro) to buy clean natural gas buses (CNG) and build natural gas fueling stations. It was a major victory for the environment and public health. Over the last three years Metro has purchased 339 natural gas buses, built a natural gas fueling station at its Bladensburg facility in the District and is constructing a second fueling station at its Four Mile Run facility in Arlington. Metro expects to purchase another 75 buses this summer, bringing the natural gas bus fleet to 414.

Metro was planning to purchase 200 more natural gas buses and build a third fueling station at its facility in Montgomery County, but the natural gas program is now in serious jeopardy. The Sierra Club needs your help!

On May 6, Metro board members nearly voted to reverse their previous decision to expand the natural gas bus program to Montgomery County (this facility serves many Northwest D.C. routes). CNG opponents proposed instead to buy 196 diesel buses and 50 electric-diesel hybrids. Robert Smith, Maryland Governor Robert Erlich's appointee to the Metro board, orchestrated the vote. Smith, who is now the board chairman, has opposed CNG buses since he joined the board. Fortunately, the vote deadlocked in a 3-3 tie. It is, however, most disturbing that one of the District's Metro board members, Gladys Mack (a mayoral appointee),

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Conservation

Renewable Energy Standards

Continued from page 1

tion Administration (EIA) show that a national 10 percent RES by 2020 would not significantly impact electricity prices and could save consumers money on their energy bills. EIA's most recent analysis, in May 2003, found that the 10 percent RES would have no impact on electricity prices through 2017, and would be less than one-tenth of a cent per kilowatt-hour higher than business as usual after that. A March 2003 study by Synapse, an energy consulting firm, found that a Maryland RES similar to the one introduced in the District would actually have a negligible impact on electric bills or even result in a slight decrease in customers' costs.

Fact: The RPS can reduce natural gas prices and total consumer energy bills. EIA's national RPS studies show that increased renewable energy use creates new competitors to traditional power plants, reducing the demand for natural gas and helping to lower its price. According to EIA, reaching 10 percent renewable electricity could reduce consumer natural gas prices by as much as 6 percent (\$0.26 per million Btu) in 2020 compared to business as usual. Lower natural gas prices for electricity generators and other consumers would offset the slightly higher cost of renewable electricity technologies. Even using high estimates of renewable energy technology costs and future natural gas price projections below even today's costs, EIA last year found that a 10 percent RES can reduce both natural gas and electricity bills, saving energy consumers \$13.2 billion between 2002 and 2020 (net present value).

Myth #2: Renewable sources are not reliable and will impose additional costs on consumers.

Fact: The RPS creates competition and demand for both intermittent and continuously available renewable energy sources. The U.S. electricity delivery system is designed to handle

unexpected swings in energy supply and demands far larger than those imposed by fluctuations in renewable sources. Several important renewable energy sources, such as geothermal, bioenergy, biomass and landfill gas systems, can operate around the clock. Solar energy is also generally most plentiful when it is most needed—during periods of peak electricity demand. Renewable energy can increase the reliability of the overall system by diversifying the resource base and using supplies that are not vulnerable to periodic fuel shortages or other supply interruptions. Several states have found that renewable installations, even above the levels contemplated in this RES, do not affect their transmission models. In several areas in Europe wind power alone already supplies over 20 percent of the electricity delivered with no adverse effects on the reliability of the system.

Myth #3: The requirements in the bill are impossible to meet and will force rate increases on consumers.

Fact: The RPS allows retailers of electricity to buy and sell renewable energy credits throughout the region served by suppliers in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland. This market-based system allows companies to buy or sell clean energy from anywhere in the mid-Atlantic region at the least possible cost in order to meet their requirements.

Fact: The region has significant renewable energy potential. This mid-Atlantic region is blessed with a rich and diverse pool of renewable energy resources that can be developed to enable electricity suppliers to meet their renewable sources requirement. For example, according to the U.S. Department of Energy, the state of Maryland has the technical potential to generate 15 percent of its energy needs from renewable sources. Pennsylvania could generate 60 percent and the states of Delaware and New Jersey could

generate 50 percent and 26 percent respectively.

Fact: The RES is technologically and economically feasible. The 11 percent renewable energy standard would represent a significant increase in renewable energy generation from today's level of about 2 percent of electricity sales (not including hydroelectric power). Our current level of renewable energy generation is shamefully low compared to our abundant, cost-effective renewable energy potential. New Jersey has already adopted an RES much more aggressive than that proposed for the District. The legislatures of both Pennsylvania and Delaware are also contemplating aggressive RES legislation.

With luck, a vote on the legislation will take place by mid-July. D.C. Council approval of the bill requires seven votes in favor and support by the mayor. Congress must also concur. We believe that this legislation will bring many positive benefits to the D.C. area including helping to improve air quality, reducing the number of asthma attacks, enabling better compliance with the Clean Air Act and creating jobs for the District/Virginia/Maryland region.

How you can support this bill :

1. Send a petition to members of the D.C. Council and the mayor asking them to support the RPS bill. It is easy; simply click on the link <http://gal.org/campaign/energyD.C>.
2. Spread this message to other interested parties and ask them to send the same petition.

A summary and a copy of the full bill are available at <http://www.foe.org/camps/reg/D.C.en/cleanenergy/facts.html>.

To get involved, you can call 571-236-5396 or e-mail Marty Silber at Marty_Silber@yahoo.com to find out how you can support bringing clean energy to the region.

Conservation

Talking Trash:

Recycling Team Campaigns For Compliance Across D.C.

by Brenda Moorman

A lot has gone on in recycling since our February report. First, 20 curious Sierra Club adventurers turned out for the Sierra Club tour of the Eagle Recycling Plant in March. After coffee and doughnuts, we set out to answer for ourselves the question everyone asks: “Do they really recycle all that stuff?”

We discovered that the answer is a resounding yes. We watched large machines make the first separations of glass, plastic and metal. We then witnessed hand sorting of paper and like materials. Finally, we watched the bundling of recycled materials for shipment to destinations as far away as China. The experience was fun and educational and we have pictures to prove it.

Second, the Recycling Committee now meets on the third Thursday of the month (consult our Web site for details—www.dc.sierraclub.org) and we are taking action to help boost the low rate of recycling in D.C., particularly the dismal rate of nonresidential recycling.

As we have stated before, we are using the carrot and stick approach. The carrot is a public awareness campaign starting with all the recycling information posted on our Sierra Club Web site. The campaign will be carried to the public with flyers, information tables at events and public service announcements. Our stick has a more dramatic flavor.

Several hearty members of the committee have gone “dumpster diving” to see if recycling is taking place at several large commercial office buildings downtown. Recycling by commercial enterprises is mandated by law, and heavy fines can result for scofflaws (although D.C.’s enforcement

is extremely lax).

After several dives behind 1900 M Street, N.W., revealed repeated recycling infractions, we went public with a press conference in front of the building on Earth Day. We received good TV coverage that put a spotlight on the problem of the low rate of recycling in commercial buildings.

Third, in March, the D.C. government announced a dramatic change in the residential recycling program. Starting in February 2005, the D.C. government will bring the residential collection of recycled material in-house, meaning it will use its own trucks with D.C. employees. Waste Management, the current hauling contractor, will be phased out of the pickup operation but will continue handling processing. In addition, the program will change to a single-sort recycling model.

At present, we have a double-sort program, meaning paper and all other materials are separated by residents and picked up that way. After February, D.C.

residents will be issued a large (smaller than a supercan) wheeled can in which all recyclables are to be placed together.

Residents will not be required to separate paper from

metal, plastic or glass because the separation will all be done at the processing plant. This plan has merit in that it may foster greater compliance and will be easier for residents and labor alike. As a downside, more cost and labor will be required in processing and there is the possible risk of more material being discarded due to contamination. Single-sort recycling, however, has worked well in several other cities and, with some modifications, could succeed here.

After a frustrating winter of missed pickups and declining recycling rates, there is reason for optimism for the D.C. recycling program. The D.C. Council has heard from residents loud and clear that we want an effective recycling program and the Sierra Club has made the issue a top priority. We invite you to join us in that effort. To get involved, contact Brenda Moorman at 202-333-5424 or brendamoorman@aol.com.



photo by Brenda Moorman

Bulldozer at Eagle Recycling moving recyclable materials.

Conservation

Klingle Valley

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native under federal law but will not be seriously considered. Alternative B includes a one-way road, while Alternative B2 entails a one-way road with a 4-foot-wide recreational trail. Alternative C would rebuild the two-way road to its original 22-foot-wide alignment, while Alternative D would construct a road that would be 28 feet wide including shoulders. The Sierra Club has not decided to support any particular alternative.

Officials spent most the meeting talking informally with members of the public one-on-one and in small groups, answering questions and soliciting feedback. A number of Sierra Club members and other advocates for Rock Creek Park attended the meeting.

Representatives of the Berger Group said that they intend to complete a draft version of the EIS by fall 2004, at which time they will distribute it to the public, begin a new public comment period that will last at least 45 days and hold another public meeting. Then they will prepare the final version of the EIS, to be released for a period of public comment of at least 30 days. Finally, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and DDOT will complete the process and enter a "record of decision" officially announcing which alternative they intend to pursue.

Due to the significant adverse impacts to the natural environment, even after the EIS process has concluded the road likely could not be rebuilt without first surviving a legal challenge.

Those who wish to submit comments on the EIS process may send an e-mail message to KlingleRoadEIS@louisberger.com or submit a comment form at <http://www.klingleroadeis.com/comments.html>. Written comments may be mailed to Damon Harvey, c/o Melissa Bird, The Louis Berger Group, 2300 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037. No deadline has been announced for submitting comments.

For more information, or to learn how you can get involved, please contact Jason Broehm at 202-299-0745 or jason_broehm@hotmail.com.

Metro Board Needs to Hear CNG Support

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who previously supported CNG buses, flipped and voted with Robert Smith. Smith is pledging to bring this matter up for a vote again this month or next.

Robert Smith and others based their support for reversing Metro's commitment to natural gas buses on a March 25 Metro bus division report that concluded that diesel buses are as clean as CNG buses and that diesel hybrids are a more attractive option than CNG. Two stalwart CNG supporters on the Metro board, D.C. Councilman Jim Graham (D-Ward 1) and Arlington Board member Chris Zimmerman, called for an independent review of the Metro report's conclusions by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Responding to this request, DOE's Dennis Smith presented his analysis at the May 6 board meeting. He found that the Metro bus staff had relied on faulty assumptions and overly optimistic views on the state of diesel-hybrid technology. He also concluded that the Montgomery County bus garage was a good candidate for CNG technology. Unfortunately, it is not clear that board members fully understood the problems with the Metro staff report. It also didn't help that Joan Rohlf, air quality chief at the Council of Governments (COG), told board members that transit buses were responsible for only 1 percent of the region's pollution, giving them cover to believe that even if they chose a more polluting technology—diesel—it would make very little difference in air quality.

Dennis Smith also told the board that no diesel engine manufacturer has built a commercially available engine that meets the 2007 federal emissions standards. Some natural gas engines already meet those standards. Meanwhile, diesel-electric hybrids are still an unproven technology and very expensive.

There are only 36 diesel-electric hybrids in service today in the United States.

The Washington-Baltimore region ranks 11th worst in the nation for ozone pollution and 18th worst for sooty particles, according to the American Lung Association's recent "State of the Air" report. Diesel engines are a major cause of both kinds of pollution, which contribute to asthma, bronchitis and heart disease. In this area, more than 300,000 adults and 50,000 children have asthma, according to the association.

Although diesel engines have become cleaner in recent years, natural gas technology is still our preferred choice. Metro's natural gas buses emit 53 percent fewer nitrogen oxides and 85 percent less total particulate matter than its cleanest diesel buses, according to a June 2003 DOE study. There is no guarantee that diesel buses bought over the next two or three years will be any cleaner.

We need to let Metro know that there is strong public support to continue its natural gas bus program, and that means buying 200 natural gas buses and building a new natural gas fueling station at its Montgomery facility. Metro should not buy diesel buses until they are shown to be at least as clean as natural gas buses and should not be gambling on diesel-electric hybrids, which are still in an experimental stage.

We urge you to e-mail Mayor Anthony Williams at mayor@dc.gov and tell him you want Metro to continue to buy natural gas buses and to build a third natural gas fueling station in Montgomery County.

For more information, please contact Mark Wenzler at mwenzler@net.org or Elliott Negin of NRDC at enegin@nrdc.org.

Metro Branch Trail Faces Dangerous Crossroads

by Paul Meijer and Chris Craig

The Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) needs your help to realize its completion and maintain its integrity as an alternative transportation route and park. This hiker-biker trail and greenspace, which will eventually link Union Station with Northeast Washington neighborhoods, Takoma Park and Silver Spring, has seen much progress in recent months. The trail has been incorporated into the design of the new New York Avenue Metro Station. A new section has been constructed in Takoma Park, Md. Work on the Brookland section has progressed, including the incorporation of a small park on Eighth Street, N.E., as a trail rest area.

Much work remains, however, and the trail has become embroiled in political controversy around three potentially dangerous intersections.

- At Riggs Road, N.E., trail consultants and volunteers are in delicate negotiations with the National Park Service on the trail's alignment.
- The trail runs into a problematic crossing where it intersects Monroe Street, N.E. One solution could be a trail underpass similar to one that exists on the WB&A Trail at Route 193 in Bowie.
- At Piney Branch Road, N.W., in Takoma, D.C., the trail route remains uncertain since the District government has given permission for a new housing development to be built on public land, some of which is needed for the trail. The developer insists the area is too small to allow the MBT to pass through the property, which is adjacent to the Metro and CSX rail lines. Resulting detours could force

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Volunteers Promote Bus Ridership

by Jenna
Musselman

Beginning March 30 and continuing through the month of April, "The 30s Are Going Your Way" campaign aimed to attract new riders to the 30, 32, 34, 35 and 36 bus routes, which run from Capitol Hill through downtown to Georgetown and then north along Wisconsin Avenue. The frequency of service along the route made it a good choice for introducing the buses to new riders through a special promotion sponsored by Metro and the D.C. Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Chapter members first met with Metro officials to discuss plans and publicity for the event, and then Metro staff joined a large number of chapter volunteers for a folder-stuffing party at which handouts for the kickoff and other outreach events were prepared. The colorful folders contained a bus map, route schedules, a bookmark touting the "Top Ten Reasons to Try the 30s" and many promotional offers from merchants along the 30s route. The Sierra Club logo was featured on the informational flyer.

At the March 30 kickoff at the Mall in Georgetown Park, WASH FM radio entertained lunchtime shoppers. Winners of a Metrobus quiz game received prizes such as movie certificates, dinner-for-two at restaurants along the 30s route and other gifts from participating stores. Chapter volunteers and Metro staff handed out the prepared information folders and answered questions from interested passersby. To further target residents and commuters along the Georgetown/Wisconsin Avenue



The author and volunteer Ruth Wong staff the 30s bus information table at Georgetown Park mall.

photo by Daniel Abedon

corridor, five more rush-hour outreach events sent chapter volunteers into the community to distribute more folders. Metro staff made the information available at the Foggy Bottom Metro Station.

"We're pleased to be able to work together with Metro on improving Metrobus," said Tom Metcalf, chair of the chapter's Air Quality and Transportation Committee. Metcalf also expressed the committee's appreciation for the work of all the volunteers who helped prepare the information folders and participated in the outreach.

The 30s campaign melded well with the D.C. Chapter's ongoing efforts to improve bus information and focus Metro's attention on its bus system. The 30s effort builds on Metro's earlier success in displaying bus route maps at bus shelters (see Spring 2004 *Capital Sierran* for details).

Metro will not have specific figures for ridership on the 30s buses during the promotion, but Metcalf expects Metro to evaluate the effort and anticipates a similar project on a different bus line. He hopes that this successful event with Metro will lead to more partnerships in the future.

Conservation

Political Committee Plans for Busy Year

by Danilo Pelletiere

With our official kickoff happy hour at Regional Food and Drink (May 5) behind us, the D.C. Chapter's Political Committee has begun looking toward the elections this fall. As in past years, our primary activity will be evaluating and influencing local races, particularly the D.C. Council, where two at-large and four ward seats (2, 4, 7, 8) are to be contested along with the delegate to the U.S. Congress and the city's (shadow) U.S. Representative.

The political season for local offices will move into high gear in July when petitions have been filed and the field of candidates for the primaries is set.

At this point the Political Committee will begin the endorsement process and engage volunteers for endorsed campaigns and other projects. This year the primary election is set for September 14 and the general election will be November 2. Given the national importance of this year's election, however, we will also be plugging local volunteers into national efforts and encouraging national Sierra Club political operations to use local volunteers and resources in priority campaigns and races. To be involved with the D.C. Chapter's efforts this year, contact Dain Roose-Snyder at the chapter's offices at 202-543-0552 or dain.roose-snyder@sierraclub.org.



photo by Jason Broelhm

Dain Roose-Snyder, deputy political director for the Sierra Club, describes the organization's election year plan at a Cinco de Mayo happy hour at RFD.

District and Club Address Lead Crisis

by Gwyn Jones

While numerous lawsuits and legislative actions make their way through the courts and D.C. Council, many residents are still uncertain about how they may or may not be affected by lead contamination in the city's drinking water.

On May 14 the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) asked a Superior Court judge to dismiss a class-action lawsuit against the agency over its management of lead contamination of some drinking water, arguing that a court order would impose burdensome and unnecessary costs.

WASA has taken corrective actions in changing the chemical mix in the water (the previous additives used for disinfection apparently may have caused excessive leaching of lead in existing service lines). The agency has distributed about 27,000 filters to homes with lead service lines. At the urging of city and congressional leaders, WASA also offered free water tests to residents whose service lines may be in question and promised a free water filter to any

home that has water with excessive lead levels.

The council has considered a number of resolutions and bills relating to the lead contamination issue, including funding for various remediation efforts. The Committee on Public Works and the Environment, led by Councilmember Carol Schwartz (R-At Large), has an ongoing investigation into WASA's alleged mismanagement and recently held public hearings on the matter.

At those hearings, Sierra Club Environmental Justice Organizer Linda Fennell made sure the council heard the concerns of communities east of the river and offered several recommendations to ensure that poor, disabled and elderly residents who have the least access to information and city services would be able to get blood testing, purchase water and have clear, accurate information on how to protect themselves and where to go for help.

"During this crisis, those who can least afford to defend themselves must be protected," Linda testified.

Metro Branch Trail

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trail users into a circuitous route of questionable safety.

To induce people to give up their cars and travel by bicycle or foot, we need trails that are mainly off-road and that avoid dangerous intersections. The recent death of a bicycle commuter near the South Capitol Bridge reinforces the need for safe facilities for those using alternative transportation. Please write D.C. Councilmember Carol Schwartz (R-At Large) and ask her to instruct District transportation consultants to explore the safest and most direct alternatives for the MBT alignment in Takoma and other neighborhoods. In particular, we support proposed Alignments A or C along the eastern side of Metro's Red Line.

For more information or to get involved with the Coalition for the Metropolitan Branch Trail, contact Paul Meijer at 202-726-7364 or meijer@cua.edu.

Club Members Elect New Directors

Members of the Sierra Club turned out in record numbers this year to elect five new members to the Board of Directors. Far more—171,616 members or 22.7 percent of the membership—voted than in any previous election.

Voters elected to a second term incumbent directors Jan O’Connell, an insurance executive and environmental organizer from Grand Rapids, Mich., and Nick Aumen, a biologist from Loxahatchee, Fla.

Top vote-getter Lisa Renstrom, an environmental activist from Charlotte, N.C., received 141,407 votes. She served on the board from 2001 to 2003. Consumer lawyer Sanjay Ranchod from San Francisco and student David Karpf from Philadelphia were elected for the first time.

The election was widely reported in the press because of controversial disagreements about the club’s immigration policy and concerns about the involvement of outside groups.

Larry Fahn, president of the Sierra Club, says that the grassroots organization’s membership sent a clear message through its record voter turnout: “Nearly a quarter of our members have elected active leaders in the Sierra Club who support our core agenda to protect the environment and educate Americans about the destructive environmental practices of the Bush administration.”

Renstrom adds, “Twenty-two percent turnout is extraordinary. We need to find ways to keep that level of participation going.”

O’Connell echoes Renstrom’s sentiments, commenting, “I campaigned like crazy. I contacted almost 14,000 club members—by phone, by e-mail, by postcard and in person. My goal is to go back to those people, keep networking, keep them engaged in our work.”

For specific vote totals and more information, go to www.sierraclub.org/bod.

Gulf Coasters Join with Appalachians to Stop Mountaintop Removal Mining and Find Clean Energy Solutions

by Wendy Balazik

Far up Cripple Creek Holler, Larry Gibson’s family has nestled on its mountaintop for four generations. Larry’s ancestors rest in the graveyard, comfortably protected by the surrounding wild, wooded, higher peaks, where their descendants have hunted, gathered and farmed in harmony with the rhythm of water, sky, woods and land. No land more resembles the human body with its curves and creases than Appalachia, which may explain the unique closeness of the people to their hills and hollows.

Over 60 Sierra Club activists from the Appalachia and Gulf Coast Region Conservation committees met in Charleston, W.Va., from April 1 to 3, for training about the devastation caused by the mountaintop removal mining that is destroying Appalachian communities.

Larry showed them a scene vastly different from the one described above. Participants climbed Kayford Mountain to witness firsthand the barren devastation left from mountaintop removal mining of all the surrounding peaks.

“Irresponsible coal mining practices like mountaintop removal mining and long-wall mining are literally killing many communities and ecosystems in Appalachia,” said Maurice Coman, chair of the Sierra Club’s Gulf Coast Region Conservation Committee. Larry Gibson added, “There is no such thing as cheap energy. During flooding after a steady rainstorm or while dodging overloaded, careless coal trucks, Appalachians pay for the so-called ‘cheap’ coal.”

Mountaintop removal mining levels landscapes, turning peaks and valleys

Continued on page 14

Membership

Yes, I want to help safeguard our nation’s precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

email _____

Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club

Mastercard Visa Exp Date ____/____

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

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Moving Toward Sustainable Architecture: Virginia Tech

by *Elon Danziger*

“For me it’s a much more feasible idea to have a solar compound—like a community water tower—PV cells all plugged together and supplying houses in a neighborhood rather than cells on every roof.”

Energy, the enabler of our civilization, comes cheaply from the organic detritus we salvage from underground. But as it has become clear that such fuels—oil, natural gas and coal—are not inexhaustible, and that their use comes with environmental, health and political costs, some have turned their attention to sources of energy that are more expensive but also cleaner and never-ending. Among them is Richard King, head of the U.S. Department of Energy program on photovoltaics (PV), the technology through which sunlight can be converted to electricity. With great personal enthusiasm, King has long sought to publicize the advantages of harnessing energy from the sun. In the ‘90s he conceived and oversaw the Sunrayce, a national inter-university competition to construct a vehicle powered entirely by the sun. At the turn of the millennium, he imagined a new competition: teams of architecture students would design, build and operate a small, solar-powered house that would face 10 tests to prove it functioned as well as, and looked as attractive as, a conventional home. The result, the first Solar Decathlon, culminated in the reconstruction of houses

sponsored by 14 universities on the National Mall in fall 2002. Public interest was so strong that a second competition, targeted for 2005, was launched and the 20 sites on the Mall were quickly reserved by American, Canadian and European architecture schools.

Among the top-ranked teams in 2002 was Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Virginia Tech), a 25,000-student university in southwestern Virginia with one of the largest and best architecture programs in the country. The vision for Virginia Tech’s house came from graduate student Yousef Nawas, winner of an early design competition. Several faculty and dozens of students collaborated to finalize the design and build the house without any outside assistance. The team sought new ways to solve dozens of perennial problems of domestic architecture: for insulation they obtained Aerogel, a translucent, ultralight, silicon vermiculite made for the National Aeronautics and Space Agency and never before used in architecture; for structural supports they used lightweight, fiberglass-reinforced I-beams; for indirect lighting they reconceived a technology for billboard illumination; for furniture in a constrained space, they designed a “movable closet,” a track-

mounted structure combining storage space and a foldaway bed. The house won the overall innovation award for the Solar Decathlon, and the movable closet helped Virginia Tech clinch first place among design schools at the 2003 International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York. Students and researchers at Virginia Tech are carrying many of these innova-

“My app... is inform... sustaina... but I hav... say that... tainabilit... ally start... propertie... material... ergy calc... tions—m... informat... knowled... I think ge... architect... driven by... nation.”



Tech's Solar House

tions—and others, like the very concept of a building structured as a series of infilled I-beam frames—into wider use.

In February 2004 I interviewed Yousef Nawas about Virginia Tech's Solar House and larger questions of sustainability and architecture:

Let's begin with the 2002 Solar House, now reconstructed on campus. Could you talk about your artistic vision?

Since it's a small house, I had the idea of two rooms, a room for living and a room for sleeping. I thought that the room for living should have the character of white monochrome, because, with a window to the north, it receives all the colors of nature that bounce in. It becomes more like a canvas or a background for the outside colors. The other room, the bedroom, I imagined as an organic box. It faces south to create a play of shadow and it has a porch in front so from the dark you can walk toward the light and the sun can hit your skin. The materials are all bamboo, so it also has an organic quality.

The most traditional-looking houses in the 2002 Decathlon tended to be the favorites of the public, though not of the architects. How do you feel about that?

Tradition to me is not the issue: to perfect a detail requires many years of experience. The thing I criticize about our buildings nowadays is that they are not well designed. Everything is off the shelf. The focus of design has shifted from houses to products: everybody wants to own an iPod, because every part is designed. Imagine if buildings nowadays, using new technology, were designed as carefully, as critically, as beautifully as the iPod.

Do you believe homes should ultimately be completely self-sustaining?

Houses obtain services from town infrastructure like leaves get nutrients from a tree. If the leaf does not need that, it will detach. So think how urban sprawl will increase when people don't need infrastructure any more. Not that energy-independence is bad, but any medication has side effects.

For me it's a much more feasible idea to have a solar compound—like a community



water tower—PV cells all plugged together and supplying houses in a neighborhood rather than cells on every roof.

Another side effect of PV cells is waste. In the analogy of the leaf of the tree, when the leaf falls it disintegrates and the soil makes use of it, but every year a new kind of PV technology comes out which will always become waste. Even if PV devices are recyclable, how much energy is needed to recycle them?

Is your approach to architecture informed by the goal of sustainability or do you see design and sustainability as independent fields?

My approach is informed by sustainability, but I have to say that sustainability usually starts from properties of materials, energy calculations—mostly information, knowledge. But I think good architecture is driven by imagination.

When people let design be guided by knowledge and not imagination, sustainability starts taking on an ugly face. All those solar houses in the '70s were not very successful because they were driven by knowledge, not by the imagination of how we can make beautiful houses.

Sustainability for me is the concept of “fit”—it fits from every side, like granite was the perfect fit in the living room [of my solar house]. It has a lot of density, it works as a perfect thermal mass, the various panels blend to create a single surface and when you walk on it, it has a weight and gives you a certain kind of feeling. Everything feels right.

Photo opposite page: The solar village filled the National Mall during the Solar Decathlon in fall 2002.

Photo by Warren Gretz, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Above: Solar house design by Yousef Nawas of Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

Photo by Chris Gunn, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

ICO EVENTS

Summer Outings

Join the District's at-risk children on local outdoor adventures with the D.C. Chapter's Inner City Outings (ICO). Trips are held the first three Saturdays of each month with four local community centers. Planned summer trips include canoeing at Lake Accotink, hiking the Billy Goat Trail, camping on the Wye River, hiking at Calvert Cliffs, a water tour/cleanup with the Anacostia Watershed Society, swimming at Beaver Dam and hiking at Sugarloaf Mountain. Visit www.sierraclub.org/ico/dc for trip details.

Volunteer Social, June 23

Want to connect with other Sierra Club members, Inner City Outings volunteers and friends? Join us for half-priced mojitos and salsa music at Cafe Citron on Wednesday, June 23 from 6 to 8 p.m. Your \$5 donation will help Washington's at-risk youth learn about and explore the natural world and gain you access to extended happy hour prices. Dancing, socializing and a raffle--all at one of D.C.'s unique hot spots. Cafe Citron is located at 1343 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., 202-530-8844, one block from the Dupont Circle Metro. Prices: \$5 donation/door charge; raffle tickets, \$1 each or 6 for \$5; and half-priced mojitos and beer.

Fund Raiser/Book Fair

Father's Day weekend, June 18-20, the ICO program will be having a book fair with the Barnes and Noble at 2800 Clarendon Blvd., Arlington. Part of the proceeds from the sale of books, magazines, CDs and DVDs to customers who bring in a flyer or mention ICO at the time of purchase will go to ICO. Also, please join us at 1 p.m. Saturday for short talks from local authors on hiking and gardening. For details, contact Steven Tom at 703-218-2731 or stom@icfconsulting.com. Also visit www.sierraclub.org/ico/dc.

At Woodson High School, Students Are Taking the Initiative

by *The Woodson Warrior Planet Protectors*

In February 2004, we, as a group of concerned high school students, grades 9-12, who attend H. D. Woodson Senior High School in the Deanwood neighborhood of northeast Washington, D.C., developed an action group to address environmental issues in our school and its community. Our initiative was sponsored by the supplemental service provider Alliances for Quality Education as part of Woodson's after-school program.

Naming ourselves the Woodson Warrior Planet Protectors, we identified a need for a recycling program to reduce the amount of solid waste accrued daily in our school. As we sat down and thought things through, we calculated that our school produces an amount of trash that can fill three and a half classrooms every month. It was this calculation that prompted us to implement a recycling program at our school.

From the date of our decision we have diligently sought the support of our school family and community partners. With the encouragement of our principal, Mrs. Aona Jefferson, and our science teachers, Mrs. Nancy Gordon and Dr. Steve Donkin, we have established a working relationship with Linda Fennell, the Sierra Club's environmental justice coordinator for the District, and the D.C. Department of Public Works (DPW). The DPW is supplying us with bins for collecting recyclables and the Sierra Club is providing transportation for hauling recyclables to the sorting facility.

A challenge we face in getting our program to work is motivating students in the school to participate in recycling. To address this, we are making a short

movie to show throughout the school on the importance of recycling in our schools and neighborhoods.

Our efforts to encourage recycling also have increased our awareness of other environmental issues such as water and energy conservation at our school, e-cycling (recycling computers and other hazardous electrical appliances), exploring aquatic ecosystems and promoting the use of native vegetation in gardening and composting in our community.

We are the Woodson Warrior Planet Protectors!

Jonathan Brooks	Keisha Mack
Jasmine Frank	Kelvina Marshall
Bryan Frye	Christopher Peters
Bernice Genus	Rhonda Thomas
Tequila Ingram	Terrence White



Environmental Justice

East of the River Foundation Launches Program for Areas East of the Anacostia

by Linda Fennell

The Washington East Foundation inaugurated its Environmental Justice Program for East of the River on Saturday, April 17, in support of the Anacostia River and the communities on its eastern banks. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation Anacostia River Initiative and the D.C. Environmental Justice Program of the Sierra Club collaborated in the event. Linda Fennell, the D.C. Chapter's environmental justice organizer, co-organized.

Setting out for a tour of the Anacostia River under a sunny blue sky and a gentle breeze, approximately 20 community leaders and clergy from Wards 7 and 8 boarded the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's vessel *Susquehanna* to become acquainted with the river's beauty and challenges. Sierra Club members Gwyn Jones and Jim Dougherty joined this energetic group of activists and profited from a historical perspective of the river given by Doug Siglin of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

The Washington East Foundation plans to have a series of communitywide events to educate residents on environmental issues in the hope that this information will lead to effective advocacy by the community for clean air, safe drinking water, vibrant waterways, and clean and beautiful streets, parks, trees and greenspace. The foundation also believes that it is essential that areas east of the Anacostia have effective transportation and economic development to support healthy living and environmentally sustainable communities.

Save the date: June 26, 2004, when the Washington East Foundation is sponsoring an environmental justice land tour. For more information, contact Deborah Jones, 202-584-2544 or Linda Fennell, 202-610-0200.



*On the Anacostia (above):
The group saw the range of
stresses and successes along the
Anacostia, from the osprey nest
to industrial storage tanks. Below
left, they stop to pull up nets to
check on the numbers and types
of fish. Below, one group member
holds out a catfish, before it's
returned to the river.
(photos by Amy Cody)*



Club Battles Mining Abuses

Continued from page 9

into flat, dead moonscapes where nothing grows or lives. To get to a thin seam of coal, mining companies blow the tops off mountains and then bury streams and everything else under tons of mining waste. When it rains, the water has no place to go, often flooding local communities. The stream buffer zone rule, a provision that prohibits energy companies from dumping mining waste within 100 feet of streams, is a tried-and-true solution that has protected streams for over 25 years. Instead of enforcing this important safeguard, the Bush administration is actually working to weaken it.

Longwall mining causes buildings to collapse and streams to dry up, yanking the land out from underneath them. Traditional underground mining required miners to leave columns of coal to support the mine shaft to avoid collapse. Now, some miners use machines to rip out all of the coal, leaving no support. The mine shaft inevitably collapses, causing surface land and everything on it to slump as much as four feet into the ground. These cracks swallow up streams and destroy foundations of buildings. And longwall mining doesn't discriminate; it destroys historic buildings along with homes in new developments and dries up streams for farmers.

Yet streams are not the only casualties of mountaintop removal and longwall mining. Communities across the country face the pollution that comes from burning coal. Coal-burning power plants are the single largest source of mercury pollution in the United States and are responsible for 33 percent of the total mercury emissions from all manmade sources nationwide. Forty-five states and territories have warned the public to limit consump-

tion of fish from mercury-contaminated lakes and rivers. The Environmental Protection Agency recently estimated that one in six women of childbearing age have mercury levels in their blood high enough to put their babies at risk for serious neurological problems. That means approximately 630,000 newborns are at risk each year.

"Anyone who flips on a light switch should be concerned about these reckless forms of mining because the devastation doesn't end in Appalachia," said Bob Morris, chair of the Sierra Club's Appalachian Region Conservation Committee. "Throughout America, more and more asthmatic children are wheezing on hot, unsafe-air days in the summer. There is a better way. We have the technology and the know-how to move beyond our dependence on polluting coal-fired power plants and create 3.3 million jobs by using clean, safe, and affordable renewable energy."

The Apollo Alliance was represented by Skye Perryman, who agreed with Morris that renewable energy is the best alternative to mountaintop removal mining and burning dirty coal. Renewable energy comes from clean sources like the sun and wind, generating electricity without spewing asthma-inducing pollution into the air or destroying mountains and homes in Appalachia. The Apollo Alliance is building a broad coalition within the labor, environmental, business, urban and faith communities in support of good jobs and energy independence. The alliance is also developing public education campaigns and communications strategies to link allies and build a national constituency for a bold, broad-based and immediately applicable program of public policy.

The Sierra Club has long worked to protect the Appalachian heritage from mountaintop removal, irresponsible mining and the destruction of forests. Now the club is proud to be a sponsor of a four-hour documentary, "The Appalachians: America's First and Last Frontier," narrated by Naomi Judd. Premiering this coming fall on PBS, this definitive history of Appalachia tells the story of the people, the land and the music. Please check local listings for more information.

To learn more about the film and the Sierra Club's work in Appalachia, please visit www.sierraclub.org/appalachia. Help Larry Gibson and other members of Appalachian communities save the mountains and forests for future generations.

"The Planet" is the Sierra Club's monthly newsletter guide to environmental activism at the national and international levels. Educate yourself on hot conservation issues, learn how to get involved in club campaigns, and find out how you can take individual action. You can read "Planet" online at www.sierraclub.org/planet. Or to subscribe, write Sierra Club Activist Desk, 85 Second St., Second Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105 or e-mail activist.desk@sierraclub.org.

To subscribe to "Sierra Club Current," an electronic listserv for environmental activists interested in and willing to respond to action alerts on various local, national and international issues, send an e-mail to SIERRACLUB-ACTION-SUBSCRIBE-REQUEST@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG. No subject line or message content is required. You will receive an action e-mail two or three times per week with recent information and suggested action. You will not receive other unsolicited e-mail.

D.C. Consumers Can Give Farm Animals a Break by Choosing Certified Humane Products

by Rachel Query

Consumers in the Washington, D.C., area can now improve the lives of farm animals and support food producers who take extra steps to treat their animals humanely by purchasing meat, dairy and egg products that carry the “Certified Humane” label. A consumer education program that informs residents of the D.C. area about where to find Certified Humane products is now under way.

The “Certified Humane Raised and Handled” label, unveiled in May 2003 by Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC), a nonprofit organization in nearby Herndon, Va., assures consumers that a meat, poultry, egg or dairy product has been produced according to HFAC’s rigorous standards for the humane treatment of farm animals. Certified Humane producers give their animals a nutritious diet without antibiotics or hormones, ample shelter and resting areas and enough space to allow them to behave normally. Fifteen companies are now certified to use the new label and more are being certified all the time.

“A chicken needs space to flap its wings, pigs like to root around in the dirt and cows need room to roam,” says Adele Douglass, founder and executive director of HFAC. “The very existence of this program means that things are changing for the better for farm animals.”

HFAC, with backing from The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and 13 regional animal welfare organizations in the United States, has embarked on a consumer education campaign to inform Washington, D.C., retailers and consumers about the Certified Humane label. This is the first

of many market-education campaigns that HFAC hopes to conduct in cities throughout the United States.

The program was kicked off in early April with a letter to thousands of HSUS and ASPCA members in the D.C. area. The letter explained that purchasing Certified Humane products and asking grocers and restaurants to support Certified Humane products improves the lives of farm animals. The HSUS also featured a Certified Humane story in *All Animals*, its quarterly glossy magazine for members. In addition, HFAC placed a series of consumer education ads in local newspapers and magazines, including *The Washingtonian*.

Douglass explains that HFAC chose Washington, D.C., as the first market for this program because many Certified Humane products are already available in the area. “This strong base sets the stage for more Certified Humane products to find their way onto store shelves,” she says.

The range of Certified Humane products available in the District proves Douglass’s point. For fresh eggs, consumers can choose between Pete & Gerry’s Organic Eggs and Nellie’s Nest Cage-Free Eggs. Meat that is Certified Humane includes Meyer Natural Angus Beef, du Breton Natural Pork and Applegate Bacon. Deer Creek Beef is available at the Mill of Bel Air and Bell Air Farmer’s Market in Maryland every Saturday from April through October.

Washington, D.C., residents also can patronize Hunter’s Head Tavern—the country’s first Certified Humane restaurant—located in Upperville, Va., about 55 miles from the District.

On a national scale, the Certified Humane label can be found on meat, dairy and egg products from California to Florida. Meyer Natural Angus, Maver-

ick Ranch Pork, Pederson’s Natural Farms and du Breton Natural Pork are among the Certified



* Meets the Humane Farm Animal Care Program standards, which include nutritious diet without antibiotics, or hormones, animals raised with shelter, resting areas, sufficient space and the ability to engage in natural behaviors.

Humane meat producers with a national customer base. Other Certified Humane producers include Prather Ranch (Northern California), Organic Breadbasket (Winnipeg, Canada), Echo Farms Dairy (New Hampshire), Tobin Farms (Washington State), Deer Creek Beef (Maryland), Hedgeapple Farms Beef (Maryland) and North Country Smokehouse (Connecticut). While these companies sell their products primarily to local consumers, many will sell direct anywhere in the United States through their Web sites.

The early success of the program has piqued the interest of major media outlets and resulted in stories in *USA Today*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Toronto Globe*, *Gourmet* magazine and the *Associated Press*. The Certified Humane program was also featured, along with a Certified Humane egg producer, on the *CBS Evening News*.

HFAC’s Animal Care Standards for chickens, pigs and cows were developed by the team of veterinarians and animal scientists who make up the organization’s advisory board. Adherence to the standards by producers must be verified by independent on-site inspections conducted by HFAC.

To find out more about the Certified Humane program, visit HFAC’s web site at www.CertifiedHumane.org or call HFAC at 703-435-3883.

Announcements

Thank you, Donors, for Your Support !

Our March Window D.C. Chapter fundraising campaign is off to a great start. Fifteen volunteers helped put out our mailing in record time, and we soon started hearing back from our loyal members. As of press time, 55 members had contributed \$2,400 for chapter activities and \$515 for the Political Action Committee. It's never too late! Our goals of increased recycling, environmental justice, cleaner air and more CNG buses for D.C. need help from all our members. Mail your contributions to Karen Cordry, 10705 Torrance Dr., Silver Spring, Md. 20902.

A special thank-you to these contributors to our March Window fundraising campaign:

Steve Aupperle
Carol A. Baume
Merwin C. Blust
Lauren Brown
Miles Charest
John Colwell
Jane Comings
Chris Craig
Martin Day
Richard J. Delaney
Gregory Dotson
James Doyle
Louis Eby
Krystyna Edmondson
Laura Farina

Amelia R. Fry
Daphne Dej Gemmill
Richard Gould
F. James Handley
Ellen Haring
Jean Hughes
Laura A. Ivers
Ella Krucoff
Juanita Lambert
Shalina McPherson
Samuel Mehlman
Douglas C. Melcher
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Corinne Scott
Rachel Shaw
Gerald Stacy
Jerry Stilkind
Rebekah Stutsman
Jonathan B. Tucker
Susan F. Volman
Oona Waxenfelter
Peter A. Weitzel
John Wheeler
Edwin Wheelless
Juliet Wurr

General Membership Meetings

Beginning this summer, we will hold periodic general membership meetings to provide you with another opportunity to meet your fellow Sierra Club members and learn more about what the Sierra Club is doing locally to protect the environment.

Our first meeting on Monday, June 21, will feature a slide presentation on Costa Rica (see details below).

We hope to offer similar slide shows in the future. Would you like to share your outdoor travel photos and experiences with other Sierra Club members at a future meeting? Or do you have another idea for a general membership meeting? If so, please contact Jason Broehm at 202-299-0745 or jason_broehm@hotmail.com.

What: General Membership Meeting—Costa Rica Slide Show

When: Monday, June 21, 7:00 p.m.

Where: 401 C Street, N.E. (Sierra Club office)

Longtime Sierra Club member Jim Dougherty will share his photos and stories about a recent adventure in Costa Rica. Come and see beautiful photos of the Costa Rican landscape—natural, rural and urban—as well as exotic plant life and wildlife. Food will be provided.

photos courtesy of Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Potomac Paddle Set for June 10

Join us Thursday, June 10, for the Sierra Club's Brink of Summer Potomac Paddle. We will gather from 6:00 p.m. to dusk. Meet at Jack's Boathouse, 3500 K Street, N.W. (on the Potomac under the Key Bridge). All are welcome; cicadas and other wildlife may be present. Refreshments will be served. For more information or to RSVP, call Lisa Swanson at 202-328-8110 or melatar@yahoo.com.

Thanks, Volunteers!



Thanks to all volunteers who helped plant trees along the Anacostia River on Saturday, March 27. In spite of a drizzly, chilly morning, dozens gathered and made quick work of planting the saplings near the RFK Stadium parking lot. We worked alongside volunteers and staff from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and staff of the Watershed Protection Division of D.C.'s Department of Health.

Announcements

What You Can Do to Stop the Bush Administration's Assault on the Environment (and Have Fun Doing It!)

Taking a stand against the Bush administration's anti-environmental agenda is the Sierra Club's number one priority, and here is your chance to discover what you can do to help! Make your plans now to attend this motivating, fun, skills-filled workshop on how to stop the Bush administration's assault on our air, water and public lands.

WHEN: Friday, June 11, beginning with a reception, 7 p.m.—Sunday, June 13, lunch

WHERE: YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly, Asheville, N.C.

WHAT: Workshop: Join fellow Sierrans from across the Appalachian region (D.C., Del., Ga., Md., N.C., S.C., Tenn., Va. and W.Va.) to learn what we can do to oppose the Bush administration's anti-environmental agenda

WHO: Sponsored by the Sierra Club's Appalachian Regional Office and Appalachian Regional Conservation Committee

COST: From \$67.00 to \$92.50 for room and meals, plus travel. New flat rate for SSCers (students)—\$50.00 (accommodations in Lee Hall Dorm)

SPECIAL GUESTS: Eric Schaffer, former EPA air enforcement administrator (confirmed), Carl Pope, Sierra Club executive director (invited)

Topics include:

- This land is your land—the Bush administration's attack on public lands

- Every breath you take—the Bush administration's attack on air quality
- No polluter left behind—the Bush administration's toxic tango
- Arsenic in your drinking water and other Bush administration aquatic adventures
- Big oil, dirty coal and a lot of gas—the Bush administration's energy policy
- Outdoor activities and entertainment

Skills training includes:

- Talking about the Bush administration—The Sierra Club Message Book
- Bringing it home—localizing your message
- What you can do! A toolbox and cookbook of tactics
- What you can and cannot say about the Bush administration—compliance concerns
- Building environmental communities—a refined approach to Sierra Club organizing
- State caucuses—planning together for your state
- Making it fun! Having a good time doing good works

To register for this must-be-at event visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/field/appalachia/events.asp> or call Kate Smolski at 404-607-1262, ext. 222.

Hike D.C.'s Parks

Hike Glover Archbold Park, Whitehaven Park, Dumbarton Oaks Park and Rock Creek Park in one afternoon. Sound like fun? From the Tenleytown Metrorail Station, our route will take us through the parks and end at the Woodley Park-National Zoo-Adams Morgan Metrorail Station.

Date: Saturday, July 17

Time: 12:00 noon

Location: Meet at the Tenleytown Metrorail Station (Red Line), on the sidewalk at the top of the western exit (near the new Best Buy store).

Length: Approximately 5 miles

Rating: Moderate

Contact: Jason Broehm at 202-299-0745 or jason_broehm@hotmail.com.

Hiking boots or sturdy walking shoes with a good tread are recommended, along with appropriate clothes for weather conditions on the day of the hike. Also bring water and any food you may want during the hike. All participants must sign a liability waiver.

Paid Summer Internships for District Teens

Casey Trees Endowment announces summer internships for D.C. high school students, ages 16 years and older, who are interested in summer work outdoors and learning about the District's trees. Students will identify, inventory and maintain trees, and work with residents throughout the city. Students must have an interest in the environment, a readiness to work hard in rain or high heat and the motivation to learn and follow directions with a positive spirit and high energy. Training provided. Employment will be July 6-Aug. 13, averaging 35 hours per week, and stipend will be \$1,500. For information or an application, contact Buffie Brownstein, 202-833-4010 x107 or bbrownstein@caseytrees.org.

Chapter E-mail Alerts

Would you like to receive e-mail alerts from the chapter about upcoming events and opportunities to help speak up for the District's environment? To join, please submit a request by e-mail to washingtondc.chapter@sierraclub.org.

Calendar

Outings

Following is a *partial list of activities offered by the Metropolitan Washington Regional Outings Program (MWROP)*. For a more complete and up-to-date list and additional information, visit www.mwrop.org or call 202-547-2326.

Sat. May 29 (rated A). 9 a.m.-noon. Blockhouse Point Conservation Park in Potomac. Take a leisurely 3-mi. stroll through one of Montgomery County's largest intact forests and learn about some of the threats to our county parks. Come experience a bit of nature, discuss local issues, and view the Potomac River from a spectacular overlook. Leader: Ron LaCoss 301-946-1106 before 9 p.m. or ronenviroed@aol.com.

Sat. May 29 (rated C). U.S. National Arboretum: Get-to-Know-DC Series. Mildly hilly, 7.5-mi. circuit hike in lush spring landscape of rich and rare botanical delights. See late-blooming azalea hillsides and ascend Mt. Hamilton (if reopened), visit bonsai and viewing-stone collections and tour National Herb Garden. Metrobus accessible. Meet at 10 a.m. at main parking lot (just inside Arboretum's R St. entrance). Leashed dogs okay. Joint event with AMC-DC. Leader: Paul Elliott 703-256-6351.

Thu. Jun 3 (rated C). Scotts Run to Turkey Run Park. 10 mi. over varied terrain near Langley, Va. From I-495, Exit 44, go W. on VA 193 (Georgetown Pike) 0.6 mi to Swinks Mill Rd., turn right into main parking area. Start 10 a.m. Bring lunch, water. No pets. Leader: Henri Comeau 703-451-7965 or henricomeau@aol.com.

Fri. Jun 4 (rated A-B). Moonlit Hike on the Mall. Explore D.C.'s beautiful Mall and monuments by almost-full moon. Meet 8 p.m. at parking lot off Constitution Ave. by Washington Monument (now closed to cars). Park on Constitution Ave., N.W., near 16th Street. Nearest Metro is Federal Triangle. Bring water. Kids who can walk 7+ mi. (or 3 mi.) on relatively level terrain are most welcome. Leader: Jim Finucane, 301-365-3485 before 9 p.m.

Sat. Jun 5 (rated A-B). C&O Canal Towpath Stroll plus Carderock Picnic. Out-and-back walk of up to 10 mi. between Carderock and Great Falls and between 9:30 a.m. and noon (choose your own pace and distance), followed by optional potluck picnic to celebrate this year's OneDayHike. No pets. Call for details or if carless. Leaders: Pat Hopson 703-379-1795 before 10 p.m. and Paul Elliott 703-256-6351.

Sat. Jun 5 (rated E). Conestoga Trail in Pa. Challenging 11 mi. hike with 3,000 ft. of elev. change. Great views of Susquehanna River. See one of the

largest tectonic caves in the eastern U.S. and cool off in streams along the trail. Co-leaders: Ted Conwell 301-589-1513, Russ Norfleet 703-294-6068. Call for details.

Sat. Jun 5 (not rated). Scouting Trip by Canoe for the Seneca Creek Cleanup. See Jun 19 calendar entry for details. Leader: Jim Finucane 301-365-3485 before 9 p.m.

Sun. Jun 6 (rated B). Rock Creek Park. Explore the beauty of Rock Creek Park in spring. Meet at the Rock Creek Nature Center (Military Road and Oregon Ave., N.W.) at 1 p.m. Bring water and a snack. Kids who can walk 7+ mi. on relatively level terrain are welcome. Leader: Jim Finucane 301-365-3485 before 9 p.m.

Sun. Jun 6 (rated C). Four States Tour 2004 AT Series (plus poetry). A 7-mi. hike from Old Forge, Pa. to Penmar. Bring poetry if you like. Limited to 20 people. Leader: David Cheng 301-980-6112 before 10 p.m., or dmcheng@yahoo.com.

Sun. Jun. 6 (unrated). Potomac Canoe Trip and Hike. In a joint event with the Potomac Conservancy, we'll paddle on the Potomac near Riley's Lock to explore the river's flora and fauna and learn about its conservation challenges. We'll stop at the Conservancy's low-impact camping area, Ten Foot Island. An optional hike (up to 3 mi.) and cookout (prepared by grill maestro Rick Capriolo for a few dollars more) on the riverbank will follow the float. Bring your own canoe or kayak, or use one of the Conservancy's (first come, first served; call Matt Berres, 301-608-1188x203). No pets. Call the leaders for details, directions or if carless—and to make a reservation (by Jun 4, please) for the Capriolo Cookout. Leaders: Mike Darzi 301-593-4551 and Paul Elliott 703-256-6351.

Tue. Jun 8 (rated H). Little Devil's Stairs. Begin with scenic ascent up the stairs, connect to the Sugarloaf Trail to inspect the laurel in bloom, then return on the AT, Elkwallow, Piney Branch and Hull School trails. 4,000 ft. of elev. changes over 17 mi. Leader: Chris Nolen 301-469-8931 or chrishiker@erols.com.

Sat. Jun 12 (rated C). Lands of Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship in Discover Loudoun County Series. Moderately hilly circuit hike of 8-10 mi. in a superb private preserve on the forested eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge just south of Harpers Ferry. The property is devoted to providing opportunities for environmental learning and outdoor recreation and also includes a community-supported organic farm. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Vienna Metro Station's north parking lot. No pets. Joint event with AMC-DC. Leaders: Glenn Gillis 703-430-0568 and Paul Elliott 703-256-6351.

Sat. Jun 12 (rated G). Moorman River Trail and AT, South SNP. 16 mi. and 3,000 ft. elev. change. Meet at Oakton Shopping Center at 7:30 a.m. Inexperienced hikers call for requirements. Co-leaders: William Needham 410-884-9127 or Needham82@aol.com and Jack Thorsen 703- 339-6716 or Thorsen4@juno.com.

Sat. Jun 12 (not rated). Scouting trip by canoe for the Seneca Creek Cleanup project for 2004. See Jun 19 calendar entry for details. Leader: Jim Finucane 301-365-3485 before 9 p.m.

Sun. Jun 13 (rated D). Four States Tour 2004 AT Series. A 10.5-mi. hike from Caledonia State Park to Old Forge, Pa. Limited to 20 people. Leader: Russ Norfleet 703-294-6068 before 9 p.m.

Tue. Jun 15 (rated G). South Shenandoah. Brown Mtn Overlook—Brown Mtn Trail, Big Run Portal Trail, Patterson Ridge Trail, and AT. 13 mi. and 3,000 ft. of elev. changes with options for a longer hike. Leader: Chris Nolen 301-469-8931 or chrishiker@erols.com.

Sat. Jun 19 (rated A). 9 a.m.-noon. Rachel Carson Conservation Park, Sunshine, Md. This park was nominated as a National Natural Landmark in a report that says "the site contains the best known examples of mature chestnut oak forest in the Middle Atlantic States and contains rare orchids and other unusual plants." Walk about 3 mi., observe the natural beauty of this little-known park and discuss county plans for its recreational uses. Leader: Ron LaCoss 301-946-1106 before 9 p.m. or ronenviroed@aol.com.

Sat. Jun 19 (rated B). C&O Canal Towpath Shepa-rdstown and Upstream. Out and back for 10 mi. Leisurely stroll from Lock 38 to Snyders Landing. Exceptionally scenic area, Killiansburg Cave, cliffs. For more details see Web site after Jun 1 or contact leaders, Carol Ivory at carolivory@verizon.net and Dave Burd at dburd301@netzero.net.

Sat. Jun 19 (rated E). Little Devils Stairs. Moderate circuit hike in northern SNP of 10.7 mi. with 2,800 ft. elev. change. Hike up scenic canyon along Keyser Run. Meet at north parking lot of the Vienna Metro at 8 a.m. Leader: Marcia Wolf 301-565-3165 before 9 p.m. or wolfmk@comcast.net.

Sat. Jun 19 (not rated). Seneca Creek Cleanup--by Canoe. Join Sierrans and many other volunteers to clean up Seneca Creek from the park near Montgomery Village to its mouth at the Potomac River. Cut out major logs, take out smaller branches and de-trash this beautiful nearby creek (full of wildlife) to make it canoe-accessible. Picnic celebration follows. Leader: Jim Finucane 301-365-3485 before 9 p.m.

Sun. Jun 20 (rated E). Four States Tour 2004 AT Series (plus poetry). An 11-mi. hike from Big Flat to Caledonia. Bring poetry if you like. Limited to 20 people. Leader: David Cheng 301-980-6112 before 10 p.m. or dmcheng@yahoo.com.

Tue. Jun 22 (rated H). Runkles Gap, Massanut-ten Mtn. About 15 mi., 3,000 ft. climb. This year we will ascend pretty Morgan Run returning via Fridley Gap on the Massanutten South Trail and the Boone Run Trail. Leader: Chris Nolen 301-469-8931 or chrishiker@erols.com.



Hike Rating System					
One point is assigned to each mile and each 400' elevation change, up & down. The higher the point total, the more difficult the hike. For example, a five-mile hike with 1,200' elevation change (400' up, 800' down) gets a point total of 8 and is rated B; an 8-mile hike with an elevation change of 3,600' gets a point total of 17 and is rated E.					
Rating	Points	Rating	Points	Rating	Points
A	7 or less	B	8-10	C	11 - 13
D	14 - 16	E	17 - 19	F	20 - 22
G	23 - 25	H	more than 25		

Calendar

Outings (continued)

Sat. Jun 26 (rated H). GPS Hike: Austin Mtn and Surrounding Peaks. 17-19 mi., approx. 4,000 ft. elev. gain. Explore a very seldom visited area on western slope of the southern SNP with breathtaking views of southern end of the Massanutts and surrounding Blue Ridge peaks. We'll cover as many peaks in one day as possible. Partly unscouted. Short bushwhacks to some peaks. PATC Map 11. Meet: Oakton Shopping Center near McDonalds at 7:30 a.m. Leader: Dimitri Tundra tartakd@hotmail.com or 301-770-9639.

Sun. Jun 27 (rated D). Four States Tour 2004 AT Series. An 8.5-mi. hike from Pine Grove to Big Flat. Limited to 20 people. Leader: Frank Wodarczyk 703-569-6737 before 9 p.m.

Tue. Jun 29 (rated H). Strickler Knob. 15-mi. circuit in the Massanutts featuring 1,100 ft. bushwhack to the rocky top of Strickler Knob. Leader: Chris Nolen 301-469-8931 or chrishiker@erols.com.

FUTURE EVENTS

Sat.-Tue. Oct. 9-12 (not rated). Fall-time Rambling through the Endless Mtns & Loyalsock Country. On a memorable Columbus Day holiday weekend amidst brilliant autumn foliage of hardwood forests, participate in two half-day hikes and two full-day hikes on the challenging Loyalsock Trail in northcentral Pa. Wander through Lycoming and Sullivan counties' Endless Mtns' rugged, scenic and forested backcountry: sharp knobs, high plateaus and ridges, escarpments and steep-sided ravines. Limited to 12 people. To avoid being wait-listed, reserve early. Leader: Cliff Noyes. Details by prospectus: send e-mail request to lourich77@aol.com.

EVENTS SPONSORED BY AFFILIATES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The following events are not run by MWROP, and MWROP and the Sierra Club take no responsibility for and make no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of events they do not sponsor. They are listed as a reader service.

Sat. Jun 5. 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Potomac Heritage Trail Restoration Project at Riverbend Park. Celebrate National Trails Day with the Fairfax County Park Authority, the Potomac Conservancy and REI by working on a much-needed relocation to move a 100-yard section of trail out of the eroded floodplain. Tasks vary from clearing brush to stone construction. Tools will be provided, but volunteers with pruning shears, shovels or other trail tools are invited to bring them. Groups and families are welcome, but pets are not. Registration is necessary to ensure proper tools and materials are available. To register, call REI Customer Service at 703-379-9400, 301-982-9681 or 571-522-6568.

Tue. and Thu. Jun 10 & 24. Evening Canoe Lessons and Picnic at Swain's Lock; Jun 8 & 22 at Fletcher's Boat House. Cosponsored by NPS; Canoe Cruisers Assoc. provides instructors. Join one of these 6:30-8 p.m. classes for all levels on the C&O Canal. Swain's Lock is in Potomac, Md., 5.5 mi. out River Road beyond the Beltway; Fletcher's Boat House is off Canal Road near Chain Bridge in Northwest D.C. (Note: Canal road is one way going west out of Georgetown 3-7 p.m. weekdays.) Post-class potluck. Kids welcome. Cost for canoe, paddle, life jacket and lessons is \$2 per person. For more, contact Jim Finucane 301-365-3485 before 9 p.m.

D.C. Chapter and Related Events

Following is a list of activities of the D.C. Chapter at press time. Because of the possibility of changes, please confirm with the contact person or by checking our Web site, <http://dc.sierraclub.org/>.

Thu. May 20

Recycling Committee meeting. 6:30 p.m. The Marvin Center, Room 307, George Washington University, 800 21st St., N.W. (Foggy Bottom). Contact Brenda Moorman at 202-333-5424 or brennamoorman@aol.com.

Tue. Jun. 8

Air Quality and Transportation Committee meeting. 7 p.m. Club offices, 401 C St., N.E. All members welcome. Contact Tom Metcalf at 202-832-3809 or thmetcalf@mac.com.

Thu. Jun. 10

Brink of Summer Potomac Paddle. 6 p.m.-dusk. Jack's Boathouse, 3500 K St., N.W. See announcement, p. 16.

Fri.-Sun. Jun. 11-13

Workshop to Stop Bush's Assault on the Environment, Asheville, N.C. See announcement, p. 17.

Mon. Jun. 14

Sierra Club Second Monday Happy Hour. 5:30-7:30 p.m. Finn Mac Cool's Cork Publick House, 713 Eighth St., S.E. (Eastern Market). Contact Dain Roose-Snyder at 202-543-0552 or Dain.Roose-Snyder@sierraclub.org.

Tue. Jun. 15

Executive Committee meeting. 7-9 p.m. Club offices, 401 C St., N.E. All members welcome. Contact Mark Wenzler at 202-547-3410 or mwenzler@net.org.

Thu. Jun. 17

Recycling Committee meeting. 6:30 p.m. The Marvin Center, Room 402. See May 20.

Fri.-Sun. Jun. 18-20

ICO/Barnes and Noble Arlington Book Fair. See announcement, p. 12.

Mon. Jun. 21

General membership meeting with Costa Rica slide show. 7 p.m. Club offices, 401 C St., N.E. Contact Jason Broehm at 202-299-0745 or Jason_broehm@hotmail.com.

Wed. Jun. 23

ICO Volunteer Social, 6-8 p.m. Cafe Citron. See announcement, p. 12.

Sat. Jun. 26

Washington East Foundation Environmental Justice Land Tour. Contact Linda Fennell at 202-610-0200.

Mon. Jul. 12

Sierra Club Second Monday Happy Hour. 5:30-7:30 p.m. Toledo Lounge, 2435 18th St., N.W. (Adams Morgan).

Tue. Jul. 13

Air Quality and Transportation Committee meeting. See Jun. 8.

Thu. Jul. 15

Recycling Committee meeting. 6:30 p.m. The Marvin Center, Room 307. See May 20.

Sat. Jul. 17

Hike in Northwest D.C. parks. 12 noon. See announcement, p. 17.

Tue. Jul. 20

Executive Committee meeting. See Jun. 15.

Mon. Aug. 9

Sierra Club Second Monday Happy Hour. 5:30-7:30 p.m. RFD, 810 Seventh St., N.W. (Metro Center). Tonight is "Bring your friends night"! The member who brings the most friends to this month's event wins a fabulous cash door prize!

Tue. Aug. 10

Air Quality and Transportation Committee meeting. See Jun. 8.

Tue. Aug. 17

Executive Committee meeting. See Jun. 15.

Mon. Sep. 13

Sierra Club Second Monday Happy Hour. 5:30-7:30 p.m. The Exchange, 1719 G St., N.W. (Farragut West).

Tue. Sep. 14

D.C. Primary Election.

Thu. Sep. 16

Recycling Committee meeting. 6:30 p.m. The Marvin Center, Room 307. See May 20.

Tue. Sep. 21

Executive Committee meeting. See Jun. 15.

WASHINGTON, D.C., CHAPTER DIRECTORY

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