



WENOCA SIERRAN

Newsletter of the
Western North Carolina Sierra Club

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

APRIL - JUNE 2012

Upcoming Events:

Unitarian Church
1 Edwin Place
(corner of Charlotte St. & Edwin Pl.)
Social: 7 pm / Program: 7:15 pm

Wednesday, April 4 Hartwell Carson & Frank Holleman

*Impacts of Coal Ash and
Possible Legal Strategies*

Wednesday, May 2 Will Morgan

*A legislative update from
Raleigh with our
state chapter lobbyist.*

Wednesday, June 6 Bill Hascher & Shannon Tuch

'Asheville Tree Map'

*Learn about a new
collaborative tree inventory
program and how the city works
to preserve our urban canopy.*

WENOCA will hold meetings on
the first Wednesday of the month.
Executive Committee meetings
will be held at 5:30 pm prior
to the monthly programs.

All members are invited to attend.

For more information, call
Judy Mattox at 828-683-2176
or email judymattox@sbcglobal.net.

WENOCA SIERRAN is the newsletter
of the Western North Carolina Sierra Club.
The newsletter is published four times a year.
Articles and comments are welcome.

Impacts of Coal Ash and Possible Legal Strategies - April 4



Hartwell Carson

Hartwell Carson, French Broad Riverkeeper, will discuss the health and environmental impacts at the Progress Energy power plant on the banks of the French Broad river, including polluting the French Broad river, poisoning fish, polluting area groundwater, and blowing toxic ash into a surrounding neighborhood. He will also offer specific action items so folks can actively participate and make a difference.

Hartwell has worked to protect and defend the French Broad River as the Riverkeeper for the last six years. He has played a key role in reducing sediment pollution, starting and expanding bacteria, sediment, and coal ash monitoring programs, implementing over two miles of stream restoration, and ensuring regulations are adequate and enforced to meet the goals of the Clean Water Act to have all waters be fishable and swimmable.

He completed his undergraduate work at the University of Georgia studying Recreation and Resource Management. While a student there, he worked with the Outdoor Recreation Center as an environmental educator and guide. After working for the Forest Service in Colorado, Hartwell earned his Master's of Science from the University of Montana, where he conducted extensive work examining

social and ecological impacts on the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument.

He has also served as a community advocate on the City of Asheville's Flood Damage Reduction Task Force and Watershed Policy Committee, and currently serves as the president of Tennessee Riverkeeper, board member of the Asheville Affiliates and North Carolina Paddle Trails Association.

Southern Environmental Law Center Attorney Frank Holleman will speak about coal ash lagoons' impact on water quality and communities throughout the country. Frank will be discussing possible legal strategies to encourage the removal and remediation of coal ash lagoons, to reduce the pollution emanating from them, and to encourage their careful maintenance and operation.



Frank Holleman

Frank Holleman is a senior attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center. He is working on the Center's initiative to address coal ash impoundments in the Southeast and has filed suit against one impoundment. Frank has served as U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education and a Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the U.S. Department of Justice. In 2011, he received South Carolina's Environmental Awareness Award presented on behalf of the General Assembly and the Governor.

State Legislative Update - May 2

Will Morgan, Sierra Club's state lobbyist, plans to present a summary of the environmental legislation that passed in 2011, and provide a preview of the legislation expected to move in 2012. Topics will include a number of bills that impact western North Carolina, including the Asheville Water System, clear cutting around billboards, Boylston Creek reclassification, and steep slopes. He will also provide an analysis of the upcoming November elections, including a number of hotly contested races in western NC.

Will is the Sierra Club's state chapter's Director of Government Relations. In this role, Will's primary responsibility is lobbying at the state legislature on behalf of the chapter. His other responsibilities include lobbying the executive branch, providing policy expertise on the chapter's legislative and conservation priorities, acting as the chapter's point person in legal proceedings, and engaging volunteers in the chapter's legislative advocacy.



Will Morgan

CRITICAL ISSUES: What you can do now!

Protect the Asheville/Buncombe Water System

Buncombe County Rep. Tim Moffitt introduced a bill last year that called for seizing the Asheville water system to turn over to a regional water authority. After a backlash, he turned the bill into a 5-person Raleigh study committee.

On April 20, 21012, this committee will have the authority to recommend that Asheville be stripped of its water system by the state legislature. Know that Rep. Moffitt is Chair of the House Select Committee on Public-Private Partnerships. Also know that a Texas corporation is trying to buy the Tryon water system, 35 miles south of Asheville.

Action needed:

Please express your concern by writing to members of the Raleigh study committee: Tim.Moffitt@ncleg.net; Bill.Brawley@ncleg.net; William.Brisson@ncleg.net; Tom.Murry@ncleg.net; Chuck.McGrady@ncleg.net. Also, please write letters to the editor: letters@citizen-times.com or letters@mountainx.com.

For additional information about this issue, visit www.speakingforbuncombe.wordpress.com.

Alert: Stop Clearcutting around state billboards - SB183

Starting March 1, this law allows football field size areas to be clearcut around state billboards; an estimated \$12 million of trees could be cut, disproportionately in Western North Carolina.

Billboard companies have no requirement for replanting. There are two things you can do to help stop this: first, email the people below and second, get your camera out and take pictures of trees near bill boards so we have a good record of the before and after effects of this law so we can hold people accountable for clear cutting these trees.

Action needed: Please email Don Smith of NCDOT, Gov. Perdue, and your state legislators listed below who voted for SB 183 to ask for repeal of the temporary rules & that the 60% replanting provision of the first round of NCDOT rules be made into law. Also ask your representative below to modify this terrible bill that over rides local ordinances, doesn't require replanting, doesn't require the billboard companies to repay the state for the value of the trees cut on state property, and allows cutting of large trees even if they don't block the view of the billboard.

Don Smith: NC Dept of Transportation, Roadside Unit, donsmit@ncdot.gov; Governor Perdue, governor.office@nc.gov or call 919-733-4240; Tim.Moffitt@ncleg.net – Buncombe County; Martin.Nesbitt@ncleg.net – Buncombe county; Roger.West@ncleg.net – Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Macon Counties; Ralph.Hise@ncleg.net - Avery, Haywood, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Yancey Counties; Jim.Davis@ncleg.net - Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, Transylvania Counties; Phillip.Frye@ncleg.net - Avery, Caldwell, Mitchell, Yancey Counties; Mitch.Gillespie@ncleg.net - Burke, McDowell Counties.

Protecting the Environmental Integrity of Our Watershed

By Marc Hunt, Asheville City Councilman

The watersheds of Bee Tree and North Fork comprise 22,000-acres of pristine forest that has not been logged for decades. Except for the reservoirs and system infrastructure that comprise a tiny portion, the area is more environmentally intact than many areas in our national forests, and their protection is obviously critical to water quality. Despite the

very modest provisions of a conservation easement that went in place in the 90's, a future owner might be financially incentivized to log and make other allowable changes that would significantly degrade that very special environmental character and the water quality we enjoy. Asheville has been an excellent environmental steward of the resource, and our community should be concerned about how any future owner might treat it. This is a concern of regional importance. Concerned citizens should insist on strengthened protection for the watershed via an improved conservation easement on the property.

5th annual Asheville Earth Day Celebration

The 5th annual Asheville Earth Day, is scheduled to take place on Saturday, April 21, on Lexington Avenue in Downtown Asheville (same location as LAFF & Downtown after 5). This daylong FREE event, will be held from 11 am - 10 pm and includes an Earth Day Eco-Village highlighting many of Asheville's Earth-Friendly businesses and non-profit organizations, a live music stage, and a Kids Village encouraging environmental awareness in our youth, while providing fun activities. Please look for our WENOCA Sierra Club booth.

100th coal plant retiring

Sierra Club is proud to announce that the Beyond Coal movement is winning: the 100th coal plant since 2010 - Portland coal plant in Mt. Bethel, PA - has announced plans for retirement! Not only that, but our efforts have led to the equivalent of 11 million homes powered throughout the nation by clean energy!

Please help us save trees ... Let us e-mail your newsletter!

WENOCA member emails are requested. Send your email address to:
judymattox@sbcglobal.net.



'Asheville Tree Map' and Preserving the Urban Canopy - June 6



Bill Hascher

Asheville Tree Map is an "easy-to-use public inventorying platform that enables individuals, organizations, and governments to search and contribute to a collaborative, interactive, and dynamic map of a community's tree population. Urban street trees have many proven environmental, economic, and aesthetic benefits and an accurate and current inventory is essential for effectively

and efficiently caring for this vital community resource. Bill Hascher will also discuss how this new program can be a launching site for tree care education initiatives, tree protection, and the Asheville Greenworks' treasured tree program.

Bill Hascher is the arborist manager at Biltmore Estate, chairman of the Asheville tree commission, and a board member at Asheville Greenworks. He is a certified arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture, and a member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists. Bill has a Master of Science in Forest Resources from Clemson University and a Bachelor of Science in Landscape contracting from Penn State University.

Shannon Tuch, Asheville's Assistant Director of Planning & Development will speak about the City of Asheville's efforts to promote and preserve the city's urban canopy as well as discuss some environmental successes, lessons learned, and ongoing challenges facing local governments today.



Shannon Tuch

Shannon Tuch is the Assistant Director for the Planning & Development Department for the City of Asheville. Ms. Tuch is a registered landscape architect with over 12 years of experience in public and private sector planning and site design. She has worked extensively on a variety of development related initiatives and comprehensive code amendments in her career at the City of Asheville and was principally involved in the adoption and implementation of the City's landscape and steep slope construction standards.

Prior to joining City of Asheville, Ms. Tuch worked as a Landscape Architect in private design firms in Asheville, Charlotte, and Portland, Oregon. Ms. Tuch holds a master's degree in landscape architecture from University of Georgia and is a member of the American Planning Association and the American Society of Landscape Architects.

The wealth of the nation is its air, water, soil, forests, minerals, rivers, lakes, oceans, scenic beauty, wildlife habitats and biodiversity ... that's all there is. That's the whole economy. That's where all the economic activity and jobs come from. These biological systems are the sustaining wealth of the world. - Sen. Gaylord Nelson



Spring Hiking Schedule



Saturday, March 31 - Cove Creek/Caney Bottom - Meet in Asheville at 10 am and return around 4 pm. A pleasant, easy to moderate, 4.6 mile loop hike near Looking Glass Rock in Pisgah National Forest. The trail follows a stream part of the way and a short side trail leads to Cove Creek falls. RSVP to hike leader Jane at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.

Saturday, April 14 - Table Mountain State Park in South Carolina - Meet at 9:45 am in Asheville and return around 6 pm. Distance approx 5.4 miles, rated as "Strenuous/Moderate." There are a number of wondrous round boulders as big as a house that we'll see along the Table Rock trail. We will go as far as Governor's Rock, which is a large granite slab that offers a nice view of the surrounding area. Park admission \$2. RSVP to hike leader Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994.

Saturday, May 12 - Hike the Mountains to Sea Trail from NC 128 to Balsam Gap. Meet at 10 am in Asheville and return about 4 pm. A difficult, but rewarding, 5-mile, high elevation hike with good views. Starts near Mt. Mitchell and climbs 1610 feet over Blackstock Knob before dropping down to Balsam Gap. Requires a car shuttle. Conditioned hikers only. RSVP to hike leader Jane at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.

Sunday, June 3 - Hike at Black Balsam. Meet in Asheville at 10 and return around 5:15. Distance approx 5.5 miles, rated as Moderate. This is one of my favorite areas, with panoramic vistas seen from rocky outcrops. Conditioned hikers only. RSVP to hike leader Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994.

Saturday, June 16 - Hike the Mountains to Sea Trail from Bee Tree Gap Road near Craggy Gardens to Rattlesnake Lodge and then down to the Parkway, about 6 miles. Meet at 10 am in Asheville and return about 4 pm. There are good views from Lane Pinnacle and some history near the end of the hike. Rattlesnake Lodge is an historic site with ruins of family structures dating back to 1903. Moderate/strenuous level of difficulty with a 1200 foot elevation gain. Involves a car shuttle. Conditioned hikers only. RSVP to hike leader Jane at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.



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**Critical Issues:
Actions that you
can take now!**

See page 2.

The Executive Committee meets monthly. For more information, please contact Judy Mattox at 828-683-2176 or at judymattox@sbcglobal.net. All WENOCA members are invited to attend.
Our website is www.wenoca.org.

WENOCA OFFICERS - 2012 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Judy Mattox – Chair - 828-683-2176
Lisa McWherter - Outings Leader
Dave Erb - Transportation Committee
Kris Cunningham - Membership Chair

Grace Curry
Ken Brame - Political Committee
Elaine Lite - Newsletter Editor

The Executive Committee has two open seats. Please call Judy Mattox if you are interested.

***Get acquainted with Sierra Club members through
these social networking venues!***

Find the WENOCA Group of the Sierra Club on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/pages/Wenoca-Group-of-the-NC-Sierra-Club/119353431450105?ref=ts.

We're also on Meetup at www.meetup.com/WENOCA-Sierra-Club-WNC.