



WENOCA SIERRAN

Newsletter of the
Western North Carolina Sierra Club

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

FEBRUARY-APRIL 2013

Upcoming Events:

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

Wednesday, February 6 Kelly Martin & Kris Cunningham

North Carolina's Energy Future
Part 1: Beyond Coal

Wednesday, March 6 Charlie Coggeshall

North Carolina's Energy Future
Part 2: Clean Energy Solutions -
Renewables

Wednesday, April 3 Jake Crouch & Amy Musser

North Carolina's Energy Future
Part 3: Climate Change
and Energy Efficiency -
What Action Can We Take?

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.

'Beyond Coal' - North Carolina's Energy Future: Part 1



Kelly Martin

Join us on Wed., Feb. 6 when Kelly Martin will present on the changing energy landscape and share the successes and challenges of the campaign, both nationally and here in Asheville.

Coal is our country's dirtiest energy source, from mining to burning to its impacts on climate disruption to the disposing of coal waste. The Asheville Beyond Coal campaign is part of a nationwide movement that is uniting grassroots activists across the country, to move America Beyond Coal.

Join us and learn how you can help transition Western North Carolina off of its dependence on Duke Energy's Asheville Coal plant and build a local clean energy economy.

As part of this program, Kris Cunningham, North Carolina Sierra Club's state chapter nuclear chairperson, will talk briefly about why nuclear is not the solution to replace coal: in-

cluding water issues, high cost of construction, and lack of safe storage facilities.

Kelly Martin is the North Carolina Beyond Coal Campaign Representative for the Sierra Club, where she advocates for North Carolina's clean energy future. She served as Congressman Heath Shuler's Director of Grants and Special Projects 2007-2012 in his Asheville office, where she secured federal funding for clean energy projects in Western North Carolina and advised him on environmental policy. Prior to working with Congressman Shuler, Kelly spent more than a decade developing and implementing environmental advocacy campaigns and served as the Campaign Director at the Dogwood Alliance, where she led a national campaign to protect endangered Southern forests. Kelly received her B.S. in Environmental Studies at the University of Vermont and is a graduate of the Green Corps leadership program for environmental organizers.



Kris Cunningham

'Clean Energy Solutions' - North Carolina's Energy Future: Part 2

Solutions to moving "Beyond Coal" as a primary energy source, including solar and wind power, will be presented on Wed., Mar. 6 by Charlie Coggeshall of the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy. SACE has been a leading voice for energy policy to protect the quality of life and treasured places in the Southeast since 1985.

The Sierra Club and other advocacy groups are pushing to shut down existing coal plants and prevent the construction of new plants, but what will be the substitute? Is it realistic to move "beyond coal?" Charlie will provide an overview of North Carolina's electricity market and a deeper review and analysis of the market and policy drivers that are needed to support the deployment of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy sources in meeting the requirements of going "beyond" coal.

Charlie Coggeshall joined the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy as a Renewable Energy Manager in 2012. His role is to identify and

implement state and utility-level strategies that support renewable energy market development throughout the Southeast, with a particular focus on solar energy. He works out of the Asheville office, and is an active volunteer with local energy and environmental groups. Prior to joining SACE, Charlie worked with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in developing major assessments and funding opportunities in support of solar energy technologies, markets, and policies. He has co-authored several NREL technical reports and was a lead editor and coordinator of DOE's landmark solar feasibility analysis, the SunShot Vision Study. Charlie holds an MBA with a concentration in Environmental Policy from the University of Denver, and a BS in Community Development and Applied Economics from the University of VT.



Charlie Coggeshall

Kill the Keystone Pipeline

By Richard Kark

Alberta tar sand oil and the Keystone Pipeline may be the worst anti-environment one two punch ever delivered. These mines have been called the biggest capital project anywhere on earth and the most destructive. According to NASA climate scientist, James Hansen, if this mining does not cease it will likely be "game over" for the earth's climate. Sound important? Yes, it is vitally so.

For Canadians this massive rape of the earth is an unmitigated disaster. The land is devastated and rivers are being heavily polluted. Nearby groundwater is being poisoned by seepage from the toxic sludge in massive tailings ponds. Nearby indigenous peoples are already suffering increased rates of cancer and other health ill-effects. Downwind Saskatchewan is experiencing the effects of acid rain. There have already been related pipeline spills in Canada causing significant contamination of surface soils and waters.

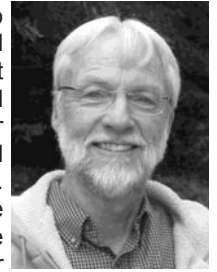
OK, so that's Canada. But why should the world care? At a time when Climate Change is reaching a critical point, we cannot afford major new sources of carbon dioxide rising into our atmosphere. Conventional oil drilling is bad enough but the mining and processing of tar sands spews three times more CO2 into the air. One ironic reason for this is that massive amounts of natural gas are burned to extract the oil from the sands. Of course, the refined oil itself is eventually burned releasing its CO2 into the atmosphere.

Why should the United States care? Because the plan is to

convey this dirty oil across six of our states to refineries on the Gulf Coast via the proposed Keystone Pipeline. It will cross important rivers and vital aquifers. Significant spills will very likely occur. The corrosive effects of tar sand oil are greater than conventional oil increasing the likelihood of such a spill. Neighborhoods which surround refineries are nearly always comprised of low income people who are often non-white. They suffer disproportionately from the effects of the worsened local air pollution. It turns out that refining tar sand oil releases more sulfur dioxide and nitrous oxide than does the refining of conventional oil.

So, the pipeline must be stopped and Canada must be pressured to cease the mining of tar sands. For U.S. citizens the first priority is to stop the Keystone Pipeline. President Obama slowed in early 2012 the juggernaut by stalling its construction. Yet, it is far from clear that he intends to halt it indefinitely or completely. A major direct action is being planned for the streets of Washington D.C. on "Presidents Day," Sunday Feb. 17, 2012. Thousands of citizens will form a human pipeline. They will march to express intense opposition to the construction of this terrible conduit. Perhaps Asheville Sierrans and other local environmentalist will join them. If there is ever a time to take to the streets in massive numbers again, the time is NOW, over this critical issue.

For those interested in participating in the Feb. 17 protest, contact Emma Greenbaum at emma.greenbaum@sierraclub.org or call 520-275-4812.



Richard Kark

'Climate Change & Home Energy Efficiency' - NC's Energy Future: Part 3

Join us on Wed., April 3 when Jake Crouch discusses climate change and Amy Musser will show us simple ways to increase the energy efficiency of our homes.

Jake Crouch of the NOAA's National Climatic Data Center will put recent climate conditions for the world, the United States, and North Carolina into historical perspective. Jake will also discuss how we know the earth's climate is changing, what is causing these changes, and what future impacts we can expect here in the United States.

Most people believe that they need to spend a lot of money or invest a lot of sweat equity to make their homes more efficient. Home renovations and renewable energy definitely help and are great steps to take. But if you don't have the money or aren't ready for a big project, you can still have a big impact. Just like "hyper milers" can get 80 mpg driving the same cars the rest of us drive, your behavior matters a lot. Amy Musser will talk about ways that people of any age and on any budget can use less energy. And yes, you can even do some of them while sitting on your couch!

Amy is co-founder and principal of VandeMusser Design, PLLC, founded in 2002. Amy received her Bachelors and Ph.D. degrees in Architectural Engineering and an M.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Pennsylvania State University. She is an active

member of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), and has previously held a faculty position in Architectural Engineering at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and as a researcher in the Indoor Air Quality group at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in Gaithersburg, MD.



Amy Musser

Jake Crouch grew up in Southern West Virginia, where his family has lived for several generations. He moved to Asheville in 2003 to pursue a degree in Atmospheric Sciences at UNCA and graduated in 2007. Following his undergraduate work, Jake received a master's degree in meteorology from NC State University in 2009. Jake has worked at NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, first as an intern, then as a full-time scientist, since 2005. Jake is now part of the Climate Monitoring Branch, where he provides near-real time analysis of the climate system across the U.S. and Arctic. He also acts as media liaison for the group, communicating climate science to the general public.



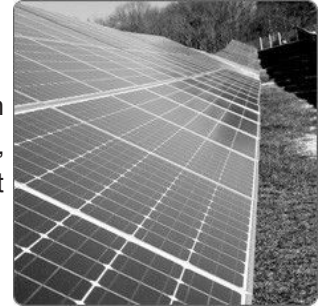
Jake Crouch

Sierra Club Board of Directors Endorsements

The North Carolina Chapter recommends a vote for Robin Mann, Susana Reyes, Jim Dougherty and Becky Gillette in the upcoming elections for the Sierra Club's Board of Directors. Ballots will be sent to Sierra Club members in late February or early March.

Clean Energy Tour of Biltmore Estate - March 16

WNC Alliance will host a "Clean Energy and Sustainability Tour of the Biltmore Estate" on Saturday, March 16. The event will showcase the Estate's 6-acre Solar Array, Canola Fields, and Biofuels Project. \$40 for members; \$45 for nonmembers. For more information, contact rachel@wnca.org or call 828-258-8737.



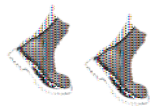
North Carolina's Renewable Energy Mandate is in danger Rep. Mike Hager hopes to freeze this valuable resource

The N.C. House's new Republican majority whip, Rep. Mike Hager, believes he has the votes to stop North Carolina's green-energy mandate – the first in the Southeast when it was enacted in 2007 – in its tracks. The law says electric utilities have to derive rising amounts of their retail sales from solar, wind or biomass sources, beginning at 3 percent in 2012 and ending at 12.5 percent by 2021. Separate, smaller targets for solar energy took effect in 2010. But Republican state Rep. Mike Hager of Rutherford County views the mandate as the government unfairly "picking winners and losers" in the marketplace. As chairman of the Public Utilities committee, Hager would like to freeze it at the current 3 percent level.

According to a post on Rep. Hager's Facebook page from

Dec. 17, 2012: *The main theme of legislation in this long session will center around reducing the financial cost of government on the citizens of NC and reducing the business-crushing regulations on our businesses. We will have a bill ready by mid February that repeals the renewable energy mandate that adds virtually zero pollution reduction but costs energy ratepayers millions of dollars per year.*

Please contact Rep. Hager to express your support of the green-energy mandate at Mike.Hager@NCleg.net, 919-733-5749, or NC House of Representatives, 300 N. Salisbury St., Room 304, Raleigh, NC 27603-5925. Or post to his Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RepMikeHager?ref=ts&fref=ts.



Winter / Early Spring Hiking Schedule



SAT, FEB 9 – Caesar's Head Area in S. Carolina. Moderate/ easy hike approx 6.2 miles. Includes a hike to Raven Cliff Falls overlook & another hike to a small waterfall. Will end with a quick stop at Caesar's Head overlook. The Raven Cliff trail is a pleasant trail offering a view of a distant waterfall. Also offers a shelter for a lunch spot. Meet in Asheville at 10 am and return around 6 pm. Be prepared for \$2/person park admission fee. NOTE if there is snow we will come up with an alternate hike that's closer to Asheville, as long as the roads are open. RSVP to hike leader Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994.

SAT, FEB 23 - Avery Creek - Twin Falls Trail – Easy to moderate, 4 mile round trip hike along Avery Creek to three waterfalls in Pisgah National Forest near Brevard. Nice views of the creek with ice possible, making it a winter wonderland. Meet in Asheville at 10 am and return about 3 or 4 pm. RSVP to hike leader Jane at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.

SAT, MAR 16 - Daniel Ridge – Moderate 4 mile loop hike in Pisgah Forest near the Fish Hatchery follows the creek and finishes with an amazing waterfall at the end. Wear sturdy shoes or hiking boots, bring water and a lunch or snack. Leave Asheville at 10 am and return by 3- 4 pm. RSVP to leader at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.

SAT, MAR 23 – Grogan Creek/Pickelshimer Fields - Moderate/easy, approx 6 miles R.T. on this there & back hike. It is situated at the base of John Rock. A nice trail which is mostly sheltered from the March winds. Features an occasional water fall. Meet at 10 am in Asheville and return around 5:45 pm. Wear good footwear for a few steep areas & a few muddy spots. Contact hike leader to sign up – Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or call 828-713-4994.

SAT, APR 13 - Skinny Dip Falls – Easy to moderate, 5.3 mile mostly downhill hike near Looking Glass Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Trail goes through a nicely wooded area with abundant early wildflowers and ends at wooden steps and a bridge with breathtaking views of the falls on the Pigeon River. Requires a car shuttle. Meet in Asheville at 10 am and return by 4 pm. RSVP to leader at janelaping@sbcglobal.net or 828-772-0379.

SAT, APR 27 – Green River Gamelands, Pullium Creek Trail (mostly). Moderate level of difficulty. Approx 6.5 miles roundtrip on this there & back trail with elevation gain of 900 ft. It's a beautiful trail that ends up at the Green River narrows, which has some rapids shooting thru large boulders. On the way there, there's a tedious creek crossing with step-stones, so wear good footwear & consider a hiking pole. Hopefully there will be some nice wildflowers along the way. **NOTE:** No doggies this trip. RSVP to hike leader Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994.



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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 - 2013 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Judy Mattox – Chair - 828-683-2176

Lisa McWherter - Outings Leader

Rich Wasch - Treasurer

Kris Cunningham - State Executive Committee

Grace Curry - Publicity Committee

Ken Brame - Political Committee

Gene Keil - Website/Membership Committee

Rober Zieber - At Large

Elaine Lite - Newsletter Editor

Kelly Martin - Beyond Coal - 828-251-1272

North Carolina Adopt a Legislator - Volunteer Lobby Corps

If you would like to be a volunteer lobbyist to work with a legislator in your area, contact Travis Hargett, travis.hargett@sierraclub.org or call 919-833-8467. Need is strongest for volunteers outside of Buncombe County.

WENOCA IS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!

If you'd like to volunteer with Sierra Club, please contact judymattox@sbcglobal.net, 828-683-2176. Currently, we need help with data entry, conservation issues, phone calls and our newsletter.

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