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Why so Many Warehouses?

By Patricia Hilliard • Conservation Chair, Hudson County Group



These days, shopping is often done online. This has caused changes in the structures needed to fulfill our shopping demands. Shopping malls are threatened by retail store clos-

ings, while warehouses are popping up like mushrooms after a rainy day.

For the corporate world, getting land that's unencumbered is a dream come true. A farm field that is wide open and near a major highway keeps costs down and allows for quick construction and quick access for trucks as they enter and depart the warehouse. In New Jersey, many small towns and rural areas are perfect targets for big-box warehouses.

But such development is not just a concern for small communities and rural areas. Various cities, such as Newark and Elizabeth, which are port towns, also are seeing more warehouse construction: "Costco Opens 183,000 SF Warehouse, Distribution Center Near Port of Newark," one recent headline reads. A Google search for "Newark warehouses newly built" brought up over 12 new warehouses near the I-95 and I-78 highway intersection. Jersey City has over 15 warehouses—some new, some refurbished. Recently in Bayonne, the former military ocean terminal was wiped clean of old structures. Waterfront warehouses enable goods to be shipped to New York City via barges, but they still bring more highway congestion. Homeowners in Bayonne



Warehouse proliferation in the Newark and Elizabeth port districts worsens air quality in Newark's Ironbound section, an environmental justice community.

have been complaining about high taxes, but will taxes really drop now that mega warehouses are luring in big trucks and more traffic? What's the solution?

What We Really Need

With online shopping, warehouses have become an important part of our modern world. We must at least demand sustainable land-use planning. One activist suggested that shopping malls be converted to warehouses. Why not equip warehouse roofs with solar panels or transform them into habitat for birds? Could rainwater be diverted into wetlands to avoid flooding? Traffic studies must be done and actions taken accordingly. If planning is not effective, warehouses could create environmental and health costs

that outweigh the benefit of tax revenue and jobs for communities.

In February 2021, Gov. Phil Murphy signed into law requirements that municipal land use master plans include an assessment of local vulnerability to climate-change hazards. Obviously, New Jersey faces increased flooding from sea level rise, but warehouses with their large impermeable surface space could contribute to climate disasters. While it seeks to mitigate climate-change hazards, New Jersey also offers guidelines on warehouse development from the State Planning Commission. Good to know, but these are only guidelines.

Kip Cherry, conservation chair of our Central Jersey Group, has been deep into the fight against warehouse development in West Windsor. In an interview, Kip said that one of the big problems is that neither NJ law nor the state Department of Transportation require

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See our other warehouse-related articles on pages 3 and 16 (electronic edition), as well as our electric school bus news on pages 5 and 6.

EPR Bills Would Help Solve Product Packaging and Waste Problems

By Sylvia Kay • Zero Waste Coordinator, Sierra Club NJ

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) tasks manufacturers to pay and innovate to solve the huge waste problems created by the production and sale of their own products. EPR bills are making a timely entrance into a growing global waste crisis. Over the coming year, New Jersey legislators will be increasingly focused on an EPR packaging bill.

At this time, solid waste management needs a reformation to comply with "reduce, reuse, recycle" and to relieve municipalities strapped with sharply increased waste management costs. EPR is an environmental management strategy mandating that producers (the manufacturer/brand owner) take responsibility for reducing waste and recycling products they sell and the packaging used. The produc-

er may work individually or as part of an industry group ("producer responsibility organization"). Producers are responsible for reporting data to a state authority or appointed body which has oversight responsibilities. While states have passed EPR rulings for specific waste items such as carpets or batteries in past years, EPR packaging bills are presently being formulated across the United States. This is a vital initiative because packaging forms a large category of waste material—28% in the United States, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

To date, only four states have passed statewide EPR legislation of some sort for packaging. These laws focus on single-use products and packaging and may involve one or more types of materials (eg, plastics, glass, pa-

per, and metals). The EPR packaging laws of Oregon (SB 582), Maine (LD 1541), Colorado (HB 1355), and California (SB 54) vary greatly in their scope and strength.

The bills of Colorado and California are the most recent. Currently, many states are in the process of formulating EPR bills. They include Maryland, Vermont, Connecticut, Illinois, Washington, Rhode Island, New York, and New Jersey. There is wide variation in these bills. New Jersey's bill (S426/A1444) is presently being revised and will likely be ready for a vote at some point in late 2023.



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2022 Election for NJ Chapter Officers and Groups

Balloting is now under way for the 2022 election of executive officers and group leaders for the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club. All current members are invited to participate. Members will receive solicitations via email in October for online voting. The deadline for receipt of ballots is November 14 (e-ballot or paper). Votes may be cast using the mail-in paper ballot in the print edition of this newsletter (see page 2 for the ballot).

Your votes are essential to help select leaders who best represent the interests of Club membership!

Three seats are open on the Chapter's Executive Committee (ExCom). ExCom members are volunteers who meet on the second Saturday of each month for discussion of state, regional, and other environmental issues. ExCom coordinates committees on sustainability and conservation issues and makes policy decisions, initiates legal actions, endorses candidates for public office, and hears reports from staff and volunteer officers.

ExCom consists of nine at-large members, three of whom are elected each year. They serve three-year terms. This year's ExCom candidates were selected by Nominating Committee members Renée Pollard, Allen Swanson, and Joanne Pannone. Candidate bios and photos are on page 2. There were no petition candidates this year.

Please vote for three at-large ExCom members and the leadership of your regional group. Representatives of individual groups within the NJ Chapter participate in ExCom meetings and decisions.

The NJ Chapter has 12 groups, and their geographic territories are described in the Group News section of this newsletter (pages 6-9). If you receive the print version of the newsletter, your group number is listed on the

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2022 BALLOTS

Instructions for completing your ballot

Step 1: Vote for the NJ Chapter leadership.

Step 2: Vote for candidates in your assigned regional group.

Please check the mailing label on page 1 to confirm your group number. Group codes are: Central Jersey, 4001; Jersey Shore, 4002; Loantaka, 4003; North Jersey, 4004; Skylands, 4005; West Jersey, 4006; South Jersey, 4007; Raritan Valley, 4008; Hudson County, 4009; Gateway, 4010; Hunterdon Warren, 4011; and Ocean County, 4012.

Step 3: Clip the entire ballot and mail it to **Sierra Club Ballot, 145 West Hanover Street, Trenton NJ 08618.** Be sure that your Club address label is on the back of the ballot. Due by November 14, 2022.

If you have questions about the elections process or require additional assistance, please contact the Elections Chair at spjersey@gmail.com.

Use the ballots below for electing Chapter Executive Committee members and group officers:

NJ Chapter ExCom Ballot: Please vote for a maximum of three candidates to serve three-year terms until December 2025. Name order has been randomized.

Candidates	Member or 1st Joint Member Vote	2nd Joint Member Vote
Paul Sanderson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patricia Hilliard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
John Kashwick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rich Isaac	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____

Group Ballots: Please vote for your regional Group Executive Committee.

Candidates	Member or 1st Joint Member Vote	2nd Joint Member Vote
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Central Jersey Group Ballot (4001): Vote for maximum of three candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Joanne Pannone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leona Fluck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
George Fluck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

Jersey Shore Group Ballot (4002): Vote for maximum of five candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Dennis Anderson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steve Miller	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
John Luard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jim Baye	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harold Zullo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

Loantaka Group Ballot (4003): Vote for maximum of six candidates. The top five leading candidates will serve two-year terms until December 2024. The sixth candidate will serve until December 2023.

Allen Swanson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kevin O'Brien	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

BALLOT *continued from page 1*

top line of your address label. This will help you determine which group ballot you should vote.

To vote using the paper ballot included with the print edition of this newsletter, clip the entire ballot on the heavy dashed line and return it in your own stamped envelope to the NJ Chapter address provided in the ballot instructions.

Note that a properly clipped ballot will include the front-page mailing label. This will verify your membership. Your address label also indicates whether you have a joint or single membership.

To the right of candidate names on the paper ballot there is a second column of boxes. This enables another person to vote if you and they have joint Club membership. If you are an individual member, just check the box nearest the candidates of your choosing.

North Jersey Group Ballot (4004): Vote for maximum of four candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Buddy Jenson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bushra Asfare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Judy Green	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bob Weiss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

Skylands Group Ballot (4005): Vote for maximum of four candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Greg Gorman	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Norene Haberski	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jill Aquino	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nicole Guerrieri	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

West Jersey Group Ballot (4006): Vote for maximum of two candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

South Jersey Group Ballot (4007): Vote for maximum of three candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Tom Boghosian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dick Colby	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

Raritan Valley Group Ballot (4008): Vote for maximum of three candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Gary Frederick	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
S. Pasricha	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bernadette Maher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

Hudson County Group Ballot (4009): Vote for maximum of five candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Patricia Hilliard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Richard Pereira	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

Gateway Group Ballot (4010): Vote for maximum of six candidates. The top five leading candidates will serve two-year terms until December 2024. The sixth candidate will serve until December 2023.

Caroline Kane	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rachel Tarzia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

Hunterdon Warren Group Ballot (4011): Vote for maximum of four candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Karen Becker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amy Weeder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

Ocean County Group Ballot (4012): Vote for maximum of five candidates to serve two-year terms until December 2024.

Margaret Mary Piccolo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laura Stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ray Kozakiewicz	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kathy Kozakiewicz	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Write-In	_____	_____
Write-In	_____	_____

If the Sierra Club has your email address in its records and you have authorized emails from the NJ Chapter, you will receive a ballot by email in October. Click on the link provided in the email and follow the instructions for voting. Joint members who choose the online voting option must vote separately. Please cast only one ballot (e-ballot or paper).

Note: Club rules require nominating committees to nominate at least two more candidates than the number of executive member seats that are open. Some ballots include those "extra" candidates as write-in spaces. Candidates who are written in must be Sierra Club members and we must be able to contact them.

The 2022 NJ Chapter ballots with instructions are above.

ExCom Candidate Bios and Statements

(Randomly arranged)

Rich Isaac (Loantaka Group): A Club member since 1976, Rich has served as chair and political chair of the North Jersey, Loantaka, and Essex County groups and organized the Ocean County, Hunterdon Warren, Skylands, and Hudson County groups. Now serving as both an Executive Committee member and Chapter chair, Rich is also the Club's National Political Committee representative. For his efforts, he has received the Chapter's Political Action Award and Outstanding Group Chairperson Award. Rich enjoys quiet walks in the woods with his wife.



Patricia Hilliard (Hudson County Group): With the Sierra Club for over 20 years, Pat has been active in the Hudson County Group since 2017, serving as conservation chair, secretary, treasurer, and recently, chair. She has fought to protect Hudson County parks, in particular Liberty State Park. On the Chapter's Transportation Committee, she opposes widening of the NJ Turnpike Newark Bay-Hudson County Extension. Pat has protested nuclear power plants, campaigned to free Nelson Mandela and end apartheid in South Africa, and helped with labor organizing. She has protested most of the current Supreme Court appointments. A writer and photographer, she is a Sierra Club Wilderness Guardian.



John Kashwick (Hunterdon Warren Group): A member since 1992, John currently serves as Chapter vice-chair, Legislative Committee chair, and wildlands issues coordinator. John was the Chapter's political chair for four years, is the cofounder of the LGBTQ+ section and previously chaired the North Jersey Group. He was also a founding member of the Club's National Parks and Monuments Team and has traveled to 52 of the 63 US national parks. He has led numerous outings and participated in training and political advocacy on behalf of federal, state, and local land preservation. He enjoys cooking, gardening, and hiking with his husband and their two dogs.



Paul Sanderson (Loantaka Group): A Sierra Club member for more than 30 years, Paul has served in many capacities. He has held the membership chair, treasurer, group chair, and co-chair positions in Loantaka Group and remains an active member. He became the NJ Chapter treasurer on January 1, 2017, and has dealt with the Chapter's finances, staffing, and grants as well as Chapter fundraising and political activities. He credits his involvement and interest in politics in his personal life to his activities with the Club, having participated in many candidate interviews and Club discussions on political endorsements. He is an avid gardener and hiker.



POLITICAL COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT

Don't Sit Out This Election

By Karen Becker • political.chair@newjerseysierraclub.org

What Happens If You Don't Vote? "I'm not voting. My vote doesn't matter." This is a common phrase heard during an election cycle. One or two votes may not change the outcome of an election. But what if hundreds or thousands of people decided not to vote because they think their vote doesn't matter?

"Sitting out" an election has a direct impact on who runs your local government and how it's managed. Your mayor or council appoints members of the community to serve on your planning or zoning board. Are they going to rubber-stamp an approval for a warehouse or will they develop a park and create an open space area on that vacant plot of land? Will they look for innovative ways to adopt solar or wind or are they climate change deniers?

If you don't vote, what impact will that have on your community and way of life?

Some people holding local positions want to move up the political ladder and serve at a higher level. How will their views on issues affect you when they have even more power?

In 2015, Andrew Zwicker (currently a Democrat serving in the NJ Senate) would not have won a seat in the NJ Assembly if 78 people had decided

to "sit out the election." That's how many votes he won by. Zwicker's victory was an environmental win for the state, as he has sponsored bills to establish solar power incentive programs, create an Office of Clean Energy Equity in the Board of Public Utilities, and promote transition to electric vehicles. Most recently, he sponsored A4214/S2770, which Gov. Phil Murphy just signed into law, authorizing the NJ Infrastructure Bank to expend loans for transportation infrastructure projects.

The key race to follow in the 2022 midterm election is in NJ Congressional District 7, where incumbent Democratic Rep. Tom Malinowski faces a challenge for the second time from former state Senate Republican Leader Tom Kean Jr. Malinowski won in 2020 by 5,300 votes or just 1% of the total ballots cast. This is a prime example of how the outcome of a race can result in a landslide victory or a close call, proving once again, every vote matters. Another win for Malinowski could mean Democrats retain control of the House.

The Sierra Club has endorsed can-



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Put a Hold on That Next Long-Distance Getaway

By Tony Hagen • editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

“You can’t preach temperance from a barstool” – Sen. Ed Markey

One recent morning, I awoke to much grinding and crunching coming from the property next door. It was the wrecking crew for new curb construction. It was loud.

To escape and regroup, I hopped into the car and drove to Starbucks.

Abandoning ship is a reflex action that afflicts many Americans. To escape the ills of modern civilization, we go not only to Starbucks, but also to many countries abroad.

We are mostly driven to those extremes by the results of our own actions. Without working and producing we cannot afford to live, and by producing and consuming we make our world less habitable.

Our streets are filled with cars and trucks; our air with noise, soot, and ozone; and our water with all manner of toxic things.

Faced with this, everybody feels entitled to an occasional trip somewhere, even though it may leave a carbon trail from Florence to the Bordentown Starbucks, or from Newark to New Zealand.

The dollars we put into circulation by taking these trips help others to do the same, and thus the damage is repeated.

We are the only creatures on the planet who seek to hoard enough for a lifetime of consumption and then continue to hoard well beyond that point.

Not enough is said about the need for consumer restraint. The reasons why are a well-kept secret. Once spending declines, the economy starts to shrink

and people lose jobs, often the people who need them most.

Further, the long-term economic security of everybody is predicated on a vibrant economy.

But some adjustment seems necessary.

We do need to link our climate policy more closely to fiscal and monetary policy, so that not only does the economy not overheat or sputter, but also we do not cook the planet to a cinder.

And those three words, “reduce, reuse, recycle,” should become a mantra for the modern age. We need consumers and companies to do their part in living less large.

Bordentown Starbucks instead of Lake Geneva? It sounds ridiculous, but somewhere between those two extremes there’s a better outcome for the planet.

Like everybody else, I want to spend and travel. I’d like to ride horses in Mongolia or cruise the Bosphorus. It’s painful to hold back, but eventually we’ll have greener aircraft that can get us to these places without such a devastating environmental impact. And even if that never happens, there are discoveries to be made much closer to home.

People led meaningful, fulfilling lives in Ben Franklin’s day, when the only conveyances were horses and sailboats, and most of the food you could buy was grown (or shot) within 5 miles of your house.

Somehow, as consumers, from Jeff (417-foot yacht) Bezos on down, we need to voluntarily cut back.



New Warehouses Must Be Solar-Ready

By Kip Cherry • *Central Jersey Conversation Chair*

In November 2021, Gov. Phil Murphy signed [A3352](#) requiring newly constructed warehouses to be solar-ready buildings. The solar-ready requirement will apply to any newly constructed warehouse for which an application for a construction permit has not been declared complete by the enforcing agency before July 1, 2022.

Specifically, all new warehouses 100,000 square feet or greater must reserve at least 40% of the roof area for the future installation of a photovoltaic or solar thermal system. This means that the proposed Bridge Point 8 Industrial Park in West Windsor Township, for instance, a mega warehouse project, with 5.5 million square feet of storage in its first two phases, will have to be solar-ready. Bridge Point, a subsidiary of Chicago-based Bridge Development Partners, has not already completed an application for a building construction permit, so far as we understand it.

The new law directs the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to adopt rules and regulations establishing standards for the design and construction of solar-ready warehouses. According to the statute the rules and regs are supposed to incorporate the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code, which addresses energy conservation, savings, and associated environmental impacts. We

understand that the NJ Building Code Division of the DCA is in the process of publishing, for public comment, the actual building code requirements that building inspectors will use to evaluate new warehouses for solar readiness.

What is not defined in the solar-ready bill are the next steps toward actually starting to produce solar power. The warehouse owner will need a “production power agreement” with a vendor as an intermediary negotiating with the public utility along with a permit from the Board of Public Utilities (BPU).

Typically, a BPU permit is based on historical on-site energy usage. Since each warehouse is new, there is no historical usage, so this could create delay while data is collected once the building is in operation. The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club is interested in working with the BPU in developing procedural language that would address energy need estimates, permitting based on such, and modification following receipt of historical data.

The newly signed bill defines a solar-ready building as one with a so-called “solar-ready zone” with a roof or building overhang designated and reserved for the future installation of a solar photovoltaic or solar thermal system. The zone is to be at least 40% of the roof area minus the area cov-

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A Heartfelt Thank You and a Warm Welcome

By Richard Isaac • Richard.Isaac@Sierraclub.org

A Heartfelt Thank You

While there are many volunteers who’ve done outstanding work, I want to give special thanks and appreciation to someone who has worked tirelessly in a number of capacities vital to keeping our Chapter successful.

My deepest thanks goes to Ken Johanson for his tireless dedication and long hours of work as our Chapter chair, Chapter fundraising chair, and Chapter legislative chair and his unwavering commitment to the environmental cause. Unfortunately, due to health reasons, he has stepped down after two decades of incredible service.

For 11 years Ken did an extraordinary job as Chapter chair with thoughtfulness, skill, and grace. In that role, he kept our Chapter in solid financial health and, even more important, was a strong, effective advocate for the environment. He next served as our Fundraising Committee chair and consistently led that committee’s efforts in raising substantial resources for our Chapter for several years until he recently stepped down.

Ken’s initial forays into the environmental movement were with other environmental organizations, where he stuffed envelopes, performed trail maintenance, and even did some pro bono legal work. However, he found that because those other organizations were largely staff driven, it wasn’t all that fulfilling at some level. When Ken discovered the Sierra Club via a group executive meeting, he was pleased to find that the meeting was run by volunteers and that within the Club he could satisfy a need to be actively involved in the decision-making process.

When he took over from the able leadership of the previous Chapter

chair, his number one goal was not to “break” anything, with another goal being to find ways of strengthening our Chapter’s financial base.

He accomplished both objectives and devoted an incredible amount of time to proposed state legislation. When he stepped down after over a decade as chair, the Chapter was a strong, effective organization in excellent shape.

Ken, while all I can say is thank you for your long and dedicated service with our New Jersey Chapter, please know that it’s from deep within my heart.

A Warm Welcome

In addition to thanking Ken, I also want to wish a warm welcome to Robert “Bo” Petrillo as our Chapter’s newly appointed wetlands issues coordinator.

Bo clearly is qualified for this position, as he holds a Master of Natural Resources degree and is a certified Professional Wetland Scientist.

Bo received an undergraduate degree in biology with a focus on conservation from Arcadia University in 2012 and a Master of Restoration Ecology and Habitat Management from the University of Idaho in 2021. Since 2012, he has worked in the environmental consulting industry as a professional wetland scientist and certified ecologist. Bo’s main specialty is wetland preservation and wetland restoration. He also focuses on environmental permitting and threatened and endangered species population studies and habitat identification and management.

We’re glad to have Bo on board and look forward to him helping us preserve our state’s wetlands.



Legislative Committee News

By John Kashwick • john.kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

The NJ Chapter’s Legislative Committee continues to review bills introduced in our state legislature. Chapter members are encouraged to ask their assembly members and state senators to **support** the following legislation:

S1602—Would authorize the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the “Air Pollution Control Act (1954)” and “Global Warming Response Act.”

A2436/S104—Would exclude farmland from definitions of “redevelopment area” and “rehabilitation area” in the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.”

A3080—Outdoor lighting fixtures for state or state-funded projects would have to meet light pollution and energy waste reduction criteria.

A3974/S2642—Would prohibit extradition of an individual from another state back to that state for actions related to reproductive healthcare services that are lawful in New Jersey.

A3975/S2633—Would protect access to abortion services and procedures for out-of-state individuals and provide nondisclosure protections regarding reproductive healthcare services received.

A4350/S2918—Would strengthen access to reproductive health care; appropriate \$20 million.

A1444/S426—Producers in New Jersey would have to adopt and implement plans to improve product packaging, recycling and disposal.

The Legislative Committee also supports a bill proposed by our Chapter’s Building Electrification Committee that would phase out heating and appliances fueled by natural gas.

The NJ Chapter **opposes** the following bill and encourages members to ask their assembly members and state senators to vote against this legislation unless amended to include more sustainable methods of curtailing beach erosion:

A3535/S2449—Would increase the amount annually credited to the Shore Protection Fund for beach sand replenishment to \$50 million.

To find your legislators, please visit bit.ly/3wq3Vvc

For a complete list as well as updates on bills, please visit www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/political-action

For questions on Chapter positions on various bills, please contact Legislative Committee Chair John Kashwick at john.kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org.

Energy Storage Plays an Instrumental Role

By Greg Gorman • ggorman@embargmail.com

Climate crisis–induced heat waves and cold snaps stress our energy systems. The strategy to address the climate crisis is to replace fossil fuels with clean energy and to electrify everything. The combination of weather extremes, electrification, and an aging power grid will require significant infrastructure investments. The challenge is to achieve integration of clean power while providing reliable electricity.

Energy storage (ES) systems play an instrumental role in improving grid resiliency, reliability, and efficiency. Grid applications for ES systems include backup power, demand reduction, frequency regulation, peak shaving, pre-heating, or cooling of air and fluids, uninterrupted power supply, and voltage regulation. Some of these terms are self-explanatory, but frequency regulation is the balancing of energy supply and demand, peak shaving is the moderation of short-term demand spikes; pre-heating and cooling strategies help to moderate system demand; and voltage regulation ensures consistent levels of energy transmission. The beneficiary of these applications is ultimately the ratepayer.

The NJ [Clean Energy Act](#) required the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU), in consultation with PJM, an independent energy transmission group, to conduct

an [ES analysis](#). The NJ Energy Storage Analysis (ESA) was completed and published in 2019 by Rutgers School of Engineering and the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy and serves as a basis for the NJ Energy Master Plan. The analysis findings contained in the executive summary provide a top-level description of benefits of energy storage systems and a discussion of various energy storage technologies. (The ESA noted that technology is rapidly changing. For a more current discussion of ES technology see [Worku 2022](#)). The services provided by ES systems are applicable whether or not electricity is derived from fossil fuel, nuclear, or renewables.

ES provides critical value in times of extreme temperatures. The grid operated by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas is not connected to the national grid. During the cold snap of 2021, natural gas pipelines froze and equipment at thermal power plants broke. During a Texas heat wave in June, 11,000 megawatts (MW) of thermal generation was offline for repairs, cloud cover reduced solar output, and slower wind speeds reduced wind power output. However, ES contributed backup power for the grid to help compensate for needed power.

Grid scale ES systems provide short-

term service when demand is greatest and are recharged at night when rates are lowest. Yards Creek Generating Station in Blairstown, NJ, is a pumped-storage hydroelectric facility that provides voltage regulation services to allow thermal generation plants to go offline for routine service. As more clean energy sources are integrated into the grid, ES demand will increase to provide similar voltage regulation service.

Use of “behind-the-meter” energy storage reduces demand for grid power. Behind-the-meter systems supply energy stored from solar panels, etc., that customers do not have to pay their utilities for. In the event of rolling blackouts or short-term outages, behind-the-meter ES allows for continuity of service for the business or homeowner.

Electrochemical, electromechanical, and thermal ES devices save the user money. Commercial and industrial businesses recharge their batteries, compress air, or wind-up flywheels when electricity is cheap. They release the energy when power is expensive. The same principle is used for preheating or precooling of buildings, water, and air.

Why am I discussing this? The NJ Clean Energy Act codifies a goal of achieving 600 MW of ES by 2021 and

2,000 MW by 2030.

At the time of the NJ Energy Master Plan’s publication (2019), New Jersey had 475 MW of energy storage including Yards Creek. The administration has been criticized for making minimal progress toward this goal. In testimony presented to the Senate Environment and Energy Committee on June 9, 2022, the BPU reported the state currently has over 500 MW of energy storage installed—[100 MW short](#) of the 2021 goal. To meet the 2030 ES goal, the BPU needs help.

S2185, which requires the BPU to develop programs to incentivize installation of new ES systems, is essential (the main sponsors are Sen. Bob Smith and Sen. Linda Greenstein; co-sponsor, Sen. Patrick Diegan). It passed the Senate on June 29 and was referred to the Assembly Telecommunications and Utilities Committee. S2185 needs our support.

Resources

- NJ Clean Energy Act: bit.ly/3zA50nd
- NJ Energy Storage Analysis: bit.ly/3BdfvOq
- Advances in Energy Storage Systems: bit.ly/3vEGiWP
- Energy storage shortfall: bit.ly/3z9hoJd
- S2185: bit.ly/3cAXrmV



It’s Time to Decommission Natural Gas Plants

By Greg Gorman • ggorman@embargmail.com

In 2022, 14.9 gigawatts (GW) of US electric generation capacity was scheduled for retirement. Of that, 8% is natural gas facility shutdowns, primarily older steam and combustion turbines. This year, 46.1 GW of new electric generating capacity is projected to be added, including 9.6 GW of gas. Predominantly, the [remainder](#) of the new electric generating capacity will be a combination of solar (21.5 GW), wind (7.6 GW), battery storage (5.1 GW), and nuclear (2.2 GW)—all carbon-free sources of power.

New Jersey currently has 21 gas-fired generation plants. The two largest (Linden and Bergen generating plants) provide power to New Jersey and New York. The power demand for New York is expected to diminish as action is taken to fight climate change. In December 2021, New York City banned natural gas in new buildings. In June 2022, New York Gov. Kathy Hochul signed [legislation](#) to support greenhouse gas reduction strategies in buildings and spur development of geothermal energy networks.

Many of the gas facilities in New Jer-

sey are “peaker plants” that operate only when energy demand is highest. Two of the [new gas plants](#) proposed in New Jersey are “microgrids” for intermittent use to ensure continuity of service for rail and sewage.

The NJ solar market continues to see strong growth, and offshore wind will come online within the next few years. Like it or not, New Jersey approved financial support for the state’s remaining three nuclear power reactors to prevent their closures. Displacing dirty gas power plants eliminates pollutant sources, which is especially important for environmental justice communities. When dirty power plants or their potential can be eliminated, the landscape is unencumbered by the need for pipeline rights of way and safety setbacks. This land can be developed or converted to forest. It’s time to plan for an orderly decommissioning of natural gas power plants.

Resources

- New energy sources: bit.ly/3PLKu0Z
- New York ban: n.pr/3cMMm2d
- Hochul legislation: on.ny.gov/3JmrJ9l

be monitoring the design and construction of new warehouses around the state and the progress of Bridge Point, in particular, in becoming a solar-ready warehouse complex quickly. The Club also intends to work with warehouse owners, including Bridge Point, to ensure that rooftop solar is installed and becomes operational.

The adoption notices for the Division of Codes and Standards can be found at <https://bit.ly/3pjldqF>

The proposed rules are at: <https://bit.ly/3dxHMVS>

NEW WAREHOUSES

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ered by skylights, occupied roof decks, vegetative roof areas, and mandatory access or setback areas required by the NJ Uniform Construction Code.

The next step is the adoption of implementing rules. The proposed rules for implementation have been published in the New Jersey Register, with a 60-day comment period that ended on June 1, 2022. DCA is waiting for adoption approval for final publication in the NJ Register.

The Sierra Club’s NJ Chapter will

ExCom Meeting Highlights

June: The Executive Committee (ExCom) voted to empower the Chapter’s Forest Conservation Committee to decide which proposals to send to Chapter Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot for submission to the state’s new Forest Stewardship Task Force. The task force has work groups assigned to address the health of forest ecology and the carbon sequestration of forests. Anjuli is an appointed member of the task force. The Chapter’s Trenton staff will ensure proposals conform with National’s forest policies. ExCom decided that proposals for task force consideration should first be discussed on the Conservation Committee and ExCom listservs so Club members can weigh in on the strength of these ideas. Leona Fluck was appointed Outings Chair, replacing Ellen Blumenkrantz, who stepped down owing to work requirements.

July: Karen Becker was appointed to serve the unexpired 3-year Executive Committee term of Ken Johanson, who has stepped down for health reasons. Over two decades with the NJ Chapter, Ken has served as chair, legislative chair, and treasurer; and he has been a strong and effective advocate for the environment. The Club wishes him well. Judy Minot and Jim Andreano were appointed as co-chairs of the Fundraising Committee. Robert “Bo” Petrillo was officially appointed as wetlands issues coordinator. He holds a Master of Natural Resources from the University of Idaho and is a certified Professional Wetland Scientist. His professional experience includes ecology and scientific work with Excelon, McCormic Taylor, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and the US Army Corps of Engineers. His work has included threatened and endangered species surveys and environmental impact analysis. The Club welcomes Bo. A motion was passed to reassign the following communities to the Raritan Valley Group: Iselin (08830), South Plainfield (07080), parts of Edison (08818, 08837, 08899), Carteret (07008), Colonia (07067), Sewaren (07077), and Port Reading (07064).

August: The ExCom voted to withdraw cosponsorship of a resolution asking National to support the creation of Delaware River National Park and Lenape Preserve. Political Committee Chair Karen Becker noted the Loantaka Group has endorsed Danny O’Sullivan for Ward 1 on the Summit Common Council and Rachele Ehrlich for Madison Borough Council. Raritan Valley Group has endorsed Melonie Marana for Somerset County Commissioner. In a special action, the NJ Chapter endorsed Reed Gusciara for another term as mayor of Trenton. The Conservation Committee voted to support creation of a Hudson Canyon marine sanctuary. The Hudson Canyon supports an immense variety of undersea and bird life. It extends from Raritan Bay, and the most pronounced features (walls .75 mile high), which would be in the sanctuary, begin about 100 miles south-east of the bay. The resolution calls for protecting Hudson Canyon from oil, gas, and mineral development and preserving this ecological treasure.

Donate Unwanted Reusable Bags and Help Food Banks

You have may a surplus of reusable bags. You can reduce your supply without having to throw them away. Donate to New Jersey’s food banks. They need reusable bags to help get groceries into the hands of people who need them. Visit this site for an interactive map of food banks in New Jersey that accept reusable bag donations: <https://cfbnj.org/donate-reusable-shopping-bags/>

Electric School Buses: Hybrids are Necessary

By Paul Ehrlich • Clean Air Issues Coordinator

Electric school buses can produce low or no emissions. Since some pollutants from emissions can leak into the bus, lowering emissions will be beneficial for student health. Significant increases in government subsidies for electric school buses are currently planned. However, electric buses are very expensive, about \$350,000 to \$400,000 each. Diesel buses typically cost about half as much as electric buses. New Jersey currently has 15,000 school buses, resulting in a total electric bus replacement cost of about \$5 billion to \$6 billion. A new NJ law provides enough funding to replace 1% to 2% of the fleet.

The low replacement rate is very likely to lead to controversy among school districts that differ significantly in economic status. Some low-income districts will be able to take advantage of funding priorities already announced by the Environmental Protection Agency. High-income districts should be able to afford the full price of electric vehicles.

Middle-income districts cannot use either path and must hope for significant reductions in electric school bus costs. Thus, middle class students, as well as many lower-income

students, will have limited access to healthier buses. Hybrid buses with an electric powertrain replacing the original diesel powertrain can cost from \$20,000 to \$100,000, or significantly less than new diesel buses. At \$20,000 per bus converted to electric power, NJ fleet replacement would be about \$300 million. Thus, 15% to 20% of the fleet could be replaced at a cost approximately equal to what the legislature has already approved for new electric buses. Competition for seats on a healthier converted bus could be reduced by rotating the low-emission buses among the bus routes of a district.

Low-emission school buses have a great advantage over electric vehicles used for other purposes. The range of a fully charged vehicle is unlikely to be as long as required for a complete eight-hour day. However, school buses are used mostly for transporting students in the morning and afternoon with downtime of at least four hours in the middle of the day. Charging during the inactive period can double the range of each bus. This advantage, plus the availability of old diesel buses for conversion to electric, should reduce the cost of transitioning to an electric fleet.

EPR BILLS

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While there are many elements to “reduce, reuse, recycle,” it is suggested that stronger, model EPR bills include several essential elements:

- Reduction of overall packaging material to be used
- Elimination of toxins in packaging
- Strong oversight by a government group or government-appointed group
- Establishment of clear rates and dates for reduction and recycle regulations
- Exclusion of chemical recycling (aka advanced recycling)

Overall reduction of packaging material is vital and key to this bill. Reduction of packaging material will require design changes and could be incentivized with “eco-modulated fees.” These fees would create a reward system for pro-environmental packaging. The desirable low fees would be awarded to producers creating packages that are reusable or have high post-consumer, recyclable content. High fees would be assigned to producers creating packages made with minimal recycled content and disposed of in landfills or incineration plants. Fees would be collected and dispersed by a government agency.

EPR packaging bills are severely needed to reduce the huge and growing volume of global waste. Future waste growth is linked to the global population increase, which is projected to reach 10 billion in 2050, up from 7.9 billion currently. Global waste is currently 2.01 billion metric tons annually and projections suggest 3.4 billion metric tons by 2050. The United States is one of the world’s leading producers of solid waste, especially on a per-capita basis.

EPR legislation is needed to lessen our dependence on landfills and especially on incineration plants. Over the past century, most municipal solid waste (MSW) was disposed of in landfill sites. According to the EPA, “Landfilling of waste has decreased from 94% of the amount generated in 1960 to 50% of the amount generated in 2018. Meanwhile, incineration of municipal solid waste has gained in popularity. Most recently, studies have

highlighted the inadequacies and hazards created by incineration plants and the need for waste reduction and recycling has been increasingly recognized. Data and safety measure records from incineration plants across the nation are inconsistent, so it is difficult to track compliance with current safety regulations; however, it is clear incineration plants contribute significantly to greenhouse gas and pollutants. Further, these plants have a short lifespan of roughly 30 years and upgrades to older facilities can be a costly burden to taxpayers. Their favored location in lower-income areas underscores environmental injustice.

New Jersey has already passed an important plastic bag ban law (PL 2020) as well as a recycled content law (PL 2021). It now needs to focus on a strong EPR bill. New Jersey generated roughly 23 million tons of municipal solid waste in 2018, according to the most recent state Department of Environmental Protection data. It has 578 landfills with 12 currently in operation and four working incinerators. A strong EPR bill can reduce the overall amount of MSW created and decrease dependencies on landfills and incinerators. A strong EPR bill can help relieve taxpayers and municipalities from growing solid waste management costs. A strong EPR bill would decrease the use of virgin materials and grow markets for recycled materials. Of great importance, New Jersey’s draft EPR legislation would help promote employment in new areas of environmental waste management and would help welcome a severely needed age of waste reduction.

Resources

- Incinerators in EJ Communities: bit.ly/3poGki6
- US Waste Production: bit.ly/2X-wopUA
- Spread of EPR Laws: bit.ly/3QUWFAL
- Getting to zero waste: bit.ly/3SZuXnR
- Incinerator Industry in Decline: bit.ly/3dD5SiK



Sierra Club members posed for a photo on the steps of Patriots Theater: from left, Joanne Pannone, Denise Brush, Chapter Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot, Tony Hagen, and Leona and George Fluck.

March for Clean Air and Climate Justice

By Denise Brush • offshorewind@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Several members of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club attended the June 23 March for Clean Air and Climate Justice in Trenton, including Chapter Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot, Newsletter Editor Tony Hagen, Central Jersey Chair Joanne Pannone, Sindhu Pasricha, Leona Fluck, and me. The march was organized by the staff of Food & Water Watch of New Jersey on behalf of the Empower NJ coalition, to which the NJ Chapter belongs.

Matt Smith, NJ director of Food & Water Watch, led the activities during the three-hour event. We began by gathering in front of Patriots Theater at the War Memorial for a performance and sing-along by the Solidarity Singers. Following that we marched several blocks to the courtyard of the State House. Food & Water Watch had a permit for the march and rally, which was targeted at Gov. Phil Murphy. According to reporter [Wayne Parry](#), there were hundreds of protestors, but Murphy was out of town—in a meeting about offshore wind policy.

In addition to a variety of handheld signs about the need for clean air, climate justice, and getting off fossil fuels, participants from various parts of the state carried banners opposing the seven fossil fuel projects that are still under consideration in New Jersey. As Matt Smith stated in his [opinion piece](#) published prior to the rally, “If all seven projects were to be approved, they could increase the state’s overall emissions by up to 38%.”

The Seven Deadly Fossil Fuel Projects

The seven fossil fuel projects and their [annual greenhouse gas impacts](#) in millions of metric tons (MMT), if completed, are:

- Regional Energy Access Expansion Project (18 MMT)—expands the Williams Transco gas pipeline to include a new compressor station in West Dept-

ford and expands compressor stations in Branchburg and Old Bridge.

- Gibbstown Logistics Center liquid natural gas export terminal (12.56 MMT)—would enable exports of fracked gas from Pennsylvania using a new deep-water port to be built on the Delaware River.

- NJ Turnpike and Garden State Parkway expansion (1.4 MMT)—calls for widening 60 miles of the Turnpike and 64 miles of the Parkway, which will generate 1.8 billion additional vehicle miles traveled per year.

- Tennessee Gas Pipeline compressors (2.8 MMT)—expands the Wantage compressor station and adds a new compressor station in West Milford to support load expansion of 115 million cubic feet of gas per day.

- Keasbey Energy Center (CPV2) power plant (2.36 MMT)—630 MW gas power plant in Woodbridge, which would be the third major fossil fuel plant sited in the overburdened Keasbey section of Woodbridge.

- NJ Transit Microgrid power plant (0.6 MMT)—new 140 MW gas power plant in Kearny to operate trains during loss of commercial power. Expected to go into service in 2028.

- Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) fracked gas power plant (0.039 MMT)—new 84 MW gas plant in Newark to power sewer operations when commercial power is lost.

After the crowd gathered in a circle around the State House courtyard, there was a spoken word performance, and then activists from groups opposing each fossil fuel project spoke. The event ended with an energizing performance by Pace and the Trumpet Chicks, a brass band.

Resources

- Wayne Parry article: bit.ly/3S2XzMj
- Matt Smith article: njersy.co/3zzEs5u
- Fossil fuel project info: bit.ly/3Bh-kyNK

DON'T SIT OUT

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didates, including Malinowski, who have supported environmental and social justice causes. We now take an even broader look at candidates, making sure they put county over party and politics. Many states have made it difficult for residents in marginalized communities to vote. Ironically, these communities have the most severe environmental and social justice issues.

Election day is November 8. It is imperative that we vote if for no other

reason than to protect our democracy. Make a plan to vote in person, by mail, or at an early voting location. Don't sit this one out.

Contact your county clerk for information on how to vote by mail or early voting dates.

2022 Sierra Club endorsed candidates: www.sierraclubindependentaction.org/endorsements

E-School Bus Milestone

By Bill Beren • Beren1@verizon.net

Four years of hard work finally paid off for members of the NJ Chapter's Transportation Committee when Gov. Phil Murphy signed into law A1282 (Stanley) and companion bill S759 (DiEgnan, Greenstein). The bill allocates \$45 million spread over 3 years to subsidize the cost of electric school buses in the northern, central, and southern regions of the state, with emphasis on funding electric buses in economically challenged or overburdened communities.



At a recent event highlighting the importance of electric school buses were Doug O'Malley, director of Environment New Jersey; Brandon Lewis, electric vehicle and business development specialist at H.A. DeHart & Son, a distributor for Thomas Built Buses; and Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club. Photo credit: Taylor McFarland

The committee worked closely with the Assembly and Senate sponsors to amend the bill to establish minimum standards for the buses, such as minimum mileage, telematics to monitor vehicle performance, operator and maintenance training, and reporting. The Club's amendments also moved responsibility for managing the grants to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) instead of the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and allocated \$750,000 per year to the DEP to administer the grant and make recommendations on how to expand the program to replace the 22,000 diesel- and gasoline-powered school buses in the state. Other amendments require that 50% of the grants go to low income, urban, and environmental justice communities and that districts that do not contract out their bus services are also guaranteed 50% of the funding.

In a joint press release with Environment New Jersey, our director, Anjuli Ramos Busot, stated that "not only will this transition from diesel to electric reduce air pollution and protect our kids' health, it will also provide an economic benefit to school districts."

"We look forward to working with the DEP to fast-track the implementation of this legislation so that the \$15 million in grants for school districts can be awarded by the end of this year. There is a clear demand from school districts to electrify their school bus fleets and this bill can start to meet

that demand," said Bill Beren, transportation chair with the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Since February 2020, the state has funded the purchase of 77 electric school buses by 21 school districts, school bus contractors, and private schools using funds received under the Volkswagen settlement and Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) proceeds from sales of CO₂. According to a press release from the governor's office, funding for the electric school buses under this bill will come from the general fund, and we are hopeful that the DEP continues to provide additional funding from RGGI to increase the number of buses that can be purchased.

The committee is also sponsoring, in association with partners Environment New Jersey and the Clean Cities Coalition, numerous workshops around the state to educate school district personnel about various federal and state grant programs. We have arranged with a local school bus dealer to display a school bus at these workshops. And we will once again be an exhibitor at the NJ School Boards Association to promote electric school buses.

Check our [webpage](#) for articles, Power Point presentations, a buyers' guide, and other resources for school districts interested in going electric.

Resource

NJ Chapter's Electric School Bus Campaign: bit.ly/3zImxbu

WAREHOUSES

continued from page 1

informing the public about upcoming warehouse development. No time schedule is given out so that residents can have a voice in the location, size, and traffic considerations in the building of warehouses. The decision-making rests entirely with municipalities whose elected and appointed officials may be preoccupied with tax revenue and job creation. This makes it necessary for residents to keep an eye on local planning board agendas.

In 2021, Upper Freehold residents did claim a victory against warehouse development. Micah Rasmussen, a Rider University professor, organized the community and got some help from the State Planning Commission. In March 2022, Mansfield in Burlington County moved to ban warehouses after eight had already been approved. The community wanted to stop further warehouse sprawl.

Sierra Club has had years of experience in situations like these and can offer ideas and resources to help residents act. Research is necessary to prepare for battle. Residents may have to

educate their local governing officials on issues of importance to the community—just being angry and protesting is not going to be enough to win.

Warehouses bring serious environmental concerns, but they also represent jobs and tax revenues for hard-pressed communities. Finding a balance is the challenge. The issue of warehouse development requires serious thinking and planning. New Jersey is our home. We all want it to be the best it can be in every forest, field, town, and city. Democracy requires participation. Now is the time to be vigilant, be educated, and take action.

Resources

Costco Opens Warehouse: <https://bit.ly/3dDHM6Q>

Climate Resilience Planning: [resilience-plan-guide.pdf\(nj.gov\)](https://resilience-plan-guide.pdf(nj.gov))

Draft NJ Warehouse Guidance: <https://naiopnj.org/page-1806767>

Municipal Vigilance Needed: <https://bit.ly/3c35w46>

Mansfield Blocks Warehouses: <https://bit.ly/3QNXRoW>



There are 12 regional groups in the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club. All groups have open officer positions for volunteers and welcome new members. Interested persons should reach out to the contacts listed below. Participation in the Sierra Club is a meaningful and rewarding way to give back to your community and help create a sustainable and healthier environment for all.

Groups are listed in rough geographical sequence: North to South

SKYLANDS GROUP

(Sussex and Northern Warren counties)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/skyland

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC

Email: ggorman07419@embarqmail.com; Phone: 973-886-7950

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and other OFFICERS (ExCom members are elected to serve 2-year terms; term-expiry date in parentheses)

Chair (12/31/22)	Greg Gorman	ggorman07419@embarqmail.com
Vice Chair (12/31/23)	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Secretary (12/31/22)	Norene Haberski	norenehaberski2@gmail.com
Treasurer (12/31/23)	Norene Haberski	norenehaberski2@gmail.com
ExCom at large (12/31/23)	Dave Alcock	dwhoob@hotmail.com
	(12/31/22) Nicole Guerrieri	SierraClubNicole@gmail.com
	(12/31/23) Allison Orsi	aeorsi@hotmail.com
	(12/31/23) Jill Aquino	jda1timeforchange@gmail.com
	(12/31/23) Chris Dunbar	chrisdunbar458@gmail.com
	(12/31/23) Joanne Morgan	jojommorgan@yahoo.com
Conservation Chair	Greg Gorman	ggorman07419@embarqmail.com
Outings Chair	Dave Alcock	dwhoob@hotmail.com
Outreach Chair	Joanne Morgan	jojommorgan@yahoo.com
Environmental Justice	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Political Co-Chairs	Nicole Guerrieri	SierraClubNicole@gmail.com
	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Publicity Chair	Joanne Morgan	jojommorgan@yahoo.com
Recycling/Zero Waste	Jill Aquino	jda1timeforchange@gmail.com
Chair Webmaster	Nicole Guerrieri	SierraClubNicole@gmail.com

GENERAL MEETINGS (Conducted via Zoom)

The Skylands Group of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club serves Sussex and Northern Warren counties. We offer a variety of opportunities for the public to learn about and connect with the natural environment. We present informative films and speakers; exploration of the great outdoors on hikes, edible-plant tours, and picnics; public outreach via town tabling; and visits to schools. Our hope is to foster love and deep respect for our great outdoors.

The Skylands Group works with grassroots organizations to protect open spaces and water quality, promote clean energy, and oppose privatization of public trust resources.

CURRENT CAMPAIGNS: The Skylands Group advocates the protection of the Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area from logging done under the guise of creating "healthy forests" and opposes the proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline compressor station in Wantage.

The Skylands Group supports the Green New Deal, Sunrise Movement, and transition toward a clean energy economy.

The Skylands Group also opposes the Munsonhurst Planned Residential District development, which will adversely affect the ecology of a Natural Heritage Priority Site.

HUNTERDON WARREN GROUP

(Hunterdon and Southern Warren counties)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren

Meetup: www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/sierraclub.hunterdonwarren/

OFFICERS

Chair	Jonathan Wall *	jonwall@jonwall.com
Vice Chair	Celeste Martin *	onecentral@mac.com
Conservation Chair	Open Position!	
Political Co-Chairs	Karen Becker *	karbecker@gmail.com
	Amy Weeder *	aweeder@comcast.net
Highlands Issues Coordinator	Cinny MacGonagle *	cmacgonagle@yahoo.com
Outings	Jonathan Wall *	jonwall@jonwall.com
Social Media Coordinator	Matthew Avallone*	mattavallone@ymail.com
Treasurer, Secretary	John Kashwick	jkashwick@gmail.com
Warren County Issues	Pat Banes *	patrick_banes@comcast.net
Webmaster/Listmaster	John Kashwick	jkashwick@gmail.com
Fundraising Chair	Open Position!—please contact Jonathan if interested	

* Group Executive Committee Member

GENERAL MEETINGS: Meetings may be virtual or hybrid (in-person and virtual). Please check <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren> for updates or to register for events. Registered participants will receive Zoom meeting information.

Oct 5 (Wed): 7:30 p.m. TBA

Nov 9 (Wed), 7:30 p.m.: Elliot Ruga, policy and communications director of the NJ

Highlands Coalition, will discuss recent decisions by the Highlands Council that impact Hunterdon and Warren Counties. Feeling a little intimidated raising your concerns in front of your town council? This might be the meeting for you. Elliot will specifically address Highlands Center and Highlands Redevelopment Area designations, Highlands Conformance and other aspects of the Highlands Act, what the development criteria are, and how to oppose inappropriate development proposals in the context of Highlands regulations.

Dec 7 (Wed), 7:30 p.m. TBA

OTHER EVENTS:

Oct 12 (Wed): 8 p.m. Virtual online Executive Committee/planning meeting. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend to learn more about the Club. Hear about and discuss issues, plan future events, and become more active.

CURRENT ISSUES

Warehouse Projects: There are several massive warehouse projects that are proposed for Hunterdon and Warren counties. We had some good news last year when the state rejected a plan for Franklin Township in Warren County to declare active farmland “in need of redevelopment” in order to give tax incentives for Safavieh to build a furniture warehouse. **Now we have even better news:** The state has acknowledged that there are intermittent streams running throughout the property. Hopefully, this fact will curtail much of the planned development. We are working with other groups to oppose these projects that threaten to spread industrial sprawl to our farms and natural areas. For more information, please contact Pat Banes at patrick_banes@comcast.net

Night Skies: Voorhees State Park in Hunterdon County is home to the NJ Astronomical Association Observatory, which relies on dark skies. The Hunterdon Warren Group and the Light Pollution and Dark Skies Committee are encouraging municipalities to curb light pollution by introducing ordinances that encourage proper lighting. We need citizens to take action and contact their environmental commissions, land use boards, and governing bodies to encourage them to support passing these energy- and tax-saving initiatives. Please help us in our campaign to have our county and local municipalities adopt stricter ordinances to reduce excessive light pollution which not only conflicts our view of the night sky but also wastes energy and harms wildlife and human health. Please contact the chair of the committee, Jonathan Wall at jonwall@jonwall.com, if you are interested in this issue.

NORTH JERSEY GROUP

(Bergen and Passaic counties)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey

Meetup: www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/northjersesierraclub

Twitter: @sierraclub_nj

Instagram: sierraclubnorth_nj

OFFICERS

Co-Chair	Diane Scarangella*	diascat@hotmail.com
Co-Chair & Treasurer	Buddy Jenssen**	buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
Secretary	Laura Troy**	ltroy1019@gmail.com
Political Action Committee Chair	Ron De Vos	rondevos58@outlook.com
Outings Committee Co-Chairs	Mary Walsh & Buddy Jenssen**	north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org & buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
Conservation Committee Co-Chair	Mary Walsh*	north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Co-Chair	Hanna Atlas*	h.atlas425@gmail.com
Member	Judy Green**	jugreen547@gmail.com
Climate Change Committee Chair	Jeff Rapaport*	jefrap@optonline.net
Marketing/Social Media Co-Chair	Marie Mannino	mmannino@yahoo.com
Co-Chair	Co-Chair Open Position!	
Youth Outreach/Outings Chair	Erica Cowper*	ecowper@drew.edu
Co-Chair	Co-Chair Open Position!	
Diversity/Environmental Justice Co-Chair	Bushra Asfare	bushra_c.e@hotmail.com
Co-Chair	Co-Chair Open Position!	
Special Events/Membership Co-Chair	Hanna Atlas*	h.atlas425@gmail.com
Co-Chair	Open position!	
Member	Bob Weiss**	bobweiss1967@gmail.com

*Elected North Jersey Group Executive Committee Members. Term expires 2023

**Elected North Jersey Group Executive Committee Members. Term expires 2022

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

If you are interested in any of the open positions mentioned above, please reach out to the contacts listed.

INITIATIVES: The North Jersey Group is committed to coalition building through outreach and planning with other Sierran groups and with local and state nonprofit organizations. Our collaborative initiatives focus upon

- Encouraging municipal resolutions that support town-level adoption of renewable energy strategies and the environmentally friendly development of affordable housing;
- Opposing gas-fueled plants and the construction of pipelines, transport terminals and the use of tankers and trains to transport Bakken oil, liquid natural gas, and other dirty fuels;
- Advocating for renewable energy sources;
- Opposing commercialization and development of county, state, and local parkland and open spaces;
- Advocating for removal—not capping—of contaminated soil on undeveloped public land and the restoration of that land to its natural state;
- Advocating for the cleanup of polluted waterways and for the transition to non-polluting sources of transport on the Hudson and other NJ/NYC waterways;

- Supporting access to affordable health care to address the harm done to the health of residents in environmental justice communities;
- Increasing group diversity, and
- Supporting the efforts of organizations who are “on the ground” in environmental justice communities.

We continue to focus our existing efforts on fighting climate change; creating more opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy and appreciate nature; and collaborating with coalitions, such as Empower New Jersey and Don’t Gas the Meadowlands, and with other New Jersey groups to advocate for renewable energy and a moratorium on fossil fuel usage, preserving our waterways, and protecting our parklands.

UPCOMING EVENT: Sept. 14, 2022, at 7 p.m. (Save the date!)

SUSTAINABLE INVESTING: In person at the Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County on Larch Avenue in Teaneck, NJ. Learn about green and sustainable investments from panelists

- Vanessa Wong is an associate with Ceres, a 501(c)(3) sustainability nonprofit aiming to transform the economy by building a just and sustainable future for people and the planet. In her role, she supports capital market providers within the Ceres Investor Network, which includes more than 220 institutional investors managing more than \$60 trillion in assets, with the goal of promoting the mobilization of investors toward shareholder engagement and net zero initiatives. Prior to Ceres, Vanessa worked at Bloomberg and Morgan Stanley providing investor education in data and analysis.
- Elizabeth Landau, COO and Co-Founder of GreenPortfolio, a fintech startup focused on helping consumers make a positive climate impact with their investment and banking choices. She has 10-plus years of leadership experience in B2B and B2C markets at both Fortune 500 companies (BASF, Anheuser Busch) and startups, with a focus on brand management, innovation, and go-to-market strategy. She earned a BS in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering from the University of Pennsylvania and an MBA from the NYU Stern School of Business.

GATEWAY GROUP

(Hillside, Elizabeth, and Essex County, except for Livingston, Millburn and Roseland)

Please contact any of the leaders below if you are interested in joining our campaigns to protect the environment. There are several group officer positions open.

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Gateway/ (Also accessible from the NJ Chapter website)

Please also join the Gateway Group on **Facebook** at

www.facebook.com/pages/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782

OFFICERS

Chair	Bill Beren*	973-746-9661	Beren1@verizon.net
Conservation Chair	Caroline Kane*	646-961-9003	ckane678@verizon.net
Treasurer	Rachel Tarzia*	908-531-2168	Rtarzia6@outlook.com
Program Co-Chairs	Suzanne Trimel*	973-509-8335	suzanne.trimel@gmail.com
	Steven Yafet	908-354-2537	syafet@gmail.com
Publicity Chair	Amanda Zhong		zhong.amanda@yahoo.com
Political Chair	Claire Ciliotta	973-746-0438	ccili279@gmail.com
Fundraising Chair	Rachel Tarzia	908-531-2168	Rtarzia6@outlook.com
Membership Chair	Steven Yafet*	(see above)	
Newark Issues Chair	Jamie Bruno	973-393-2154	jjjjebruno@gmail.com
Environmental Justice Chair	Shelly Rollins	201-443-7004	volunteer4400@gmail.com
Passaic River Issues and Outings Chair	Steven Yafet	(see above)	
Webmaster	Christy Morganstein	732-718-4343	christy@medartsweb.com

*Group Executive Committee

The following Gateway Group positions are open for volunteers: vice-chair, secretary, Elizabeth issues, recycling. If you are interested, contact Bill Beren at 973-746-9661.

Please contact our program co-chairs if you have ideas or suggestions for a meeting-topic, program, or conservation project.

We invite YOU to join in our activism and ask your support as we strive to address the many issues facing our urban and suburban communities. Note the several vacant positions listed above.

CONSERVATION NEWS

In July the Gateway Group worked with Clean Cities Coalition and the Weequahic Park Association to sponsor an in-person seminar on the US Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Clean School Bus grant program. Funded by President Biden’s Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the EPA is awarding \$1 billion in grants per year for the next five years to school districts around the country to purchase electric school buses. Gateway Chair Bill Beren explained how the grant program worked and what school districts need to do to apply for the grant. Also speaking was Melissa Miles from the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance, Kim Gaddy from the (Newark) South Ward Environmental Alliance, and representatives from Thomas Built Buses, PSEG, and EV Resource Group. Six school districts attended the seminar, including Millburn and Bloomfield.

The featured speaker for our summer membership meeting was member Vanessa Wong, an associate with Ceres, a 501(c)(3) sustainability nonprofit aiming to transform the economy by building a just and sustainable future for people and the planet. Vanessa’s talk centered on efforts to encourage banks and major investment firms to divest from fossil fuels and instead invest in renewable and clean energy.

Gateway Group has also started a program to encourage homeowners to plant native species in their gardens. We have purchased 200 copies of the brochure “Going Native: A Guide to Landscaping With Native Plants in Northern New Jersey.” We are working with local realtors to hand these out for free to new homebuyers.

>continued on page 8

HUDSON COUNTY GROUP

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/ HUDSON-COUNTY

Email: HUDSONSIERRACLUB@gmail.com

Facebook: @HCSierraClub

Instagram: @HCSierraClub

Twitter: @HCSierraClub

OFFICERS

Chair	Patricia Hilliard*
Secretary/Treasurer	Open Position!
Conservation Chair	Open Position!
Political Chair	Ricardo Pereira*
Delegate to Chapter	Ricardo Pereira*
Membership	Open Position!
Publicity	Open Position!
Outings / Events	Steve Krinsky*
At-Large	Nancy Booth*

(* = Ex Com)

Meeting Schedule: The Hudson Group will continue to meet remotely for now. Meetings are held four times a year. Members are welcome and encouraged to join the meetings. Contact us at HUDSONSIERRACLUB@gmail.com for details.

Upcoming Events: We are planning activities: nature walks, shoreline cleanups and public forums. We will also be doing political outreach. Check our online calendar, watch your email or find us on social media!

Current Campaigns: Please join in. We can use help with any of these:

Environmental Justice: Clean air for Hudson County! Low-income communities and black and brown communities suffer the most from environmental destruction: elevated levels of cancer, asthma and other respiratory disease from air pollution. Join us to oppose the widening of the NJ Turnpike Extension which will add more traffic and bad air to the community.

Liberty State Park: The Caven Point Protection Act would end efforts to privatize and convert parkland to golf course. The bill, introduced by State Sen. Brain Stack, is needed to help make Caven Point in Liberty State Park into a State Natural Area. We support rallies called by the Friends of Liberty State Park. As part of our environmental justice campaign, we support the work on the interior of the park which will create 180 acres of wildlife habitat and 50 acres of active recreation for the community.

Skyway Park on the Hackensack River and Essex-Hudson Greenway: The Hudson County Group of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club is working to support and expand green spaces in Hudson County. We want to connect existing parks and trails, as part of the Crossroads Campaign to connect greenways across Hudson County. Join up and learn how you can help.

Political Action: In preparation for upcoming elections in New Jersey, we plan to meet with sympathetic public officials. We support the Caven Point Protection Act, Protecting Against Climate Threats Act (PACT), the Essex Hudson Greenway and the Clean Energy Equity Act. We support the efforts of the Don't Gas the Meadowlands coalition in support of renewable energy for NJ Transit. Let us know if you would like to join our campaigns.

LOANTAKA GROUP

(Morris and Union counties (except for Elizabeth and Hillside), plus Livingston, Milburn and Roseland, approximately)

Contact: Allen Swanson, chair afswanson@newjersey.sierraclub.org
908-721-7014

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka

Facebook: www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC

It has been another active quarter. The highlight of Loantaka activity this quarter has been the return of Eric Hausker running our auction fundraiser. This is the 17th year Eric has run the auction. This year the Group received nearly \$400 from the auction. Below is a list of the establishments that contributed items for the auction. We urge you to thank them with your business.

Chatham	
North Jersey Dog Grooming School	Quartet Home Décor
Village Hardware & Paint	Arminio's Pizza
T. M. Ward Coffee Co.	Charley's Aunt Bar & Restaurant
Cranford	
Dreyer Farms	Perrotti's Quality Meats
Westfield	
Oak Leaf Garden Center and Florist	Hershey's Subs Deli & Catering
Williams Nursery	
Madison	
San Francisco Clothing	Sunday Motor Co. Cafe
The Chatham Bookseller	
Summit	
Towne Delicatessen	
New Providence	
Prestige Diner	Latin American Deli

The Loantaka Group participated with a booth at the Berkeley Heights Block Party in June. We had a booth at the Rahway Riverfest for a weekend. We have continued our presence at farmers markets in the area.

The Group has joined with the North Jersey Municipal Sustainability Coalition in pushing for local resolutions addressing climate change. We have also continued our support for the effort to preserve the Drew Forest. Allen has presented lectures on the plans for offshore wind energy in the Atlantic and efforts to get the "Green Amendment" to the NJ Constitution on the ballot for 2023.

We have plans to continue tabling, voter registration, presentations, advocacy and more. We can use your help in a number of areas. We have leadership positions in publicity, membership, political action, and more. We can always use help when in the towns at street fairs and farmers markets. Contact Allen to see how you can help us make changes locally and beyond to preserve a healthy environment.

We welcome your questions and input on local issues and actions. We are also available to provide presentations to groups and organizations about legislation, advocacy, climate change, and much more. Contact Allen.

CENTRAL JERSEY GROUP

(Mercer County and neighboring towns in adjoining counties)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey Or find us from the NJ Chapter's website.

OFFICERS

Group Chair	Joanne Pannone	Jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
Group Vice Chair	Xiaoping Du	Du@yahoo.com
Secretary	Leona Fluck	Leona@Pineypaddlers.com
Treasurer	Arlene Ceterskiva	Va2c2015@gmail.com
Outings	George and Leona Fluck	Leona@Pineypaddlers.com
Programs	Joanne Pannone	Jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
Conservation Chair	Kip Cherry	Kipatthesierraclub@gmail.com
Recycling and Zero Waste Coordinator	Sylvia Kay	Sylviakay222@gmail.com
Trails	Dave Mattek	MattekDC@aol.com
Webmaster	Benjamin Steinberg	
Group Executive Committee Members	Joanne Pannone, Kip Cherry, Sylvia Kay	

Central Group has been busy. We continue to work with communities to protect their water and air quality. We testified at board meetings for warehouse proposals for West Windsor, Robbinsville, and Hamilton. We also commented to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection about the Williams Transco Regional Energy Access Expansion Project, which would allow more fracked gas through New Jersey. We sent comments opposing this project because we only support solar and wind—not fossil fuel projects, which negatively impact our environment.

We also assisted in finalizing NJ legislation for electric school buses.

There was attendance in a Rutgers Cooperative Extension 10-week 2022 Coastal Stewardship course with the Barnegat Bay Shellfish Restoration Program. Valuable information was shared to help understand the impacts of the proposed wind turbines off our shore.

There is also a trip offered by the American Littoral Society on fish tagging for fluke planned for September 3 from the Atlantic Highlands.

We hiked Mercer County Park, Franklin Parker Preserve (Burlington), the Watershed Institute (and visited its Environmental Center in Hopewell Township), Double Trouble State Park. We also hiked with other Sierra groups at Manasquan Reservoir, Battlefield State Park (birding with Friends of Monmouth Battlefield), Duke Farms, and Smith Woods. It was great to see other Sierra members!

Central Group also hosted a cleanup at Mercer County Park, West Windsor.

RARITAN VALLEY GROUP

(Middlesex and Somerset counties and surrounding areas)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley

Facebook: www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC

Twitter: www.twitter.com/RaritanSierra

OFFICERS

Group Chair	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
Conservation Chair	Gary Frederick	609-203-3382
	garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org	
Membership Chair	John Miraglia	johnworks3@aol.com
Political Co-Chairs	Open Position!	
Publicity Chair	Open Position!	
Treasurer	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
Webmaster Co-Chairs	Paul Ehrlich	p.w.ehrlich-nj@outlook.com
	Open Position!	
Outings/Events Co-Chairs	John Miraglia, S. Pasricha, Bernadette Maher	
Student Liaisons	Varin Dharia, Jonah Segal	
Group Executive Committee Members	Gary Frederick, S. Pasricha, Teresa Callahan, Kevin Corcoran, and Paul Ehrlich	

Monthly membership meetings are typically held on the fourth Wednesday in New Brunswick. We discuss environmental issues (impacting Middlesex and Somerset), upcoming events, and volunteer efforts. See the webpage for our calendar of events.

The issues of interest to our communities include:

1. Opposition to new fossil fuel infrastructure that threaten the air, water, and our health;
2. Conservation, preservation and protection of the Raritan River Basin area, and;
3. Passage and enforcement of environmentally friendly ordinances.

NEWS FROM THE RARITAN VALLEY AREA

• **Regional Energy Access Expansion Project (REAE) by Williams Transco:** additional compressors doubling emissions are proposed for Old Bridge (CS 207) and Neshanic

Station in Branchburg (CS 505). The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has issued the final environmental impact statement for the REAE. FERC's analysis shows issues concerning surface waters, wetlands, vegetation, forests, environmental justice communities, air quality, climate change, and noise. However, FERC claims that the effects would be reduced to "less than significant levels," except for climate change impacts. Access the 1,000-page report: <https://bit.ly/3QLNZff>

• **Keasbey, Woodbridge Township:** A fracked gas power plant is proposed to be constructed by Competitive Power Ventures. New Jersey no longer requires that power suppliers prove that energy projects are needed.

• **Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) water contamination:** A class action suit is moving forward against Middlesex Water Company for PFOA contamination. Residents in South Plainfield, Clark, Edison, Metuchen, Woodbridge, and Carteret are receiving water from alternate sources until the South Plainfield facility can be brought up to code under the new NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) thresholds. "Forever chemicals" found in nonstick cookware and other products are linked to cancer, thyroid issues, infertility, and developmental disorders. www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/pfas

• **The Raritan River continues to flood** at increased levels due to the climate crisis and intensified fatal storms such as Tropical Storm Ida. The DEP's emergency flood hazard regulations that would stop dangerous developments near inland waterways must be signed into law immediately. The regulations would raise flood elevations by 2 feet and update projected precipitation, which has dramatically increased.

We encourage you to get involved by attending your town's planning and zoning board meetings. If you are aware of development proposals in your neighborhood that may have a negative environmental impact, please contact us and join our meetings.

JERSEY SHORE GROUP

(Monmouth County, approximately)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/

Instagram: www.instagram.com/sierraclub_jerseyshore/?hl=en

OFFICERS

Group Chair	Dennis Anderson	732-970-4327	dennisaza@aol.com
	6 Maple Ave, Matawan NJ 07747		
Vice Chair	Open Position!		
Secretary	Bob Grize		
Conservation Chair	Stan Greberis	908-415-9060	grapefruit@msm.com
Fundraising Chair	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	
Treasurer	Jim Baye		jimbaye@optonline.net
Political Co-Chairs	Robin and Harold Zullo		drzullo@optonline.net
Outings Chair	John Luard	732-708-9221	John.Luard@gmail.com
Outings Leaders	Open Positions!		
Membership Chair	Wael Kanj		
Program Chair	Mary Reilly	908-731-2466	Mary@reillygreen.com
Climate Chair	Steve Miller	732-671-5917	SteveMiller@Comcast.net
Fundraising			
Co-Chair	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com
Communications Chair	Wael Kanj		waelkanj@gmail.com
High School Coord.	Open Position!		
Letter-Writing Committee	Steve Miller and Stan Greberis		

MEMBER MEETINGS

We present Zoom webinars, usually on the fourth Monday of every month at 7 p.m.

Speakers Contact: Mary Reilly, 908-731-2466 or Mary@reillygreen.com

If you are not getting emails announcing our webinars, please send one to Wael at waelkanj@gmail.com, or sign up at our webpage.

OCEAN COUNTY GROUP

Webpage: [Meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Ocean-Group](https://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Ocean-Group)

OFFICERS

Acting Chair and Conservation Chair	Margit Meissner-Jackson	sylviaJ1910@yahoo.com
Vice-Chair and Treasurer	Laura Stone	LauraS36@yahoo.com
Outings and Environmental Education	Terrance Brown	terrybrown@comcast.net
Recording Secretary	Nancy Brown	nancybrown624@comcast.net
Political Chair	Margaret Mary Piccolo	gogreenp1@yahoo.com
Membership Chairs	Ray and Cathy Kozakerich	raykozak@comcast.net
Group ExCom Members	William Rodgers	
	Peter Leighton	JPLeighton1@verizon.net
	Joyce Isaza	realtymstr@aol.com

Hospitality, fundraising, publicity, and webmaster are all open positions!

ACTIVITIES AND ISSUES: Our group is focused on many critical issues. Locally and statewide we are fighting a myriad of overdevelopment problems. Along with our allies, we are working hard to save Barnegat Bay and The Pinelands, two natural gems in Ocean County.

WEST JERSEY GROUP

(Camden, Gloucester, and Burlington counties, approximately)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey

Facebook: www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC

Follow us on **Twitter** @WJsierraclub and **Instagram** @wjsierraclub

Log on and Like Us!

OFFICERS

Group Chair	Gina Carola	856-848-8831	ginaceee@verizon.net
Vice-Chair	Frank Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Secretary	Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Treasurer	Trish Clements		patri3210@gmail.com
Publicity Chair	Anne Caridi		annecaridi@yahoo.com
Political Chair	Linda Rubiano		Linda_Maritza@yahoo.com
Greenways Coords.	Frank and Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Conservation Chair	Stacey Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
Delegat at Large	Aida Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
Membership Chair	Mike Brown	856-547-9221	eyebrown@verizon.net
Media & Communications	Tony Hagen		editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Outings Chair	Samantha Vanaman		samvanwanders@gmail.com

Open Positions! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831

Pinelands rep, smart growth chair, programs chair, social media coordinators

GENERAL MEETINGS are held at 7:30 p.m. on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of ALTERNATE MONTHS, September thru May, via Zoom. You do not need Zoom software on your PC or Smartphone, just send an email to ginaceee@verizon.net to get an invitation and link to participate.

Nov. 9: To be announced. This will be a Zoom meeting. If you would like to participate and are not already on our email reminder list, please send an email to Anne Caridi at annecaridi@yahoo.com or Gina Carola at ginaceee@verizon.net

In the meantime, please wear your mask, continue to physically distance, and stay safe and well.

Contact Gina to get involved in any of our many initiatives on climate change.

SOUTH JERSEY GROUP

(Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem counties, approximately)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/south-jersey

OFFICERS

Group, Outings Chair	Tom Boghosian	609-335-6907	boghosian1@verizon.net
Vice-Chair	Open Position!		
Conservation Chair	Open Position!		
Political Chair, Calendars	Dick Colby	609-965-4453	dick.colby@stockton.edu
Membership Chair	Open Position!		
Secretary/Treasurer	Julie Akers	609-432-3280	julieakers56@gmail.com
At Large	Allie Horn		

Most of the officers listed above are wearing out (at least with respect to the Club) and would more than welcome new blood with ideas and energy for local projects and perhaps meetings. Our consuming conservation issue, adopted just after the group was founded in the mid-1970s, continues to be protection of the Great Egg Harbor Wild & Scenic River (GEHWA). We strongly recommend GEHWA's website for keeping up with local issues and for links to many other local, regional, state, and national environmental organizations: www.gehwa.org.

Dick Colby is also an Atlantic County Parks Commissioner; contact him if you might be interested in attending monthly meetings of the Commission, which are open to the public. Tom Boghosian is an avid kayaker (certified as a Maine Guide!), both ocean-going and in fresh waters, and is possibly willing to lead trips. Julie Akers also works with Atlantic County Friends of the Parks and is president of GEHWA. Allie Horn also serves as the chapter's legislative analyst and social media coordinator.

Current Issues: (1) Ocean City (Cape May Co.) has been fighting both the siting of adjacent offshore wind turbines and the burying of power cables to bring the electricity onshore. An attempt to rally support (for wind energy) from the 65 Club members and supporters living in Ocean City has been unsuccessful! (2) We've been blue-blazing the southern portion of what will be a continuous footpath between the southern and northern tips of New Jersey, called the New Jersey Long Trail. Many others (and other groups) are contributing. Detailed maps and descriptions are now on the chapter website. Dick has also produced a brochure describing 15 historic walks in Egg Harbor City. Copies (electronic or paper) are available on request. Every municipality ought to have its own such brochure: This is a hint for you to try your hand at it! (3) We continue to hope for Community Solar opportunities for each municipality in South Jersey, operated by the Atlantic County Utilities Authority or other public agencies, promoted by the Board of Public Utilities, and with cooperative acceptance by the Atlantic City Electric Co. Many other South Jersey issues are described in previous issues of this newsletter, available on the Chapter website.

SINGLES SECTION

(A chapter-wide special interest section offering hikes/cleanups, social gatherings, meetings, etc.)

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles

OFFICERS

Interim Co-Chairs	Ron Pate	ronpate31@verizon.net
	Jimi Oleksiak	The_Hikist@Mac.com
Executive Committee Members	Rozanna Fanelli, Ron Pate, and Jeff Sovelove	

The Singles Section has a need for volunteers. Contact the officers if you would like to volunteer for any of the following: outings chair, conservation chair, treasurer, social chair, vice social chair, programs, publicity, membership, nominations.

We're a friendly, active group of individuals who enjoy hiking, biking, canoeing/kayaking, as well as a variety of social and cultural activities throughout the year. This section was created to offer a variety of singles-oriented activities to NJ Sierra Club members. See the Outings section in this issue for a list of upcoming hikes.

COMMUNICATIONS: The best way to be notified of upcoming singles events is to join our free listserv. Anyone may subscribe by going to: <https://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/NJ-SINGLES-NEWS.html> and clicking on "Join or leave the list." You may subscribe and unsubscribe at will; our events a few weeks before each event. Events are also listed on the online calendar on the Chapter's web site: sierraclub.org/new-jersey. You can also "like" us on Facebook: "Singles Group New Jersey Sierra Club." Activities will also be posted on Meetup.

SOCIAL GATHERINGS:

Social dinners: Join us for dinner the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., at a variety of restaurants in different locations. Jimi Oleksiak, the leader, will announce the details one week in advance through a listserv message. An RSVP will be required as described in the announcement.

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER (LGBTQ+) SECTION

Our mission is to support Sierra Club goals and to promote environmental activism and social equity. We are an inclusive group and all are welcome to join our events.

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/

Meetup: www.meetup.com/njsierraclub

Facebook: www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt

OFFICERS

Chair	William Parish *	whparishiv@gmail.com
Secretary	John Kashwick *	John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Treasurer	Jonathan Wall *	docjdwall@gmail.com
Outings Chair	Robert Zitzman *	robertmzi@yahoo.com
Fundraising	Matthew Lang *	matthewjlang58@gmail.com
Webmaster/Listmaster	John Kashwick *	John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

(* Section Executive Committee Member)

Please check website for further meetings and events.

SENIOR SECTION / FIFTY-PLUS SECTION

The Senior Section is a chapter-wide special interest section for members over fifty years of age. The mission of this section is to support the Sierra Club's goals through letter writing, phone calls, and other activities. We work through a listserve, by which members learn about current environmental issues, how these issues can be supported, and places and events of interest to visit in New Jersey and surrounding states. In the future we hope to appoint members who will be responsible for leading and carrying out efforts related to those issues.

Arline Zatz is the editor and chair of the Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section. She can be reached at azatz@funtravels.com and invites members to check her web site at www.funtravels.com for trips, tips, a source of travel information for New Jersey and other states.

Paul Ehrlich is the vice-chair (phehrlich-NJ@outlook.com). He vice-edits the Essays Section of the Senior Section website. These essays are written by members of the NJ Sierra Club, and focus on environmental issues, including reports of environment-related news that may not be easily accessed by many members, opinions on how to deal with environmental problems, and support/criticism of environmental actions taken by organizations and individuals. Do you have anything you've been thinking about that you'd like to tell a large audience? Send an essay to Arline and Paul for editing and approval and it will be posted on our website.

The Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section is also accessible online at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/senior-section>. Visit our webpage regularly to find out about activities and events, including hikes, clean-ups, social gatherings, dinner get-togethers, and other functions for members over 50.

ICO: INSPIRING CONNECTIONS OUTDOORS

(A special interest activity with the motto: "No child left inside!")

Co-Chairs Zachary Rose & Oscar Nazar chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com
Other Officers Amanda Gaglio, Mike Depardieu

New Jersey Inspiring Connections Outdoors: (NJ ICO) provides safe and fun wilderness trips for children and teenagers with limited access to the outdoors. Volunteer leaders collaborate with community partners to facilitate, lead and promote events that will educate and foster a love of nature and the outdoors for youth in New Jersey who may not otherwise have the opportunity or the means. The program works to reduce barriers by providing gear, transportation, trip fees and leaders to create opportunities to explore, enjoy and advocate for nature. The chair welcomes inquiries from leaders of schools and other community organizations.



A scene from the Cape May Wildlife Refuge. Photo credit Taylor McFarland.

We welcome your story about electrifying your home with a heat pump. We will discuss at our Building Electrification monthly webinars. Reply to stevemiller@comcast.net.



Manasquan Reservoir

By John Miraglia

The diminutive state of New Jersey boasts many miles of hiking trails managed by town, city, county and state authorities and in Wildlife Management Areas, from Cape May through Sussex counties. Each trail is a treasure.

Mid-state, one of these gems is the Manasquan Reservoir trail in Monmouth County. In July, 14 Sierra Club members and supporters enjoyed hiking a portion of the trail that belts the circumference of the waterbody. We hiked from the visitor center to the environmental center and back, a 4-plus mile trip. I'd classify that hike, along a broad, shaded lane, as easy. It's perfect for a young family, seniors, dog walkers, and bicyclists. The trail offers a variety of views of the water which seasonally is home to trumpeter swans, several other species of waterfowl, turtles, amphibians, and raptors including a pair of nesting bald eagles.

We scheduled our hike for mid-week because the Manasquan Reservoir is very popular and can get crowded on weekends.

I've hiked, biked, and fished at Manasquan Reservoir for decades. There are two constants. First, the people you meet there are invariably friendly. The park is a place where you leave your stress in your car and just enjoy nature and the company of folks with common interests. Second, the lake is bipolar. Sometimes it's calm enough to appear frozen in midsummer. But, given a stiff wind, the lake boils with white-capped waves that toss boaters around. If you are visiting the park to enjoy a day on the water, check wind conditions in advance.

The sandy soil and pine forest show Manasquan Reservoir is near the northern end of the Pine Barrens. It is easily accessible from Interstate 195,



Route 34, or Route 9. There is plenty of parking both at the visitor center (off Windeler Road) and the environmental center (off Georgia Tavern Road).

When I choose a place to visit, I like to have a variety of activities available. At the visitor center you can rent kayaks, rowboats, or boats with electric motors (NJ Boater Safety Certificate required). A boat launch also is available. Guided boat tours of the lake are given on afternoons in the summer through at least Labor Day.

HINT: To avoid disappointment, get your tickets at the visitor center early in the morning for an afternoon tour. There is also a playground for youngsters.

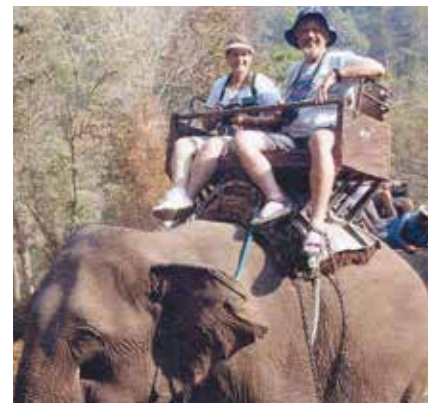
Manasquan Reservoir is a trophy bass lake. Large-mouth bass, perch, crappie, monster hybrid striped bass, and tiger muskies are abundant. The visitor center has both indoor and outdoor facilities for enjoying a picnic lunch with spectacular views. After our hike, our group enjoyed a relaxing lakeside lunch, sharing experiences and enjoying the view.

The environmental center has several well-laid-out, interactive, aquarium and nature diorama exhibits plus a live video camera's eye view of the eagle's nest. Many of the displays are geared for kids, though I always enjoy them even if I don't always choose the right answer. By appointment, groups can reserve a guided tour of the lake that departs from the environmental center. This should be arranged well in advance of your group's visit.

If you go:
 Website: monmouthcountyparks.com/page.aspx?ID=2531
 Visitor center: 732-919-0996
 Environmental center: 732-751-9453
 Ranger station: 732-938-6760

In Memoriam

Longtime Sierra Club member Bob "Cool Beans" Sandberg, 77, passed away on July 17, 2022. He was an environmental champion and sailor and for many years a valuable member of the Sierra Club Executive Committee, a trustee of the Whale Pond Brook Watershed Association, and member of the Tinton Falls Environmental Commission. Bob was a 1967 graduate of Houghton College, NY, a US Army veteran, and member of the US Coast Guard Reserve. In his civilian life, Bob was an auditor with Lambrides and Samson and the NJ Department of Human Services. Memories and condolences may be shared at www.johndayfuneralhome.com



Bob and his partner Joanne Pannone in Thailand



Learn more about your environment... take a Sierra Club educational hike!

GROUP OUTINGS COORDINATORS

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to the public. All participants must sign liability waivers on all outings sponsored by the Sierra Club. Please check with the leader before bringing small children on an outing. A parent or other responsible adult must accompany persons under 18. At their discretion, leaders may permit pets on outings if the event description specifically includes bringing pets.

Sierra Club outings are arranged by volunteer leaders who are in charge of the trip and responsible for the safety, welfare, and enjoyment of all participants. Leaders determine qualifications to participate, adequacy of equipment, routes to be followed, and special precautions to be taken. Please arrive adequately prepared and equipped. If you have any allergies, please remember to bring your medication. The leader has the final word in the conduct of the trip. Your cooperation will help ensure a safe and pleasant outing.

Please arrive early at the meeting place so that the outing can start on time. For day hikes, lunch, water (at least a liter), extra clothing, rain gear, and emergency equipment should be carried in a small daypack. For all except easy hikes, sturdy over-the-ankle shoes or boots should be worn. For most trips, you are expected to have your own equipment. In some cases, it may be rented from outdoor/camping suppliers—check the yellow pages or call the trip leader. If the weather is questionable on the date of the outing, you may assume that it will take place, unless the schedule indicates otherwise.

Registration is required for all outings, and all outings are generally limited to 10 to 12 people unless otherwise indicated. Face masks are not required for adults, but are suggested. Face masks are required for all children. Please keep appropriate space (6 ft) between you and other participants on all outings. If you are sick and experiencing any possible Covid-19 or cold/flu symptoms, do not attend the outing.

If you are a Sierra Club member interested in becoming an outing leader or have suggestions for new outings, contact your group outings chair or the chapter outings chair for assistance and further information. The Sierra group contributing each outing is given at the end of the writeup, as follows:

Atlantic Chapter, ACOC; Central Jersey, C; Gateway, G; Jersey Shore, JS; Loantaka, L; NJ Chapter, NJ; North Jersey, N; Raritan Valley, RV; River Touring, RT; Singles Section, SS; Skylands, Sk; South Jersey, S; West Jersey, W.

OCTOBER

Oct 3 (Mon): Richard J. Coffee Mercer County Park Hike (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. We will hike along Mercer Lake and walk the woods trails. Bring beverage, lunch, and snacks. Leashed dogs are welcome. Meet at the parking lot next to Grandparents Grove. There are facilities. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: Joanne Pannone at jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (C)

Oct 8 (Sat): Watchung Reservation Hike (Union Co.) 10 a.m., 6.5 miles, moderate pace. Watchung Reservation consists of 2,000 acres of woods. Bring plenty of water and a snack. Hiking boots recommended. Meet at the Trailside Nature and Science Center, located at 452 New Providence Road, Mountainside. Rain cancels. Contact leader to register for hike: Kevin O'Brien, 908-403-0900, kbkob@aol.com (L)

Oct 8 (Sat): Pinelands Month – Wells Mills Hike and 28th Annual Pine Barrens Jamboree (Ocean Co.) 10 a.m., 3.5 miles, easy pace. We'll walk the green Estlow Trail in the morning. After the walk we'll have lunch and enjoy the Jamboree! This day-long festival celebrates the history and culture of the Pinelands with music, handmade crafts, "piney vittles," and local produce. Bring, snacks, water, lunch, and a lawn chair. Leashed dogs are welcome. Hiking poles are recommended. Meet at the Wells Mills parking lot, 905 Wells Mills Road (Route 532), Waretown. There are facilities. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. George and Leona F., leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Oct 8 (Sat): Hike Pickell Park to Round Valley, White House Station (Hunterdon Co.) 10 a.m., 6 miles, 1,100 ft. vertical ascent. The approach is along several old farm fields, follows the Cushtunk Trail, and ascends the Round Valley Volcano rim. We will picnic at the shore of the reservoir. There will also be an easier version of the hike with a second leader. Facilities: indoor rest room near parking, outhouses during the hike. No pets; hiking boots and day pack with water required. Bring lunch. Register at www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar Directions will be sent via email to those who register. Leader: Jimi Oleksiak, the_hikist@mac.com (SS)

Oct 9 (Sun): AC Boardwalk (Atlantic Co.) 9:30 a.m. Let's walk from Gardener's Basin to Ventnor and back again for around 11 miles. The Atlantic City Boardwalk is the oldest in the United States and the longest in the world! We'll take it at an easy pace, stopping for bathroom breaks as needed. Bring water and sun protection. Sam will provide the meeting place to registrants 1-2 days prior. Email samvanwanders@gmail.com to register, as group size is limited. (W)

Oct 10 (Mon): Indigenous People's Day Hike at the Thompson Park Conservation Area (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. On the hike a favorite stop is the "natural spring." The park is dominated by heavily wooded forests and lowland swamps along the Manalapan Brook. Meet at the Thompson Park Trailhead near the off-leash dog area on Fir Drive, Monroe Twp. GPS coordinates: N 40° 20' 3.753", W 74° 26' 8.556". Bring water, snacks, and lunch. There are facilities. Hiking poles recommended. Leashed dogs are welcome. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at johnworks3@aol.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (RV)

Oct 20 (Thurs): Pinelands Month – Guided Hike at Double Trouble State Park/Village (Ocean Co.) 10 a.m., 3- miles, easy pace. Originally a cranberry farm and packing plant, the former company town called Double Trouble is a window into past and current industries in the Pinelands. Andrew Anderson, a historic resource interpretive specialist, will be our guide. Meet at Double Trouble State Park parking lot, 581 Pinewald-Keswick Rd., Bayville. There are facilities. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bring snacks, lunch, and beverage. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Leona and George F., leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Oct 22 (Sat): Mahlon Dickerson Reservation Hike (Morris Co.) 10 a.m., 4.7 miles, moderate pace. The route includes swampland, forests, and abandoned iron mines. Bring plenty of water

and a snack. Hiking boots recommended. I-80 West, Exit 34B to NJ 15 North. Go about 5 miles to Weldon Road. Turn right. Go about 4 miles on Weldon Road to lot on left (past trailer and camping areas) to picnic area. Jefferson Township. Rain cancels. Contact leader to register for hike: Kevin O'Brien, 908-403-0900, kbkob@aol.com (L)

Oct 23 (Sun): Hike Huber Woods Park, Middletown (Monmouth Co.) 2 p.m. We will walk the hickory and oak forest with occasional distant views of the Navesink River, listen and look for pileated woodpeckers. About 4 miles in about 2 hours, some ups and downs. Beginners welcome, supportive footwear recommended, bring plenty of water. Leader: John Luard. Register online at: <https://bit.ly/3SB65Cx> Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Oct 23 (Sun): Autumn at Grounds For Sculpture (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m. Grounds For Sculpture (GFS) was founded by artist and philanthropist Seward Johnson. It opened in 1992 on the former NJ State Fairgrounds and was a natural extension of its predecessor. The Van Gogh Café and the Peacock Café are available for lunch. No outside food permitted. Water is allowed. Follow Covid-19 GFS guidelines, masking indoors and maintaining a safe 6 ft. distance, even outdoors. www.grounds-forsculpture.org/about/ Advance timed ticket reservations are **required** to ensure entry. Open rain or shine. All sales are final. Tickets are available up to two weeks in advance. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. We will meet at the Welcome Center in the Van Gogh Café. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at johnworks3@aol.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (C/RV)

Oct 30 (Sun): Halloween Hike at Estell Manor (Atlantic Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. Meet at the Warren E. Fox Nature Center, on 109 Boulevard, Route 50, Mays Landing, and see the displays before we hike. There are facilities. Bring lunch, water, snacks for our lunch break during the hike. Leashed dogs are welcome. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian at tfboghosian44@gmail.com and Leona and George F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (S)

NOVEMBER

Nov 5 (Sat): Pyramid Mountain (Morris Co.) 10 a.m., 3 miles, easy pace. The trails are challenging in places. Bring plenty of water and a snack. Hiking boots recommended. Meet in the parking area for the Pyramid Mountain Natural Historic Area. I-287 North to Exit 45 (Wootton St., Boonton). Make first left and go under I-287. Follow Wootton St. straight up hill to blinker light. Turn right onto CR 511/Boonton Ave., and go 2.7 miles to Visitors Center parking lot on left. Montville Township-Kinnelon Borough. Rain cancels. Contact leader to register for hike: Kevin O'Brien, 908-403-0900, kbkob@aol.com (L)

Nov 6 (Sun): "Fall Back" Hike – Wharton State Forest, Batsto Mansion, and Village Tour (Atlantic Co.) 10 a.m., 3 miles, easy pace. We'll begin our walk on the Sand and Water Trail that winds along a sandy forest road and into a dense Atlantic white cedar swamp. Following a series of wooden foot bridges, the trail connects to the new 1808 trail and the Batona trail. We'll walk on back to the Visitors Center. Good footwear and hiking poles are recommended. Leashed dogs are welcome. After the hike there are hourly tours of the Batsto Mansion, <https://batstovillage.org/mansion/> Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Rain cancels. Meet at the Batsto Village Visitors Center parking lot, 31 Batsto Rd, Hammonton. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders Tom Boghosian, tfboghosian44@gmail.com, and Leona and George F., leona@pineypaddlers.com (S)

Nov 11 (Fri): Veterans Day Hike at Hamilton Township Veterans Park (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 3-miles, easy pace. This magnificent 330-acre park was built in honor of Hamilton veterans in 1977. There is a USAF F4 Phantom II fighter jet at the northern entrance to the park. This fighter is just one of several pieces of military equipment located at the park to pay homage to the branches of the United States military. Ribbons of walking paths are sprinkled through wooded areas with picnic grounds and rest stops. We'll visit Gnome Town, a new community moved into some tree hollows at the park, thanks to a local resident. Meet at the tennis court parking lot, 2264 Kuser Rd, Hamilton Township. Bring snacks, water, and lunch. Tables and rest rooms are available. Leashed dogs are welcome. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com and Joanne Pannone at jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com (C)

Nov 12 (Sat): Hike Hartshorne Woods Park, Atlantic Highlands (Monmouth Co.) 10 a.m., 7.5 miles., hilly terrain, mostly smooth earthen pathways. Views of the ocean. Historical large gun emplacements. No pets; hiking boots and day pack with water required. Bring lunch. Facilities: Portable toilet near parking lot. Register at www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar Directions will be sent via email to those who register. Leader: Jimi Oleksiak, the_hikist@mac.com (SS)

Nov 13 (Sun): Franklin Parker Preserve, Red Trail (Burlington Co.) 9 a.m. Let's meet at the Chatsworth Entrance for 6.6 miles at a moderate pace. Franklin Parker Preserve is accessible by a network of sandy roads that wind through pitch pine forest and blueberry fields, and run along the preserve's cedar swamp, shallow lakes, and pristine tributaries of the West Branch of the Wading River. So, bring your binoculars, water, and sun protection. Email Sam at samvanwanders@gmail.com to register, as group size is limited. (W)

Nov 16 (Wed): Fall Foliage Hike at Monmouth Battlefield State Park (Monmouth Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. It's National Take a Hike Day! So, let's "hit the trails"! The Monmouth Battlefield State Park is located within the Lower Raritan Watershed. Meet at the Visitors Center, 16 Business Route 33, Manalapan. Bring lunch, snacks, and water. Hiking poles are recommended. Leashed dogs are welcome! Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at johnworks3@aol.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (RV)

Nov 20 (Sun): Hike Shark River Park, Wall (Monmouth Co.) 1:30 p.m. We will enjoy the babbling brook that's Shark River in this area and then walk through the outer reaches of the park. About 5 miles (a little over 2 hours), some short climbs, mostly flat. Beginners welcome, supportive footwear recommended, bring plenty of water. Leader: John Luard. Register online at: <https://bit.ly/3SB65Cx> Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Nov 27 (Sun): Hike at Duke Island Park (Somerset Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. Let's burn some of those Thanksgiving calories! Duke Island Park includes trails, which are part of the **Raritan River Greenway**. We'll meet at the Visitors Center main parking area, 191 Old York Rd, Bridgewater Township. Facilities: portable toilets at the parking lot. Inclement weather cancels. Bring snacks, water, and lunch. Leashed dogs are welcome. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: Sindhu P. at spjersey@gmail.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (RV)

DECEMBER

Dec 4 (Sun): National Cookie Day Hike at Smith's Woods (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace at Historic Smith's Woods and Smithville Park in Vincentown, NJ. The park features a diverse collection of habitats and terrain and Rancocas Creek vistas. Meet at the Smith's Woods access parking lot, East Railroad Ave. Bring water and leaders will bring cookies. There are facilities. Option for late lunch at Vincentown Diner after the hike. Leashed dogs are welcome. Hiking poles recommended. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Leona and George F., leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Dec 7 (Wed): Hike at Jakes Branch County Park (Ocean Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. Jakes Branch has a nature center with hands-on exhibits and an observation deck that offers a 360' view of the Pinelands. Leashed dogs are welcome. Meet at Jakes Branch Park Nature Center, 1100 Double Trouble RD, Beechwood. Bring water and snacks. Hiking poles recommended. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. George and Leona F., leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

>continued on page 12

Dec 10 (Sat): Hike Silas Condict Park, Kinnelon (Morris Co.) 10 a.m., 5.5 miles. We will start with the Red Trail, 1.5 miles, easy, with an opportunity to leave, then we will hike the White Trail, 3.5 miles, which is more rugged. Facilities: portable toilet near parking lot. No pets; hiking boots and day pack with water required. Bring lunch. Register at www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar Directions will be sent via email to those who register. Leader: Jimi Oleksiak, the_hikist@mac.com (SS)

Dec 10 (Sat): Whitesbog Historic Village (Burlington Co.) 9:30 a.m. Let's meet in the parking lot at 120 W Whites Bogs Rd # 34 in Browns Mills for 5-7-plus miles at a moderate pace. Whitesbog is mostly sandy trails winding along cranberry bogs in the heart of the Jersey Pine Barrens. We're hoping to see the tundra swans as they migrate from Canada and Alaska, so bring your binoculars, water, snacks, and sun protection. Whitesbog is also celebrating the holidays, and visitors are welcome to explore the historic buildings! Exhibitors will offer handmade arts and crafts throughout the village, and there will be a special visit from you-know-who. Leashed dogs are welcome. Email Sam at samvanwanders@gmail.com to register for 7-plus miles and Leona at leona@pineypaddlers.com for 5 miles, as group size is limited. (W)

Dec 14 (Wed): Plainsboro Preserve Hike (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. The Plainsboro Preserve includes over 1,000 acres of undisturbed open space with nature trails and a 50-acre lake. Dogs are not permitted. Bring water and snacks. Meet at the Environmental Education Center, Scotts Corner Rd., Plainsboro. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at johnworks3@aol.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (RV)

Dec 18 (Sun): Hike Cheesequake Park, Old Bridge (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m. We'll use a couple of trails to create nearly 5 miles of walking in uplands near salt marshes. There are some ups and downs, bring plenty of water, supportive footwear recommended, 2 mph pace. Leader: John Luard. Register online at: bit.ly/3SB65Cx Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Dec 21 (Wed): First Day of Winter Hike on the D&R Canal (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. We will hike over the Lock 1 "swinging bridge" as we walk along the towpath and perhaps see the resident bald eagles. Meet at the River line parking lot in Bordentown City. Bring water

and snacks. There are no facilities. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com and Joanne Pannone at jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com (C)

Dec 26 - Dec 31: Patriots Week in Trenton - History of the American Revolution in New Jersey (Mercer Co.) Learn about the American Revolution during Patriots Week. Every day of the week offers fun and history for the entire family. See reenactments of the first and second battles of Trenton and participate in walking tours of the Trenton battlefields. Check website for events www.patriotsweek.com Contact us to meet for various events. Joanne P. at jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (C)

JANUARY

Jan 1 (Sat): First Day Hikes in New Jersey's State Parks and Forests (New Jersey) Celebrate the New Year with one of the "First Day Hikes" that the Park Service holds across the state. These free, guided hikes in state parks, forests, and historic sites are part of America's state parks First Day Hikes program. There are many to choose from, so contact leaders for information after the hikes are posted by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection and we select a Pinelands hike to ring in the New Year. Co-leaders Tom Boghosian at fboghosian44@gmail.com and Leona and George F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (S)

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

All members are welcome to attend these monthly policy deliberations, held by Zoom video conferencing on second Saturdays. Zoom can be accessed from a computer, smartphone, or telephone. The Conservation Committee meets from 10 a.m. to noon and the Executive Committee meets from 1 to 3 p.m. For meeting link, contact secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org.

Upcoming Meetings: Sept. 10, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Dec. 10



SIERRA CLUB

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

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If no one is in the office to take your call, please leave a message on the answering machine. Please spell your last name, and state whether the phone number you leave is for daytime or evening.

Please share this newsletter with a nonmember friend and invite them to join (see membership coupon this page).



THE JERSEY Sierran

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The Jersey Sierran appears in January, April, July and October. The deadline for copy for the 2022 October to December issue is August 3. Members are welcome to propose articles, essays, letters, poetry, and art for publication. Group/section news columns are prepared by group/section chairs; Outings are vetted by Chapter Outings Chair Leona Fluck.

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

The Advantages of Agrivoltaics and Solar Grazing

By Jordan Thompson • jmt185@pitt.edu



The Biden administration and various states have set a goal of net-zero emissions by 2050. However, to do this the United States will have to drastically increase renewable energy output from its 2021 level of [12% of total US energy consumption](#).

Solar energy will play a key role in increasing renewable energy consumption, as according to the Department of Energy's Solar Futures Study, "it is possible to envision—and chart a path toward—a future where solar provides 40% of the nation's electricity by 2035." A lot of land will be required for such an endeavor though, with the Solar Futures Study estimating that 0.5% of land in the contiguous United States will have to be used for solar to reach 2050 emissions reduction goals. For context, the Solar Futures Study estimates agriculture represents 43% of the contiguous United States' surface area.

The idea of covering more land with solar panels unnerves many Americans, especially those with farms. Recently, the residents of Pilesgrove Township, a Salem County farming community, voiced their displeasure to the township's planning board about Dakota Power Partners (DPP) building an 800-acre, 150 MW solar farm in

their town. Despite protests from residents, who were unhappy with solar panels being placed on fertile farming land, the project was approved by the town's planning board, with construction ending and operations expected to start during 2023.

However, solar arrays and agriculture can coexist in a symbiotic relationship known as agrivoltaics. With agrivoltaics, solar panels are placed above crops or pasture, and the results are proving to be beneficial. Although plants rely on sunlight, they all have a saturation point, and once that is reached, any light beyond that point doesn't increase photosynthesis and only increases the plant's need for water. Therefore, plants grown under a solar panel's shade are protected from the sun's ultraviolet rays, which helps reduce air temperature and water evaporation. A study from the US Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has shown that water-use efficiency for the jalapeno and cherry tomato were 157% and 65% greater, respectively, in an agrivoltaic system.

Agrivoltaics also increases the solar panel's energy capacity. Since plants retain more water in the agrivoltaic system, they give off water vapor that helps cool the photovoltaic panels from below, increasing panel efficiency by as much as 10%, according to a study from Oregon State University. The NREL study mentioned above also

found that agrivoltaic panels were approximately 9% cooler during daytime hours than rooftop panel arrays, allowing for better performance.

The benefits of agrivoltaics also include the diversification of farm income, something that NJ farmers are beginning to discover. Small farms can earn thousands of dollars per acre every year by leasing land to solar companies. And farms with livestock can go the route of "solar grazing," the practice of installing solar panels over grazing land for animals.

One New Jerseyan utilizing solar grazing is Julie Bishop. In recent years she struck a deal with a solar company to graze her sheep on their 15 acres of land. The deal allows the solar company to generate renewable energy while Bishop gets paid to have her sheep essentially cut the company's grass. Bishop has since renamed her farming operation "Solar Sheep" and now has flocks of sheep at multiple solar sites around New Jersey. "It all started because I had a herding dog and I wanted sheep. And then I ended up with more sheep than I could handle, so I was looking for pasture area," Bishop,



Source: Merrill Smith, US Dept. of Energy

explained in an interview with Farm Credit, which financed her barn expansion.

Bishop has also contracted to have her sheep graze at the DPP solar farm, Nichomus Run, in Pilesgrove, and this will be the first designed specifically for her sheep to graze. There is the potential for problems if sheep are turned loose in an electrical installation that is not designed to accommodate them. DPP is even including a barn for Bishop to use.

The success and benefits of agrivoltaics have not gone unnoticed by the New Jersey officials, who have set an ambitious goal of 100% renewable energy by 2050. In June 2021, the New Jersey Legislature passed the Dual-use Solar Act, establishing the Dual-Use Solar Energy Pilot Program for farm-

>continued on page 14

BUILDING ELECTRIFICATION ISSUES REPORT

Just What Does "Building Electrification" Mean?

By George Moffatt and Steve Miller • NJ 50x30 Building Electrification Team

"Building electrification" encompasses a wide range of electrical solutions to many of our fossil fuel problems, with the hopes of putting a big dent in climate change and reducing early deaths from respiratory illnesses, especially in urban areas.

New buildings and retrofits of all old buildings must be highly energy efficient and use clean electrical power instead of fossil fuel-based energy. These changes include building heating and air conditioning, water heaters, laundry dryers, lighting, toothbrushes, and, of course, electric-vehicle (EV) charging. In our kitchens, we can replace our gas stoves, a source of methane, with electrical stovetop induction heating, which is cleaner and more efficient.

"Building electrification" involves two big changes. The first is powering our residential and commercial buildings with fossil fuel-free rooftop or commercial solar electricity, and eventually, current from windfarms. Say goodbye to the need for oil, gas, or coal to brew coffee, power lawn mowers, heat and cool buildings, or even drive to work. The second change is switching to energy-efficient technology, such as electric-powered air-to-air heat pumps that don't generate heat but use a refrigerant to move heat out of buildings in summer and into them in winter.

Upgrading our homes to all-electric power is more important than we think, since homes account for 20% of greenhouse gas generation.

The goal is end-to-end, or

source-to-consumer, all-electric power, for everything, everywhere. This source-to-consumer concept includes residential and commercial solar power, onshore and offshore wind-powered turbines, hydroelectric turbines, ocean wave energy (someday), and building and grid-based backup battery storage.

While some clean electricity-producing technologies are still in development, existing technologies are ramping up in both power and scope each day. Imagine life at the turn of the 20th century, when horseless carriages (automobiles) were invented as well as, ironically, battery-powered vehicles. Today, we're ready for our next leap: end-to-end, high-performing, highly efficient, totally fossil fuel-free electrical energy.

We're seeing positive developments already. Many automakers are planning to electrify large portions or all of their fleets by 2030—some could even reach 100% EV production within 5 years, according to [Consumer Reports](#). In addition, battery-powered "semis," or tractor-trailers, are starting to roll, while "last mile" or "box" battery-powered delivery trucks and electric school and commercial buses have been here for longer.

Major improvements in solar panel technology have made solar farms more cost effective than fossil fuel-generated energy. While early solar panels produced about 200 watts per hour, today's panels produce up to 700 watts, a 250% increase. Also, research is underway to replace today's

silicon-based panels with lower-cost perovskite-based photovoltaics that match or exceed silicon's output. And, of course, there is continuing research on increasing energy storage capacity (super-batteries) for when the sun isn't shining.

The Sierra Club's NJ Chapter building electrification effort is pushing electrification of buildings and technology and encourages everyone to quickly shift away from fossil fuels. Scientists and environmentalists have been warning about the dangers of fossil fuel use for decades.

As climate change causes major disasters across the globe, some climate researchers, frustrated by unresponsive politicians, special interests, and citizens who steadfastly ignore the scientific evidence, are asking each other quietly—and sadly—"Why do we even bother?"

Why bother? We have no choice! Thankfully, New Jersey is beginning to change direction, as evidenced by these and other developments:

- Gov. Phil Murphy signed an executive order last November targeting an interim greenhouse gas reduction target of 50% below 2006 levels by 2030 ("50 x 30"), and an 80% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 ("80 x 50").

- An environmental coalition, including the Sierra Club's NJ Chapter, filed a petition in Appellate Court to force the state Department of Environmental Protection to immediately deny permits for any new fossil fuel projects that don't meet existing state require-

ments.

- Since November of 2021, Murphy has announced over \$20 million in funds for in electric buses and trucks in environmental justice communities; and the state's Zero Emission Incentive Program (NJZIP) now has over \$89 million in funds earmarked for the purchase of zero-emission vehicles for use in Camden, Newark, New Brunswick, and greater Shore areas.

Commercial EV charging stations are popping up everywhere—an important step since the transportation industry creates 42% of New Jersey's greenhouse gas emissions.

In May 2022, our Chapter's NJ 50x30 Building Electrification Team sent Murphy two letters that included a position paper recommending an initial goal of 100,000 new and retrofitted residential building units electrified by 2025 and 800,000 by 2030. The team also recently drafted two building electrification bills, for review by select NJ legislators for comments and sponsorship, to help rid NJ of polluting fossil fuels.

Those of a certain age may remember the old 1950s slogan, "Live Better Electrically." Today, we must insist that our legislators and regulators develop effective, in-the-trenches legislation to tighten the noose on climate change.

Then we can "Live Better (and Longer) Electrically."

Resources

<https://climate.smiller.org/REF>

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

Search for Executive Director Continues

Loren Blackford, a former Sierra Club president and longtime volunteer leader, has accepted the role of acting executive director until a permanent executive director is hired. Previously, Dan Chu, executive director of the Sierra Club Foundation, served as acting director of the Club while the search for a permanent hire continued. Dan will resume full-time work as executive director of the foundation.

As Club executive director, Dan helped steward the stakeholder processes that led to the board's approval of the [2030 Strategic Framework](#) and [Organizational Values](#). Ramón Cruz,

Sierra Club president, credited Dan with creating a majority Black, indigenous, and people-of-color leadership team, improving collaboration between staff and volunteers, and increasing donor and funder support for the Sierra Club's work.

"Loren has been deeply involved in advancing our shared vision, values, structures, and strategies to maximize the Sierra Club's incredible grassroots power. She looks forward to helping leverage this organizational work to deliver results in the coming months and to provide a strong foundation for the new executive director," Ramón said.

AGRIVOLTAICS *continued from page 13*

land. The pilot program will allow a small number of farmers to install agrivoltaic systems while the technology is being researched and developed. This year's state budget even allocated \$2 million to the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station for installing photovoltaic panels on its research farms.

The federal government has followed suit, and on May 5, 2022, the US Department of Energy Solar Technologies Office announced the Foundational Agrivoltaic Research for Megawatt Scale funding opportunity. This will award \$8 million in funding for projects that examine how agrivoltaics can provide new economic opportunities and possibilities to farmers, rural communities, and the solar industry.

Agrivoltaics, including solar graz-

ing, have shown to increase land-use efficiency while also benefitting energy and food production. Renewable energy has often been seen at odds with agriculture but recent research projects and experiments demonstrate that combining the two industries is worthwhile for both. Farms have been able to diversify their income, strengthen their yields, and reduce their carbon footprint by transitioning to renewable energy.

Resources

Agrivoltaics Primer: [HYPERLINK](https://bit.ly/3c00plb) "The Agrivoltaics 'Lifeline': <https://n.pr/3c5pg7e>

Benefits of Agrivoltaics: <https://bit.ly/3AuF9o4>

Funding for Agrivoltaics: <https://bit.ly/3CgZc3x>

American Dream Mall Rattles Bondholders

By George Moffatt • Programs Support Facilitator

The \$1.2 billion in NJ funds invested in the American Dream mall in East Rutherford might have supported lead detoxification, the clean energy transition, or school construction. Instead, the money appears well sunk into a deepening money pit.

Most recently, owners of the \$5 billion mega mall and amusement complex missed an Aug. 1 interest payment of \$8.8 million on bonds backed by the NJ Economic Development Authority (EDA).

Although the missed August payment isn't considered a default, bondholders are concerned. The default relates to \$390 million in funding from the EDA, meant to be paid from the sales taxes the project would generate over 20 years. The complex's owner, Triple Five, also has \$800 million in municipal bond debt, backed by payments in lieu of property taxes.

NorthJersey.com reported in May 2022 that the mall had nearly \$60 million in losses in 2021 related to the pandemic, store opening delays, and a fire in its Big Snow indoor ski attraction. Mall expenses still far exceed revenues, and total 2021 sales (\$305 million) were a fraction (15%) of the \$2 billion that the mall owners originally anticipated from first year-revenues. The mall's first-stage opening was in 2019.

The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club has opposed the 3.3 million-square-foot

mall, calling it "the largest publicly subsidized development project in state history" in 2021.

Repayments of the indebtedness to the state were to come from 75% of the 6.625% sales tax paid by the project's customers. This procedure is commonly known as "payments in lieu of taxes." Similar "in lieu" bonding arrangements have been underwritten by several local municipalities. Total mall debts were \$2.6 billion in April, according to NorthJersey.com.

An American Dream spokesperson publicly stated the mall has "no financial obligation" to make any payments to the bondholders. Instead, "The bondholders are paid exclusively from sales tax generated from the project," subject to state approval.

Press reports state that when Triple Five made a \$9.3 million bond payment from its debt service account last year, \$9.3 million remained in the reserve. But after the developer made another payment this year, the reserve had just \$820 left.

Many US malls struggled during the pandemic, although Simon Property Group, the nation's largest mall owner, said retail occupancy stood at 93.9% on June 31, up from 91.8% last year. Retail openings this year have far exceeded closings, according to Core-sight Research, a net of 2,478 openings.

Key Provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 is a landmark environmental achievement. Democratic proponents say it will put the country on track for a 40% emissions reduction by 2030. The legislation will provide as much as \$369 billion for the climate struggle by imposing a minimum 15% tax on corporate revenues, allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices with manufacturers, and enabling the Internal Revenue Service to crack down harder on tax cheats.

Key elements of the legislation (figures are approximate):	
Home energy efficiency rebates and tax credits for rooftop solar, efficiency retrofits, heat pumps, and electric appliances	\$10 billion
Clean energy (solar, wind, battery) and manufacturing (electric vehicles) and breakthrough research	\$60 billion
State and utility incentives for clean energy transition	\$30 billion
Incentives for cement, steel, and chemical manufacturing to install carbon capture technology	\$6 billion
Building a clean energy technologies manufacturing base in the United States	\$6 billion
Zero emissions vehicles for the US Postal Service	\$3 billion
Emissions reductions in environmental justice communities	\$27 billion
Electric school buses and other heavy duty public vehicles	\$1 billion
Climate-smart agricultural practices, forest conservation, coastal habitat restoration	Up to \$28 billion
Capping methane leaks at oil and gas wells and other locations, public transportation improvements, and pollution control measures in EJ communities	Specific figures not provided

Downsides of the legislation include that it ensures that federal lands will remain open to regular auctions for oil and gas leases and that this activity continues in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska's Cook Inlet.

Stop the Transco Pipeline and Compressor Project

The Williams Transco Regional Energy Access Expansion Project (REAE) threatens to undermine climate action progress and add to the burden on environmental justice communities.

REAE involves the construction of and modifications to miles of pipelines and compressor stations in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. It would increase capacity for piping fracked gas from northeastern Pennsylvania to multiple points south in that state and New Jersey. Compressor stations that would be modified or expanded in New Jersey are in Somerset County and Mercer County.

In West Deptford, NJ, close to the Gibbstown site proposed for a massive liquid natural gas export facility, REAE would involve the construction of an entirely new compressor station.

At a recent [hearing](#) of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations called upon Gov. Phil Murphy and state offi-

cial to reject a slew of air quality permits that would enable the REAE project to move forward.

According to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the REAE project would involve the construction and operation of 22.2 miles of 30-inch-diameter lateral pipeline and 13.8 miles of 42-inch-diameter loop pipeline in Pennsylvania.

FERC, in its poorly detailed environmental impact statement released July 29, 2022, states that REAE construction impacts "may be predominantly borne by environmental justice communities" and that effects of these impacts "would be reduced to less-than-significant levels, except for climate change impacts."

At a time when communities are already gasping for clean air and the effects of climate change are profoundly altering living conditions across the planet, this project is foolish at best and needs to be stopped.

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For information, write to the newsletter editor, Tony Hagen, at editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Update on Use of Residential Air Filters to Mitigate Indoor Effects of Air Pollutants

By Paul Ehrlich • Clean Air Issues Coordinator

Several years ago, I wrote an article for the Raritan Valley Group webpage on using residential air filters to help treat several respiratory diseases. Since that time new filters have been developed that can remove significantly smaller particles than earlier filters, a major improvement in their efficacy. Research studies have also contributed to development of best practices for using air filters—for example, where to place the filters for maximum efficacy. Below I've described several characteristics of residential air filters, including recent improvements.

Particles and Gases

There are two major types of air pollutants: particles and gases. High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters are very effective for filtration of particles, and these filters can remove smaller particles than HEPA filters manufactured several years ago, but they have little or no effect on the concentration of gas molecules. A different type of filter, typically activated charcoal, is necessary for a large effect on gas molecules. However, while activated charcoal is very effective at removing hydrocarbons and other gaseous chemicals, it is not effective in trapping some gaseous molecules, such as carbon dioxide, ammonia, and oxides of sulfur.

Assembling the Residential Air Filter Device

Residential air filters can produce cleaner air if the air is filtered by at least two types of filters: HEPA filters

to remove particles and activated charcoal to remove gases. Activated charcoal traps pollutants that are sometimes released back to ambient indoor air. In addition, charcoal has a relatively small capacity for trapping pollutants (which is why charcoal filters have to be replaced more often than HEPA filters). Therefore, activated charcoal should be the last filter before clean air is ejected from the filtering device. HEPA-filtered air should be immediately directed to the charcoal filter. The charcoal layer should be about 0.125 inches to 2 inches thick. While thicker layers are better for filtration, excessively thick layers can cause a significant drop in air pressure that could damage the device.

In my experience, charcoal filters that are included with new residential air filters are not thick enough to provide significant filtration. If only two charcoal filters can fit into the filter chamber, an extra-large (length x width) HEPA filter can be placed above the air intake grid plus the surrounding area of the device. Thus, only air that has passed through the HEPA filter will continue to the charcoal filter. This is important in several areas of the filtering device—even a small amount of air bypassing any filter will significantly reduce air quality.

Placement of Filtering Device

It is best for the filtering device to be used in a room with doors and windows closed. If it is necessary to keep a door open, or partly open (for example, for

small children), filtering can still retain some efficacy. Placing a filtering device in some parts of a room can be advantageous in delivering air as clean as possible to individuals in the room. For residential air filters that clean air from diffuse sources of pollutants, the device should be positioned close to individuals for the benefit of the cleanest air in the room that is not being mixed with relatively dirty air.

That is, individuals are close to the filtering device's area where the clean air first leaves the device. The device will create a breeze that could be uncomfortable so adjustments in speed of air flow and distance from the device may be required. However, for cleaning air that originates from a point source, such as a printer, it is best to position the device close to the source to maximize filtering of the air, even if the filtration unit must be placed relatively far from the person to be helped by filtering. This will help prevent turbulence that causes significant dirty air to mix with the clean air exiting the filtering device.

Additional Advantages and Disadvantages of HEPA/Charcoal Filters

If the HEPA and charcoal filters are not subject to significant air movement when removed from the device, or the filters are not subject to abrupt movements, it is very unlikely that pollutants or pollutant byproducts will detach from the filters.

It is sometimes difficult to determine when to change filters. Manufacturers

usually print advice on the packaging or include directions in the package. In my experience this advice is not always relevant. There are many factors that determine filter efficacy, so a good method is to determine whether the filter(s) has lost some ability to mitigate pollutant effects. Charcoal filters can be tested by determining whether a gaseous, nontoxic chemical's smell is removed quickly. You could also test to see if the device successfully removes food odors after cooking.

A fan should be included in all air filters, or the air will not move fast enough to remove a significant amount of pollutants. The fan can cause enough noise to annoy a few people, especially if they are trying to fall asleep. The speed of the fan could be lowered so there is less noise. In addition, the filtering device could be moved farther away from individuals bothered by the noise. Both options have drawbacks, but it is likely that significant filtering will still occur.

Volunteer to Be Our NJ Chapter Membership Chair

The Chapter membership chair is a bridge between our volunteer leadership and our members at large. After learning Salesforce software (free training provided), you'll track membership reports, update our group leadership, and assist members with inquiries. Time: roughly 2-5 hours/month. To learn more about this opportunity, please contact Chapter Chair Rich Issac at Richard.isaac@sierraclub.org or (973) 716-0297.

Putting a Spotlight on Artificial Light Pollution

By George Moffatt • Programs Support Facilitator

Neil deGrasse Tyson was embarrassed. In discussing how exterior lighting is the bane of astronomers, the director of the Hayden Planetarium admitted to once being rebuked by the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) because floodlights at his newly reconstructed planetarium pointed skyward.

In his book *"Death by Black Hole"*, while discussing the problems artificial light creates for astronomers throughout the world, he explained why upward-directed lighting is a "no-no."

Tyson wrote that light pollution is created by a mixture of water vapor, dust, and pollutants in our lower atmosphere that reflects much of this light back to Earth, "leaving the sky aglow with the signature of a city's night-life." This glow prevents one-third of Earth's population (including 60% of Europeans and 80% of North Americans) from enjoying the grand spectacle of the Milky Way.

Nighttime romance and aesthetics aside, light pollution shouldn't be—dare I say?—taken lightly. It affects our health in numerous ways.

[Harvard University research](#) shows our circadian rhythm—our night-day or sleep-wake cycle developed over the millions of years—can be affected, as well as our production of melatonin, whose antioxidant properties induce sleep, boost the immune system, lower cholesterol, and help our thyroid, pancreas, ovaries, testes, and adrenal glands to function.

The [American Medical Association](#) has warned the short- or blue-spectrum wavelengths emitted by filament and light-emitting-diode (LED) lights could have "potential harmful human health and environmental effects" by increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease, depression, sleep disorders, obesity, diabetes, and breast cancer.

And the [Stanford Sleep Epidemiology Research Center](#) also has demonstrated that street lighting can delay our sleep cycles, reducing the quality of our sleep.

Even our homes and offices aren't safe havens. Many filament lights emit short or blue wavelengths of light, ranging from 415 to 455 nanometers, while LED's emit light ranging from 400 to 490 nanometers. Both ranges can cause blurry vision, dry eye strain, macular degeneration, and cataracts, as well as sleep problems.

But to be fair to blue wavelengths, during daylight hours they boost our attention, reaction times, and mood. It's a flip of the coin.

Birds rely on the moon and starlight to navigate when migrating and are profoundly impacted by light pollution. Artificial lighting confuses their "celestial compasses," luring them from their traditional mating and foraging destinations and into brightly illuminated urban and suburban areas. Streetlights also play havoc with birds' circadian rhythms. Millions of them die each year.

And the birds' plight extends to us. [University of South Florida](#) researchers found that birds exposed to artificial light incubate West Nile Virus (WNV) for longer than other birds.

Mosquitos feed off the infected birds, potentially increasing WNV spread and that of other transmittable diseases in heavily populated areas.

Unfortunately, light pollution's myriad problems include a contribution to climate change. Unnecessary light in the United States adds up to about 21 million tons of carbon dioxide each year, or about \$3.3 billion in energy expense, according to the [IDA](#). Given this, every citizen should be moved to strongly protest our wasteful lighting.

Here's how we all can save money, conserve energy, reduce carbon pollution, and illuminate more efficiently.

- Choose light fixtures with shielding or light covers that
- Aim lighting downward to specific targeted areas;
- Shield light bulbs from being visible



The Milky Way is visible at Stone Harbor Beach in Cape May County, but at few other locations in New Jersey. Photo credit: Sinitar.

from a distance; and

- Don't aim light upward for any reason—drama, aesthetics, and corporate hubris be darned.
- Use LEDs, not filament bulbs.
- Turn off office and home lighting when not in use.
- Use varied-timed lights for outside security.
- Visit darksky.org for additional useful information.

Epilogue: The floodlight problem at the Hayden Planetarium was pointed out 20 years ago. A publicist for the planetarium declined to state for this article whether the problem has been fixed.

Resources

Harvard on Health Effects: <https://bit.ly/3A2iGjy>

Next Steps for Bridge Point

Editor's note: Earlier this summer the West Windsor Township Planning Board preliminarily approved a massive, 5.5 million-square-foot warehouse complex for the site of the former American Cyanamid research facility at Route 1 and Quaker Bridge Road. This project, the Bridge Point 8 Industrial Park, symbolizes not only the scale and pace of warehouse development in New Jersey but also the lack of regional planning and cooperation and the tremendous impacts on quality of life, health, and the environment, not the least of which is the greenhouse gas component. In this article, Kip Cherry, a member of our Chapter's Executive Committee and conservation chair of the Central Jersey Group, outlines the steps that are needed to help mitigate the harms posed by this development.

By Kip Cherry • Central Jersey Conservation Chair

The following is a summary of next steps related to the approval of Bridge Point 8 Industrial Park. There is much to know, much to shape, much to mitigate, and much to challenge.

Comments to DOT on the State Highway Application

We will send comments to the state Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding the following:

- Traffic requirements and recommendations for circulation and roadway and bridge design to effectuate a direct connection to Route 1 in implementing the property owner's (Atlantic Realty) highway access application;
- Implications of traffic congestion generated by the site on the region and how it can be mitigated (including identification of conflict areas and potential solutions); and,
- The need for DOT to undertake an open and transparent discussion of potential solutions, their costs, and sources of funding.

For Club members who wish to join this action, here is the relevant contact at the DOT:

Elaine Schwartz, Assistant Division Director, Major Access Permits
Department of Transportation
PO Box 600
Trenton, NJ 08625-0600
609-963-2467
Elaine.Schwartz@dot.nj.gov

Request Preparation of an Access Management Plan

Under the NJ Administrative Code, Section 16:7-12, an access management plan (AMP) provides a multi-stakeholder analysis of circulation, roadway, and bridge design, as well as mass-transit options for a project seeking state highway access (Route 1). It should include cost studies, funding sources, and an implementation schedule, and each participating town should pay a portion of the cost. We will request that affected municipalities and the DOT jointly conduct an AMP that includes county- and

county executive-level participation.

Study the Currently Proposed Conditions

The West Windsor Planning Board attached 83 conditions of approval in giving preliminary assent to the Bridge Point application at its meeting in July. These relate to specific aspects of the development plan and help ensure the project is tailored to West Windsor's specifications. This list is being reviewed and shaped by the planning board's legal counsel for presentation to the board for ratification as a final resolution with conditions in September. We will continue our study of these conditions.

Not all areas of concern we've identified may be covered, so care is needed to ensure these get the proper attention. Traffic congestion is a primary concern, including the need for an

AMP; an automated arrival and departure destination system for trucks; a mass transit agreement with NJ Transit; and the identification of area roadway and bridge improvements complete with costs, funding sources, and schedule. Other concerns of great importance include stormwater management, green building design and operation, solar power implementation, green landscaping, dangerous air emissions reduction, and toxic waste identification and cleanup.

We need to develop baseline information in each of these areas, including working with the applicant, the DOT, and county officials in developing credible estimates for large truck, small truck, and automobile traffic to be generated by the site. Also needed is a map



*Figures represent square feet

“Not all areas of concern we’ve identified may be covered, so care is needed to ensure these get the proper attention.”

identifying hazardous waste locations on the former Cyanamid site.

Previously, we submitted eight proposed detailed conditions for consideration by the planning board. At least one of these, covering the reduction

of dangerous air emissions, was adopted word-for-word by the planning board. Most of the conditions are environmental issues and many will involve permits issued by the state Department of Environmental Protection. It is extremely important to

identify these applications and weigh in on them, which we are in the process of doing.

Monitoring Implementation of Subgroups

A key step is to start looking with greater detail at affected subgroups to identify partners and stakeholders in each category of our concerns. For example, congestion involves every town abutting West Windsor and requires a great deal of mutual cooperation to manage. Connected to this are the economies and quality of life of the region and its air quality. This is why initiating development of a highway management plan is so important.

Naturally counties and the state have major roles to play in identifying solutions that are cost-effective. Important stakeholders, beyond citizens and their elected officials, are key businesses, including Quaker Bridge Mall, which sits on the border of the proposed warehouse development, and area educational institutions.

Other Concerns to Address

Of importance is the management of stormwater runoff and the quality of river water, a key source of drinking water for both West Windsor and Princeton. It is likely that the Watershed Institute will take a lead in the stormwater/drinking water area.

We must also ensure that Bridge Point becomes not only Solar Ready, as one of the first warehouse projects to be subject to the new Solar Ready Act, but also an actual solar power producer. The new law does not require warehouse owners and their tenants to install solar panels or use renewable energy.

In summary, there is a great deal of work to be done and it is critical this work move forward with due diligence and timeliness. We need the participation of elected officials, representatives of environmental groups, local citizens at large, and state and county representatives. We need leadership, factfinding, imaginative solutions, and consensus.

Support Your Passion for a Just and Sustainable World

Create a legacy that protects and restores the natural world for future generations by naming Sierra Club's New Jersey Chapter in your will or trust. Or, name Sierra Club Foundation as a beneficiary of your retirement plan for the benefit of your local New Jersey Chapter and leave less highly taxed assets to your loved ones.



To learn more about the advantages of making a planned gift and to become a member of the Rachel Carson Society, please contact us.



Julia Curtis • (800) 932-4270 • giftplanning@sierraclub.org • myplan.sierraclub.org

Your Skills Can Save the Planet!



The NJ Chapter is looking for volunteers. We need **graphic designers** to help with infographics, fact sheets, and presentations to illustrate and clarify our messages. **Video volunteers** are sought to create shareable videos on subjects from outings to events to news and issue “explainers.” Good ideas, self-motivation, and willingness to learn are more important than experience here. **Social media help** is also welcome. *The Jersey Sierran* is looking for a volunteer with **marketing expertise** to help us sell ads in the newsletter.

To get involved, reach out to Chapter Chair Rich Isaac at risaacx@aol