



Help Us Save Trees! Printing *The Jersey Sierran* uses paper. To opt for the digital newsletter, write to editor@newjerseysierraclub.org

A Primer on New Jersey's Offshore Wind Industry

By Denise Brush • Issues Coordinator for Offshore Wind

Offshore wind development is a big deal for New Jersey that New Jerseyans are going to be hearing a lot about over the next few years. I hope this overview will provide Sierra Club members with a greater understanding of the situation and what to expect in the future.

How Wind Farms Get Approved

All offshore wind projects currently being developed in the United States are in federal waters (between 3 and 200 miles from shore), so both federal and state authorizations are involved. The first step for wind farm developers is to win a lease area bid from the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). Then, developers must submit a site assessment plan (SAP) to BOEM, including an environmental impact statement, which requires public hearings. After that, developers need approval from the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to sell wind energy to state utility customers, and then they must go back to BOEM for approval of their construction and operation plan.

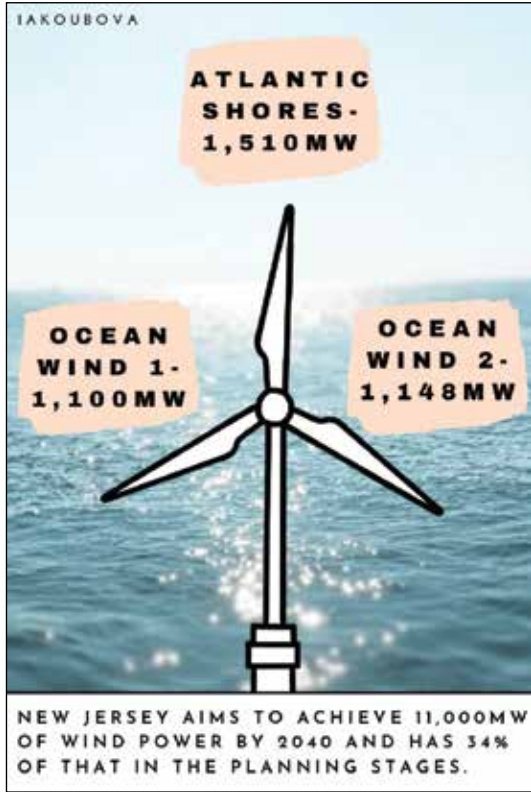
Only after all these hurdles are overcome can offshore wind projects be built and begin operating. This is good because it helps ensure that any negative environmental impacts are mitigated.

Offshore wind projects require huge capital investment, so developers are typically partnerships between large multinational companies. The winners of the first BOEM lease auction for New Jersey were Ocean Wind, a partnership between the Danish company Ørsted and NJ utility PSE&G; and Atlantic Shores, a partnership between EDF Renewables and Shell.

Offshore wind projects also need strong support from state government. Since taking office in January 2018, Gov. Phil Murphy has been an enthusiastic supporter of renewable energy and particularly offshore wind power. His Executive Order No. 8 (January 2018) set an initial state goal of obtaining 3,500 megawatts (MW) of electricity from offshore wind power by 2030. This set in motion a process that included developing an offshore wind strategic plan, developing an offshore wind renewable energy credit (OREC) program and funding mechanism, and



>continued on page 2



Sierra Club Names New Executive Director

By Joe Testa • Chapter Parliamentarian and Council of Club Leaders Delegate

In November 2022, the Sierra Club's national Board of Directors selected Ben Jealous, 49, to be the Club's next executive director after a nine-month search process that involved extensive input from volunteers, staff members, and donors; and the screening of hundreds of applicants.

Jealous' career has ranged through roles as community organizer, environmental activist, and civil rights leader, starting with founding, as a teenager, the first high school chapter of the Student Environmental Action Coalition. As a student at Columbia University, he led protests against student aid cutbacks. He was the youngest person to serve as president and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP, 2008-2013); during his tenure there, the NAACP launched its climate justice program and issued its 2012 report "Coal Blooded: Putting Profits before People," which assessed the impact of the nation's 378 coal-fired power plants on communities of color and low-income communities. Most recently, Jealous has served as president of People for the American Way. He has also been a partner at a venture capital firm leading an investment portfolio of green startups; run as the Democratic candidate for governor in Maryland in 2018; and served on the boards of the Trust for Public Land, the Wilderness Society, and the Environmental Defense Fund.

It is notable that Jealous comes to the Sierra Club after having led organiza-

tions of comparable complexity with significant volunteer components. Club President Ramón Cruz said of Jealous, "He's been a staunch advocate for the health of our planet since he was a child growing up in California and has worked tirelessly at the intersection of the environment, equity, and social justice."



Ben Jealous

In a statement following his appointment, Jealous said, "Early trips with my parents and sister to the Sierras and the copies of *Sierra* magazine in our house inspired me to become an environmental activist. They steeled my commitment to supporting local and national efforts

to preserve the wild places and to save the planet." He continued, "As a nation, we are on the cusp of finally cutting bait with dangerous 'either/or' strategies and embracing a 'both/and' future in which all communities become more prosperous and we help save the planet in the process. I am proud to join the nation's largest army of environmentalists and conservationists to help hasten that day."

Jealous will be starting in this position on January 23, 2023, and he will spend his first month on a nationwide listening tour visiting with Sierra Club volunteers, staff, donors, and partners. He will assume full oversight and management of Sierra Club after his listening tour and the February 2023 Board of Directors meeting. Until that time, Interim Executive Director Loren Blackford continues to manage the day-to-day activities of the Club.

More information about Ben: www.sierraclub.org/meet-ben-jealous

West Windsor Finalizes Approval for Bridge Point Warehouses

By Kip Cherry • Central Jersey Conservation Chair

On November 2, 2022, the West Windsor Township Planning Board finalized approval for the proposed Bridge Point 8 Industrial Park—possibly the largest warehouse project ever proposed in New Jersey. It will encompass 5.5 million square feet (MSF) of warehouses on 645 acres off Route 1 and Quakerbridge Road, formerly an agricultural chemical research complex for American Cyanamid.

The final 83-page approval resolution was based on a June 29 vote with 80-plus conditions adopted by the planning board, along with 12 design waivers and 12 submission waivers. The approval was for preliminary and final site plan approval for "phase 1," three warehouses totaling 3.0 MSF;

and preliminary site plan approval for "phase 2," four warehouses totaling 2.5 MSF. The resolution included extensive findings of fact, which are the planning board's detailed reasons for approval.

The unusually large number of conditions of approval along with the project's size and the complexity make it particularly challenging for both regulators and concerned residents. Key concerns include congestion, road safety, diesel air emissions, decreased quality of life for area residents, flooding, and stormwater contamination.

Huge questions remain that need to be studied and answered regarding traffic volumes and potential alternatives, including bus and rail access for

employees, use of an automated truck arrival and departure system, alternative traffic patterns, and electric vehicles. There are also numerous environmental questions related to diesel air emissions, stormwater management, issues related to flooding and stormwater contamination, wetland and habitat preservation, historic site preservation, use of renewable energy sources (i.e., solar), and landscaping, as well as just the impact of the massive structures on the Route 1 landscape.



>continued on page 5

Inside This Issue

The Perfect Swarm	2
Corporate Standards	3
Chapter Chair's Message	3
Assunpink Tour	3
Stormwater Control	4
Transportation Report	5
Awash in Warehouses	5
How to Fight Warehouses	5
Building Electrification	6
Youth Committee Chair	6
On the Trail	7
Outings Calendar	7-8
Group News	8-11
Chapter Leadership	12

Electronic Supplement

(Available from the Chapter website)

Trees, EVs on Display, Bear Hunt, IRA, Water Quality Improvement, Construction	13-14
--	-------

The Perfect Swarm: NJ, Mosquitoes, & Climate Change

By Judy Minot • Secretary, Co-Chair, Communications Committee

Most of us focus on large-scale effects of climate change: sea level rise, storms, droughts, floods, and fire. We don't often consider how rising temperatures might affect populations of insects, ticks, and spiders, and how these may affect us. The mosquito is a case in point. It is an insect to be taken very seriously as temperatures warm.

Controlling the "World's Deadliest Animal"

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention labels the mosquito the "world's deadliest animal." For most NJ residents, mosquitoes are just an annoyance, but in the nation's early history, mosquito-borne malaria and yellow fever outbreaks were common and deadly.

The salt marsh mosquito was once a burdensome pest in our state. Before 1912, most of the Jersey Shore and the Delaware Bay region were essentially uninhabitable because of the swarming, biting insects. Since the early 20th century, county mosquito control commissions have kept these populations in check, but sea level rise is making their work more difficult.

The control of the salt marsh mosquito is possible because these mosquitoes lay eggs only in specific places (in the mud above the water line), and only at specific times (determined by the moon and the tide). Mosquito specialists have amassed deep knowledge of the most "productive" breeding sites over many years. Crews visit these sites regularly to apply Bti, bacteria that are toxic to the

larvae. They also dig ditches to reduce standing water in salt hay in the tidal creeks, where mosquitoes breed.

How Climate Change Complicates Mosquito Control

As sea level rises and breeding sites become wetter, mosquitoes move to higher, drier sites. According to Dina Fonseca, PhD, director of the Center for Vector Biology at Rutgers University, a rise in sea level of as little as 1/2 inch can make mosquitoes seek another place to lay eggs. Mosquito control teams must then locate these new sites, confirm the presence of larvae, and time the insecticide application, all of which takes time.

Another complication is warmer temperatures. The mosquito season that used to last from early June until the end of September now runs from May until mid-October, Fonseca said. Not only are budgets stretched over longer time periods, but also the sea-

son no longer fits the college vacation schedule, making hiring trickier.

Insects as Climate Change Indicators

Because they lay many eggs and mature quickly, insect populations can adapt and respond quickly to changes in temperature and humidity. More mosquitoes survive a warm winter, and they hatch earlier in a warmer spring, so changes in insect populations help indicate where and how much warming is taking place.

New Jersey's 21 mosquito control programs are like "eyes" across the state. They keep tabs on how many and what species of mosquitoes are present at various places and times. According to Fonseca, southern mosquito species are moving northward into our state, including several that carry disease.

Non-native mosquitoes are also spreading due to warmer temperatures. The [Asian tiger mosquito](#) is an

aggressively-biting, invasive species of mosquito first found in southern New Jersey in 1995. It is a potential carrier of encephalitis, dengue, yellow fever, and dog heartworm. These mosquitoes have made their way steadily north to higher elevations.



The Mosquito as Disease Vector

An insect may have to bite many times before transmitting a parasite from one host another. When insect numbers increase explosively, parasites like West Nile virus, Eastern equine encephalitis, and avian malaria are far more likely to be passed on.

So far, New Jersey has not seen major outbreaks of mosquito-borne diseases. It helps that we live in houses with screens and spend our time primarily indoors, in dry areas. But mosquito control teams are on the lookout, especially for mosquitoes like *aedes aegypti*, a species that is expanding its range north and carries Zika, dengue, yellow fever, and Chikungunya.

As we respond to the threat of climate change in our state, it's important to keep as close an eye on these tiny invaders as on the biggest storms.

References

Deadliest animal: bit.ly/3ORyKSB
Tiger mosquito: bit.ly/3AKVU7e



Cattus Island in Toms River has many trenches dug into it to drain standing water and prevent mosquito infestations. Credit: Google Maps Image: ©2022 Google.

OFFSHORE WIND INDUSTRY

continued from page 1

issuing a solicitation for offshore wind projects generating 1,100 MW.

Wind Projects Timeline

The first three offshore wind projects planned for the Atlantic City coast, called Ocean Wind 1 and 2 and Atlantic Shores, won their leases in a BOEM auction in early 2016. The first to be built will be Ocean Wind 1, whose SAP was approved by BOEM in May 2018 and may start commercial operations as soon as the end of 2024.

At the time of its SAP and state approvals, Ørsted's 1,100 MW Ocean Wind 1 project was the [largest](#) proposed offshore wind farm in the country. It will have 98 turbines, each over 800 feet high, spaced 1 mile apart, and located 15 miles offshore. The other two NJ projects are similar in size and will likely be operational between 2027 and 2029.

In November 2019, following the release of the state Energy Master Plan, which included a goal of 50% renewable energy by 2030, Murphy increased the state's offshore wind goal from 3,500 MW to 7,000 MW. Another goal increase came later.

In March 2021, President Biden announced a nationwide target of deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind projects. Along with this announcement came the designation of the New York Bight (an area of shallow waters from Long Island to the NJ coast) as a new priority Wind Energy Area.

BOEM began making plans immediately for a lease sale to offshore wind developers in the New York Bight, which was held in February 2022. The companies who won those lease areas are now beginning the federally supervised process of environmental assessment and construction planning.

While few specifics are available yet, it appears that these new wind farms will be significantly farther offshore (perhaps 50 miles), taller, and more numerous. They will not be as far offshore as the proposed Hudson Marine Sanctuary (100 miles), but they may affect this area.

In New Jersey, the pace of offshore wind development kept increasing. On June 30, 2021, the BPU [awarded](#) a combined 2,658 MW of offshore wind capacity for the Atlantic Shores project and Ørsted's Ocean Wind II, raising the state's total planned capacity to over 3,700 MW.

Recent Events

This fall has seen two important events regarding offshore wind development in New Jersey. On September 21, 2022, Gov. Murphy [increased](#) New Jersey's offshore wind goal by nearly 50% to 11,000 MW by 2040, from 7,500 MW previously. He also directed the BPU to study the feasibility of increasing the target further.

On October 26, 2022, the BPU announced a transmission agreement with regional power grid operator PJM to support the lease areas for the New York Bight. The project will involve a grid upgrade and expansion of the Larabee Substation in Monmouth County into an interconnection facility.

NJ regulators got dozens of proposals. They could have let the developer of each project choose their own transmission strategy and negotiate it separately with PJM, but instead of a market-based solution they chose a "state agreement approach." This minimizes the number of onshore connection points and the cost to NJ ratepayers. It also allows for economies of scale.

With many other northeastern states also targeting renewable energy goals,



Credit: Ørsted

the PJM interconnection queue is backlogged. An interconnection process reform package is awaiting Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approval.

Power Cables and Worker Training

New Jersey has big plans to provide the necessary infrastructure to support the offshore wind industry. A "state of the art" manufacturing facility is planned for the Port of Paulsboro (Gloucester County) on the Delaware River.

Workers at this facility will build the giant towers (monopiles) that support the wind turbines Ørsted will purchase from General Electric. The turbine components will be shipped downriver to the yet-unbuilt New Jersey Wind Port at Lower Alloways Creek in Salem County for final assembly and transport to wind farms off the Atlantic coast.

Power cables for the Ocean Wind projects are planned to come onshore at two points on the Jersey Shore: at Ocean City (through a state-owned Green Acres site), to the decommissioned B.L. England coal plant; and at Island Beach State Park, to the decommissioned Oyster Creek nuclear plant. The public hearing on the Green Acres

proposal was scheduled for November 14, 2022.

Because the offshore wind industry will require so many workers, and our state wants those jobs, workforce training is an important part of the development of infrastructure to support offshore wind. The state has created the Wind Institute for Innovation and Training to ensure NJ residents have a chance at those jobs.

The Wind Institute is partnering with community colleges such as Rowan College of South Jersey to develop career and technical education programs that will be needed soon. There are also many conversations going on with the leadership of various trade unions.

Currently, New Jersey is a national leader in the development of offshore wind power. This is largely due to our governor's leadership. At this point there is so much investment and momentum that progress is unlikely to halt even with new state leadership. Offshore wind power will be an important component of the transition to renewable energy in New Jersey and throughout the East Coast over the next several decades.

Companies Need Standards for Climate Change Action

By Tony Hagen • editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

One of the points made at the recent [Reuters Impact](#) environmental conference was that we need environmental, social, and governmental (ESG) standards to ensure that companies act responsibly as climate change gets worse.

One speaker described a crisis of conformity in the boardroom, where environmentally unsound practices are being perpetuated. “It makes us think if we continue to do things in the old way, we all get a different outcome, and that’s insane,” said Halla Tómasdóttir, CEO of The B Team, a sustainability consultancy.

An IBM study this year suggested corporate executives are increasingly willing to lead their organizations on a sustainable path. The best are transformative (13%) and fully focused on this mission. Right behind are operational executives (43%), who are making some positive changes; and then come the compliant ones (29%), who just do what the regulations say. The remainder are “assessing,” or still thinking about what they could do.

Decide for Yourself

Consider the following real (anonymized) examples of leadership and decide which of the above categories they fall into.

Case 1: A national power company is moving into “green hydrogen” and solar panels and has replaced much of its aging pipeline structure, but it is also going wholesale into “renewable natural gas,” which is conversion of farm manure into burnable gas. This biogas is known to perpetuate factory farming, create environmental justice issues, and release toxins into the environment. There are still methane leaks.

Case 2: A large power company says it is dramatically cutting its emissions and improving energy efficiency, investing in wind turbine generation, and selling off its fossil fuel generating plants, which presumably will remain in operation under new ownership. Its plan for achieving net zero emissions by 2030 includes heavy reliance on nuclear energy, which involves con-

tinuing uranium dependence. Uranium mining involves CO₂ emissions and health hazards, and radioactive waste is a worrisome by-product of mining and nuclear power plants.

Case 3: An executive of a large business and industry association lobbies legislators to reject bills that would require divesting a state’s pension and annuity funds from fossil fuel companies. He advises a go-slow approach, saying fossil fuels are the bedrock of the nation’s economy, ensure pensioners will have income into old age, and can help pay for the transition to renewable energy. He argues that drastic measures to divest could bankrupt these fossil fuel companies.

Given the timeline we’re all facing from climate change, half measures and more protections for fossil fuel industries could be disastrous.

Some businesses don’t have a lot of flexibility to act. For example, what can a fuel oil delivery company do? Some businesses just put their heads down and avoid the sustainability discussion for as long as possible.

The Power of Family

Tómasdóttir said the most courageous CEOs are driven toward change by their employees and even their family members. “I have heard some remarkable stories from business leaders about how their own children or grandchildren transformed their heart space.”

The way out of this mess are the Four A’s, she said: action, accountability, advocacy, and ambition. “This is about leadership. That is what it’s missing. And it needs to be 10 times more courageous than what we’re seeing right now. And no longer just from the private sector or just from governments or just from civil society and citizens, but from all of us. No one can be absolved from the past. And if we embrace that, what if the best times are ahead of us?”



Tour Highlights Assunpink Creek Flooding Issues

By Joanne Pannone • Central Jersey Group Chair

Fred Stine, citizen action coordinator of Delaware Riverkeeper, led Trenton-area nonprofit representatives on a driving tour of the Assunpink Creek from where it travels under city streets in Trenton to its headwaters in Monmouth County. We visited the Hetzel Pool rain garden, which reduces stormwater runoff, and also a brownfield reclamation in a floodplain.

Another site was Sweetbriar Ave. in Hamilton Township, where Synnergy sought to build a solar farm on a 40-acre, partly wooded lot with flooding issues. Sierra Club, Riverkeeper, and community advocates successfully convinced the township that this was not in the best interest of the residents of Cornel Heights along the Assunpink. The project scope was reduced from 12.5 acres of forest lost to 7 acres.

Our last stop was at Homestead on Kuser Road in Hamilton, where stormwater miscalculations caused flooding in Veterans Park.

On this tour, my role as a Rutgers-certified Environmental Steward and Green Infrastructure Champion was to share my local knowledge of the Assunpink stream system. Chapter members Stan Greberis, Joe Testa, Gary Frederick, and family members also attended.

When we build and clearcut our natural landscape, we alter the water flow. One inch of rain on 1 acre of parking lot produces over 27,000 gallons of water. Rain gardens help replicate the natural water cycle. When rainfall exceeds absorption capacity, the Assunpink floods neighborhoods that were built too close.

Welcoming Our New Staff Member and Volunteers

By Richard Isaac • Richard.Isaac@sierraclub.org

Our Chapter extends a warm welcome to the following individuals as they take on their new Chapter volunteer and professional positions:

Raghav Akula, Youth Committee Chair

Having been our Chapter’s student liaison for the last year and a half, Raghav Akula is now chair of our new Youth Committee.



Raghav’s primary academic interests are economics, international relations, law, and government, and he likes to approach these from the lenses of environmental policy and clean energy. A senior at Moorestown High School, he prioritizes extracurricular activities relating to debate clubs and competitions, community service, and environmental and policy work. The three debate clubs that he helps lead are Model United Nations, Model Congress, and Policy Debate, where he and other high school students contend over both national and international policies. Raghav believes that the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club has served as his most direct conduit to environmental advocacy and political involvement.

Shirin Sood, Youth Committee Communications and Outreach Coordinator

Shirin is currently a sophomore at West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North and is passionate about environmental justice and climate reform. She is involved in many environmental groups and is her school’s publicity and communications coordinator. Now the Youth Committee’s communications and outreach coordinator, Shirin is excited to work alongside Raghav on this new committee and looks forward to working on climate policy and representing youth in the climate movement.



Syona Gupta, as Youth Committee Member

Syona is a youth climate enthusiast and a junior at High Technology High School,



in Lincroft, who is passionate about being involved in policymaking that impacts her generation. She is very interested in using emerging technology to help solve our environmental problems.



Shriyaa Madineni, Youth Committee member

A freshman at Monroe Township High School, Shriyaa has decided that the Sierra Club is the right place for her. She’s always been interested in nature and environmental health. Through the Club, Shriyaa hopes to make our environment a better place, and she’s looking forward to learning a lot through the process!



Jackie Greger, Communications and Outreach Coordinator

Jackie was chosen to become our new communications and outreach coordinator because of her ability to use storytelling to touch and move people toward change. She also shares a deep love for New Jersey’s people, landscapes, and ecosystems. She grew up at the Jersey Shore and dedicated her academic efforts to sustainability and environmental studies after learning how vulnerable our state is to the impacts of climate change and sea level rise. Jackie is also familiar with many environmental issues in New Jersey from two summers spent interning at the nonprofit Save Barnegat Bay. With Jackie’s knowledge of social media applications, including Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, we look forward to seeing her apply all of her skill to meet the communications goals of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club and ensure that our message emphasizes the deep interconnection between environmental problems and social injustice and oppression.



VOLUNTEER!
The Sierra Club’s New Jersey Chapter has a place for you! Contact Chapter Chair Richard Isaac at 973-716-0297 or Richard.Isaac@sierraclub.org



Pictures above: Signage from a rain garden at Veterans Park; a view of the Assunpink Creek from Trenton: (left to right) Chris Perez of Rutgers Green Infrastructure Champions Program; Fred Stine; Amy Goldsmith from Clean Water Action; and James Capasso, director of the Division of Economic Development/Brownfields Coordinator in Trenton. Credit: Joanne Pannone

NJ Offers Help with Stormwater Control

By Greg Gorman • ggorman@embargmail.com

The 2020 New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change forecasts precipitation in New Jersey to increase 4% to 11% by 2050. The intensity and frequency of storms is also anticipated to increase. Many NJ communities either don't have a stormwater management system in place or have one that is not able to adequately absorb, capture, or convey stormwater.

Stormwater carries with it oil, pesticides, other chemicals, sediments, and bacteria that may contaminate state waters.

New Jersey has a major challenge to avoid the consequences of flooding and water pollution, which are compounded by sea level rise.

Aging Infrastructure

Historically, communities have used "gray infrastructure"—systems of gutters, pipes, and tunnels—to move stormwater away from where we live to treatment plants or straight to local water bodies. The gray infrastructure in many areas is aging, and its capacity to manage large volumes of stormwater is decreasing. Systems that filter and absorb stormwater where it falls are known as "green infrastructure."

In 2019, Congress enacted the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act, which defines green infrastructure as "the range of measures that use plant or soil systems, permeable pavement or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evaporate (evapotranspiration) stormwater and reduce flows to sewer

systems or to surface waters."

In 2021, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) adopted a revised set of stormwater regulations that affect land development practices within the state. The revised rules encourage and sometimes require the use of decentralized green infrastructure practices. In conjunction with

these new standards, the DEP also released a revision to the "NJ Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual," which offers guidance on

compliance with stormwater management rules that are mandatory for major new developments. The revised document also describes state-of-the-art stormwater control and stormwater pollutant removal. However, one barrier to effective management is the high cost of corrective action. DEP Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette said approximately \$1 billion in green infrastructure project growth could be supported in the state's 2022 to 2023 fiscal cycle.

Funding Mechanism

In 2019, the Clean Stormwater and Flood Reduction Act authorized NJ municipalities, counties, and certain authorities to establish stormwater utilities with an appropriate funding mechanism. In 2020, the nonprofit New Jersey Future established the Stormwater Utility Resource Center to provide tools to establish an affordable and effective community stormwater utility. Its website provides, among other resources, case studies,

newsletters, a model ordinance, and presentations from consultants who helped municipalities in neighboring states adopt stormwater utilities. Unfortunately, after three years, although a few NJ municipalities have explored the opportunity, none has taken advantage of this law and created a stormwater utility.

Recently, a collaboration of eight newsrooms and other media organizations have taken the initiative to report on solutions to the pressing issues of flooding and stormwater management, primarily in the Passaic River basin but also throughout northern New Jersey. Supported by the Solutions Journalism Network, the Stormwater Matters project seeks to advance the conversation on stormwater management by exploring solutions for New Jersey and other communities.

The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club applauds these activities. With the resources of the DEP and Stormwater Utility Resource Center, supplemented by real-time reporting offered by the Stormwater Matters project, developers and planners will be able to better address the challenges of adapting to climate change.

Resources

Climate change report: bit.ly/3iidaKH
Green infrastructure: bit.ly/3VazrAD
Regulations: bit.ly/3OF14Zq
Revision: <https://bit.ly/3idiWgy>
Stormwater Matters: bit.ly/3Vxg1he



Solving the PFAS Problem

Per- and poly fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are linked to serious illness. In 2021, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection ruled some PFAS chemicals should be limited to ≤ 13 parts per trillion (ppt) in drinking water. The federal government now advises that maximum exposures for this class of PFAS should be ≤ .004 ppt. There's a wide difference here.

NJ Senate Democrats have released bills intended to improve PFAS protections. S3176-S3180 would require careful study of PFAS, ban certain products containing PFAS and require clearer labeling, and force landlords and public water systems to disclose PFAS levels in drinking water and educate the public about these chemicals. Also see page 14.

ExCom Meeting Highlights

September: Raghav Akula was appointed chair of the Youth Committee. Shirin Sood was named Youth Committee communications and outreach coordinator.

October: Syona Gupta and Shriyaa Madineni were appointed to the Youth Committee.

November: Victoria Iakoubova was appointed Chapter videographer; Joe Bennett and Kemi Claley were appointed to the Environmental and Social Justice Committee.

GET OFF FOSSIL FUELS AND HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

CONVERT YOUR HOME AWAY FROM OIL AND GAS BY INSTALLING A HEAT PUMP AND GOING SOLAR

The Most Efficient and Environmental Way to Cool and Heat Your Home!



- **Lower Your Energy Cost** up to 60%
- **Heat Pumps Produce 1.5-3 Times More Heat Output** than they consume in electricity input
- **Cold Weather Heat Pumps** have been around for decades
- **30% Federal Tax Credit** for all solar projects
- **Top Rated Heating & Cooling Services** in Northern NJ and NYC
- **Flexible Scheduling** - We install at your most convenient time



INTEGRATE COMFORT SYSTEMS

Call or Visit Us to Schedule an Assessment!

833-ICS-HVAC
or visit www.icshvac.com

Progress With Low-Emission Vehicles

By Bill Beren • Transportation Committee Chair

Electric School Buses

In October, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded \$965 million nationwide for electric and low-polluting school buses under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Just two NJ districts received funding; these were the Atlantic County Special Services and Bridgeton City School districts. Nationwide, the awards were heavily weighted to rural districts. The NJ Chapter will be working with our national allies to encourage the EPA to take pollution levels as well as poverty levels into account when awarding the next tranche of grants.

Building on this summer's passage of A1282/S759 (The Electric School Bus Program Act), which funds electric school buses with \$45 million over three years, the Chapter exhibited at the NJ School Boards Association Annual Workshop, held October 24-26 at the Atlantic City Convention Center.

The Chapter was represented by volunteer members of the Transportation Committee, and we distributed a number of publications, such as our well-received "NJ Buyers' Guide to Electric School Buses," a summary of the Electric School Bus Program Act, and reprints of online articles on electric school bus charging systems and using solar energy to power electric school buses. These and more are available on our electric school bus [web page](#).

Also on this web page is a link to our updated electric school bus video, which includes new information about federal and state grant programs.

NJ Transit Electric Buses

In October, NJ Transit put their [first electric transit bus](#) into service in Camden. NJ Transit has purchased eight electric transit buses and is looking to this pioneering fleet to guide the expansion of electric bus transit statewide. The agency also received a [\\$4.4](#)

million grant from the federal government to build a new Union City garage for electric buses.

Under a state law passed in 2021, NJ Transit is committed to making 10% of its bus purchases fully electric by the end of 2024; 50% by the end of 2026; and 100% by 2032.

Passenger Vehicles and Trucks

New Jersey is receiving \$104 million over five years from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to build highway charging stations for cars and trucks. At press deadline, no information was available on the timing or amount of the grant money.

In a long-awaited announcement, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection published its draft [Advanced Clean Truck Rule](#) (ACT) on Nov. 7. This would formally adopt the California standard for light, medium, and heavy-duty vehicles over 8,500 pounds. Although California's standard will take effect starting in 2024, New Jersey's ACT rule would begin to take effect in model year 2027. In addition to requiring a percentage of new trucks to be zero-emission vehicles, it would establish much tighter standards for nitrogen oxides and particulate emissions from gasoline and diesel vehicles, mandate on-board diagnostic equipment to alert fleet owners if the emission standards are exceeded, and require that all medium- and heavy-duty vehicles undergo independent emission testing.

Resources

Electric School Bus Campaign: bit.ly/3fLtrXF
Camden's Electric Bus: bit.ly/3UFTLkM



Awash in Warehouses and Diesel Trucks

By George Moffatt

New Jersey has thousands of miles of state and interstate high-speed highways. "The Garden State" is clearly becoming "The Corridor State."

Today, 18-wheelers and "last mile" delivery trucks dominate our highways, county roads, and even residential streets. With the growth of storage and order fulfillment centers, gas and soot-belching diesel trucks are increasing the state's already dangerous air and water toxins, polluting rivers (parking lot runoff), and creating 24-7 noise, dust, and traffic.

Diesel emissions are linked to asthma, cancer, heart disease, neurological disorders, stroke. A recent [study](#) blamed transportation sector emissions for 22,000 premature deaths in the United States in 2015.

Nevertheless, local officials may still pitch, "We have to develop our community," and, "We need the jobs and tax rates," when vying for warehouses. They may not give adequate thought to the size of these buildings, which range from hundreds of thousands to millions of square feet. Or, due to zoning or the need for tax revenue, they may have little choice in the matter.

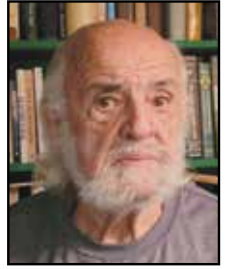
How bad can warehouses be? Count the loading docks. A 5.5 million-square-foot warehouse complex planned for Central Jersey will have 910 loading docks and very likely hundreds of 18-wheelers per day. And nighttime operations could augment the air and noise pollution by adding lighting glare.

Areas favored by warehouse developers and their tenants are urban zones; highway interchanges and railroad connections; shuttered malls that can be converted to warehouses; and cheapest of all, undeveloped land, including farms and forests. New Jersey's warehouses (see map) are most [concentrated](#) in northeast New Jersey, along the I-287 corridor, Middlesex County, and from Burlington County to Gloucester County (map page 6). But with New Jersey's network of roads, trucks are everywhere.

There are at least 1,900 warehouses in New Jersey, up 36% since 2000, according to a 2022 Sierra Club [report](#). Certainly, many more will come. Among them may be a 4 million-square-foot warehouse off Route 22 and Route 31 in Clinton Township. If it is truly a single building, it would cover 92 acres and easily rank as one of the largest warehouse facilities in North America. ExxonMobil recently notified the township that it intends to sell hundreds of acres to make room for the development.

Nationwide, warehouses have increased 55% since 2000, from 25,301 to 42,309, according to the Sierra Club report. They are exploding due to ever-expanding e-commerce, declining shopping malls and downtown stores,

>continued on page 6



WEST WINDSOR

continued from page 1

In addition, the applicant has proposed another 1 MSF or so for offices, retail, two hotels, and a multi-pump gas station. On the east side of Route 1, the project will straddle Clarksville Road, and the developer will construct a new road that bisects that.

To get to the NJ Turnpike, trucks will need access to Princeton-Hightstown Road/Route 571, but according to the conditions of approval they might not be permitted to use Clarksville Road, the most direct way. This would negatively impact other residential areas. Understandably many residents remain very concerned.

The next steps in the approval process include review by the Mercer County Planning Board, decisions on permits by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), a decision by the NJ Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding access to Route 1, and DEP permit approvals. In addition, it is unclear how the township will determine compliance with the conditions, the timeframe for compliance, and exactly how compliance will be defined.

There is no reliable projection of how many vehicles will enter and leave the site each day, neither are there consistent data on pre-pandemic vs current roadway volumes. There are no esti-

mates whether the current road system can carry the potential volumes. At the same time, if the tenants turn out to be "hub" warehouses serving, for instance, UPS or Amazon Prime, then a large number of small trucks should be added to the daily total. The township's consultant offered an industry standard for parking spaces of one space per 2,500 SF, but it is unclear how this relates to other numbers given.

The applicant did request a variance allowing 910 loading docks. What we don't know is how many trucks per day can be expected to use each loading dock.

At this point, DOT has not indicated when the Route 1 access decision will be made. In the meantime, the applicant has applied to the county for access to Quakerbridge Road and Clarksville Road, both Mercer County roads. County roadways and drainage systems are the county planning board's responsibility by statute, so the county will become a major focus of stakeholder concerns.

West Windsor, Princeton, Hamilton, Lawrence, Plainsboro, and Kingstons will all likely be affected by this development. One possible mitigating solution for them is to participate in development of an access management plan (AMP), as defined in the NJ Administrative Code (NJAC), Section 16:47-12. Where a state road (Route 1) is

How to Address Warehouse Development in Your Town

By Kip Cherry • Central Jersey Conservation Chair

1. Contact your mayor and members of your council to express your concern.
2. Encourage your mayor and council to make a request to the state Department of Transportation (DOT) for the preparation of an "access management plan" that will determine how best to handle the projected traffic.
3. Encourage your mayor to submit comments to DOT on the highway issues and make your own submission.
4. Write letters to the editor and opinion pieces expressing your concerns and making specific comments and suggestions about impacts, alternatives, and innovations that should be considered. Innovations might include computerized dispatch, the use of electric vehicles, and the production of solar power from expansive roof areas.
5. Organize residents of your community and enlist the aid of environmental advocates and labor unions. Monitor the conditions for planning board approval that may be voted on soon.
6. Gather information on the impacts of warehouse construction and share this information with decisionmakers in your community, including your mayor and council. Where you feel you lack information, file Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests to obtain information on the status of applications before the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) relevant to the project. Also, file OPRA requests with the DEP for documents on various potential impacts, including stormwater, wetlands, toxic waste sites, historic sites, and threatened and endangered species.
7. Participate in the public participation process of your county planning board with a particular focus on the board's areas of specific authority (i.e., county roads and drainage areas). Focus on road safety and congestion, stormwater flooding and stream contamination. (Note that county planning boards do not handle appeals of decisions by municipal planning and zoning boards. Such appeals are made to local courts. At the same time, violations of federal statutes, such as the Clean Water Act, are made to federal court).

involved, bordering municipalities can participate. The NJAC does not specify how other affected municipalities can be integrated into the planning process. Presumably this could be worked out. The affected municipalities should apply to DOT for formation of the AMP.

An AMP is critical to the environmental and economic wellbeing of the area. Inquiries for more information

can be directed to: Elaine Schwartz (609-963-2467), assistant division director, Major Access Permits, DOT; Elaine.Schwartz@dot.nj.gov

Comments and concerns by municipalities or other stakeholders on Bridge Point LLC's Route 1 access plan also should be sent to Elaine Schwartz. The NJAC specifically states that written comments will be considered.

AWASH IN WAREHOUSES

continued from page 5

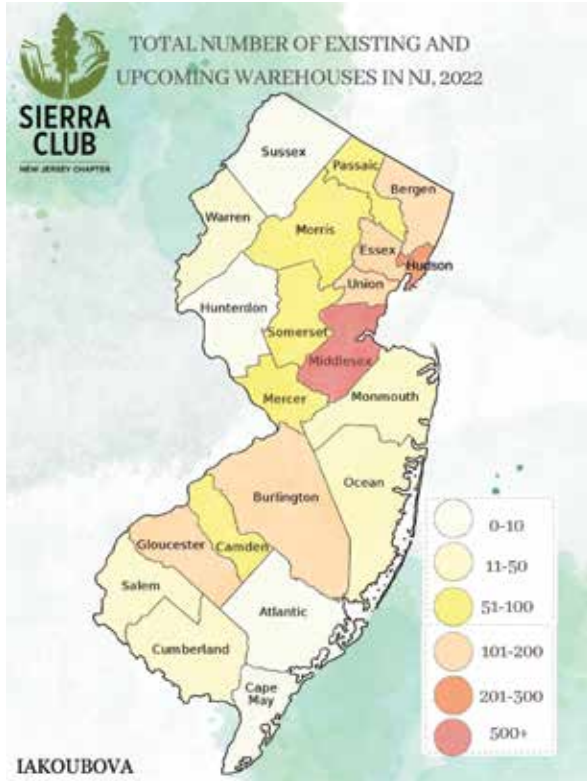
and rising manufacturing output. US warehouses employ over 2 million people, not including truckers. In 2020, Amazon became the largest employer in New Jersey (40,000). Sadly, the adequacy of wages and benefits is often disputed.

Warehousing Isn't Going Away

Of course, we can blame Covid-19 and its variants for forcing us to order items online, but we must own up to our preference for deliveries on our doorstep, often just hours after we hit "send."

With encouragement like this, warehouse traffic and pollution can spread like ink into surrounding communities and regions. New Jersey is still in the very early stages of finding ways to regulate their environmental and infrastructure impacts.

Legislation to solve some of New Jersey's warehouse problems failed to pass last year, but in September the NJ State Planning Commission adopted [guidelines](#) for municipalities on handling applications. However, it's only guidance and doesn't have the iron backbone of law.



Although the warehouse boom appears unstoppable, New Jersey, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, and Washington have adopted California's requirement that, year by year, more medium- and heavy-duty trucks sold in these states must be zero-emission vehicles. Yet, despite their public environmental claims, truck manufacturers are [opposing these benchmarks](#).

YOUTH COMMITTEE CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Building Up Youth Involvement

By Raghav Akula • 23akular@mtps.us

Issue-focused committees have provided working muscles for the NJ Chapter's advocacy, from transportation to offshore wind to legislative action. Now, a new source of strength has been added to the Chapter: the Youth Committee.

As the Sierra Club's NJ student liaison and now chair of the Youth Committee, I noticed that student members and youth involvement were scarce within the Chapter, but whether the debate was around fossil fuel infrastructure or plastic production, the Sierra Club's work routinely covered issues that would affect young people the most. The Club serves as a potent force in the environmental movement, offering connections that are difficult for high schoolers to cultivate on their own. So, for much of my time with the Chapter, I've tried to augment our level of youth engagement and enable students to access the vast networks and resources that our Chapter offers. These efforts culminated with the inauguration of the Youth Committee and the NJ Youth Climate Alliance (NJYCA).

The Youth Committee now consists of me, high school sophomore Shirin Sood, junior Syona Gupta, and freshman Shriyaa Madineni. It's a team with diverse interests and experiences who all want to get more involved in the constructive work of climate action. We also lead the newly formed NJYCA, an organization that we'll use to help publicize our work and coordinate with other state environmental groups. With this visibility and team organization, we'll leverage the resources of vari-

ous activist groups to increase youth involvement in the politics and advocacy of climate action.

Two main areas we'll explore are educational projects and targeted campaigns. We'll start producing original articles about environmental issues, ranging from clean energy technology to policy summaries. We'll publish these in newsletters, on social media, and on our websites in partnership with the Princeton University-based NJ Student Climate Advocates (NJSCA).

The other portion of our work will hopefully supplement the work and achievements of Sierra Club staff and volunteers, from lobbying state representatives to testifying for legislative committees. We intend the NJYCA to be an inherently collaborative laboratory of new ideas.

We invite youth from anywhere in the state—whether they've been engaged in the environmental movement for years or are just wading into the fight—to reach out to us with any campaigns or projects they have in mind. We're open to any suggestions and proposals, from writing policy summaries with the NJSCA to meeting with elected officials.

If this sounds like the platform for youth engagement that you've been waiting for, visit our website at www.njyouthclimate.com and contact us at njyouthclimate@gmail.com. Join us and be at the forefront of the fight against the climate crisis.



Building Electrification Is Making Headway in NJ

By Steve and Pat Miller • NJ 50 x 30 BE Team

Previously, we have described the concept of "building electrification" (BE) and what is involved in the transition to electrified, or clean, buildings. Here, we talk about recent developments and successes.

Of the three biggest sources of carbon emissions in New Jersey—transportation, electricity generation, and buildings—the buildings sector has lagged in terms of attention paid and emissions reductions achieved. The NJ 50 x 30 BE Team's goal is to jumpstart the transition to a decarbonized building sector through a combination of building electrification (heating, cooking, and cooling), building efficiency (or weatherization, such as more insulation and elimination of air leaks), and cleaner electricity (i.e., rooftop or community solar or third-party wind or solar supplier).

On May 2, the BE Team wrote to Gov. Phil Murphy requesting several clean energy initiatives, including an aggressive building electrification roadmap by the end of 2022. Subsequently, the BE Team met with several associated NJ agencies to advocate for this roadmap.

Statewide Collaborative

On Oct 3, Murphy announced the [launch](#) of New Jersey's statewide Clean Buildings Working Group, a collaboration between the governor's Office of Climate Action and the Green Economy (OCAGE) and the NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU). The group includes five NJ agencies, plus 18 stakeholders and experts in industry, government, building science, organized labor, environmental justice, and workforce development. They are charged with developing innovative solutions to decarbonize the state's building sector to help achieve a 100% clean energy economy and reduce statewide emissions by 80% below 2006 levels by 2050. They will also help achieve buy-in from key parties to make the decarbonization solutions the best possible.

OCAGE Executive Director Jane Cohen and BPU President Joseph L. Fiordaliso will lead the Working Group. Building decarbonization is a key aspect of the 2019 Energy Master Plan.

Working Group members will bring insight and experience to drive the adoption of energy efficiency improvements and emissions reduction upgrades in buildings—a priority of the Murphy administration's climate action agenda—while supporting critical repairs for low-to-moderate income housing and expanding opportunities for job growth in green building. The result should be the state's strategic roadmap to clean buildings, laying out recommendations for policy, legislative, workforce, and funding strategies to create cleaner, greener buildings that support and benefit NJ families and workers.

In September, the BPU announced the [launch](#) of the "Whole House" pilot

program designed to address health and safety issues in residences in low-income communities in Trenton. New Jersey is the first state in the nation to implement such a program. Whole House refers to a holistic approach to healthy housing—incorporating energy efficiency improvements while remediating health and safety hazards that too often cause efficiency-upgrade work to be deferred or delayed. These hazards include water intrusion, mold, asthma triggers, asbestos, radon, slip-and-fall risks, pests, electrical deficiencies, lead-based paint, lead service lines, and other existing toxins and contaminants. The results of this pilot are expected to provide important input to the Working Group's solutions as well.

In August, the federal Inflation Reduction Act was passed, and many of its benefits regarding building electrification are already in effect or will be in 2023. The generous tax incentives and discounts that are provided, especially to low-income households and disadvantaged communities, will go a long way toward easing the transition to low-or-no emission buildings. Examples are 30% tax credits on solar systems, energy storage, and EV chargers, plus discounts in the thousands of dollars for heat pump space and water heaters and in the hundreds of dollars for other efficient electric appliances. The discounts include up to \$6,500 on breaker box and wiring upgrades. More detailed information for your ZIP code and income are available at bit.ly/3GNsnxA

Silver Lining to Cost Increase

Although the recent rise in the cost of gas for heating and cooking has been painful, the silver lining is electricity prices rise much less and at a slower pace than fossil fuel prices. This is because only about half of New Jersey's electricity is generated from fossil fuels; the other half is either renewable or nuclear, whose price is relatively stable. Plus, the price of electricity is more highly regulated and is based on a three-year average that is updated only once per year. This means that gas is now about 20% more expensive than electricity. So, switching to electricity saves you money on energy bills, especially if you can pair it with building efficiency measures and onsite or community solar.

The NJ 50 x 30 BE Team is championed by Sierra Club and eagerly welcomes members across New Jersey regardless of their affiliation with Sierra Club or any other organizations. Email the authors at stevemiller@comcast.net and patmiller@comcast.net if you would like to join.



Advertise in *The Jersey Sierran*! We have thousands of environmentally minded readers.

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

Need a thoughtful gift for a friend or relative? Support the Sierra Club with a purchase of unique apparel, campsite accessories, calendars, and more. You can even "adopt" a wild animal with a donation.

Visit: store.sierraclub.org/storefront.aspx



Enjoying the Fall Foliage in Shenandoah National Park

By Gary Frederick • Conservation Chair, Raritan Valley Group

Among our great national parks, Shenandoah lies within a day's drive of New Jersey and contains some of the most pristine forested wilderness areas on the East Coast. During this past fall, when foliage colors were at their peak, I spent a few days with my wife and friends hiking the park's magnificent trails and enjoying breathtaking views across the Shenandoah Valley.



Credit: Gary Frederick

Imagine a panorama of chestnut and red oak treetops, carpeted across the hills with their leaves turned red and gold from the chill of the autumn air. To the west are 3,500-foot views of the fertile Shenandoah Valley; to the east, the rolling hills of Virginia Piedmont.

On trails that were blanketed with golden fallen leaves, we hiked one day through quiet woods, first ascending steeply to Hawksbill Mountain with its 4,050 foot elevation and views of the valley. The next day we hiked down the Dark Hollow Falls trail to see its majestic waterfalls and then continued on for several miles to Rose River Falls. Along the way we followed fast-moving streams cascading over boulders and paths dappled with sunlight, eventually emerging from the forest onto a wider carriage-type road, which then wound back into the woods. We ended our visit with an easy hike along the Loft Mountain Loop, a 2-mile route with an elevation gain of 500 feet.

Shenandoah is known for its great hiking trails, including 101 miles of the Appalachian Trail, which meanders

its way for 2,194 miles from Georgia to Maine. A white rectangular blaze marked on trees told us when we were on the famous trail. In total, Shenandoah has more than 500 miles of trails, plus numerous campgrounds and lodges for multiday visits. We stayed at Big Meadows Lodge, located at the midway point of the 105-mile long Skyline Drive. The lodge, dating back to the park's dedication in 1936 by President Franklin Roosevelt, is a rustic throwback to simpler times. No TVs in the rooms in the main lodge building, finicky radiator heat, and sketchy Wi-Fi at best. But in a way, it seemed perfect for our time with nature.



For those who want to see the entire park on their trip, a drive along Skyline Drive provides many awesome vantage points throughout its entire length from Front Royal, VA, in the north to Rockfish Gap, its southernmost point. But for me, hiking will always be the most fulfilling way to see a great space like Shenandoah. Hiking through quiet woods, away from traffic, congestion, and noise, is calming and rejuvenating. There's no feeling like it, and I can't wait to go back and hike some more.

Close Encounter of the Rattlesnake Kind

By Paul Sanderson • paulmsanderson@aol.com

Some weeks ago, a friend and I went for a walk in the Pequannock Watershed (West Milford) on the White Trail, accessible from parking areas P4 to P7 off Clinton Road. It was a beautiful day, and we were both wearing shorts. The first half of the trip was uneventful, but at one point, when I was about 5 feet behind my friend, out of the corner of my eye I caught something on the ground that didn't look "right." My brain immediately computed "JUMP!" and, with a very loud "Yaaaaah!" I moved about 3 feet forward. My friend turned saying "What? What?!" and I pointed at the snake we had just passed. The rattlesnake was facing away from the trail (and us) and it was *not* shaking its tail (rattling). I immediately noted that it had beautiful, startling black and white coloring, unlike any of the previous (three or four) rattlesnakes I have seen in New Jersey, all of which were sort of brown.



Credit: Paul Sanderson

My friend and I moved back a few feet more, hoping the snake would uncoil and slither away, but it just stayed as it was, and we resumed our hike. I thought, weeks later, that the snake had likely eaten something and was in a lethargic mood. Perhaps it recognized me as a Sierra Club member and felt reassured!



GROUP OUTINGS COORDINATORS

Chapter Outings Chair: Leona Fluck
leona@pineypaddlers.com, (609) 259-3734
Skylands: Dave Alcock, dwhoob@hotmail.com
Hunterdon Warren: Jonathan Wall
jonwall@jonwall.com
North Jersey: Co-Chairs: *Open Position!*
 and Mary Walsh, blehlwalsh@hotmail.com
Gateway: Steven Yafet, syafet@gmail.com
Hudson Co: Natalya DeRobertis-Theye
natalyadt@gmail.com
Loantaka: Kevin O'Brien, kbkob@aol.com
Central Jersey: Leona & George Fluck
Leona@pineypaddlers.com
Raritan Valley: John Miraglia, johnworks3@aol.com
 S. Pasricha, spjersey@gmail.com;
 Bernadette Maher
Jersey Shore: John Luard, John.Luard@gmail.com
Ocean County: Terrance Brown, (848) 333-7331
terrybrown@comcast.net
West Jersey: *Open Position!*
South Jersey: Tom Boghosian,
tfboghosian44@gmail.com
Singles Section: *Open Position!*
LGBTQ+ Section: Jonathan Wall, jonwall@jonwall.com,
 and Robert Zitzman, roberttmz@att.net
Inspiring Connections Outdoors:
chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com
River Touring: Fred Tocce, (908) 453-2205 (H)
 RD-1, Box 277, Washington 07882

Outing Leaders: Please send write-ups for April-to-June 2023 to your group outings coordinator (or, if you don't associate yourself with a single group, directly to leona@pineypaddlers.com) before February 1, 2023. If you are planning to lead an outing close to the beginning of one of our quarterly publication periods, please submit it also for the previous *Sierran*, due to the occasional lag in mailing. Also, please send outing rosters or sign-up sheets to the chapter office as soon as possible after each outing.

Note to Group Outings Coordinators: Please submit your April-to-June 2023 trip write-ups by February 1, 2023.

NOTES ON OUTINGS: All outings are generally open to Club members, guests and anyone interested in outings. Unless otherwise specified, the events are free and open 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. 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.

JANUARY

Jan 1 (Sun): 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. We will select a Pinelands hike to ring in the New Year. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian at tfboghosian44@gmail.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (S)

Jan 5 (Thurs): National Bird Day Hike at Veterans Park (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. This magnificent 330-acre park was built in honor of Hamilton veterans in 1977. Ribbons of walking paths are sprinkled through wooded areas with picnic grounds and rest stops. Meet at the tennis court parking lot, 2264 Kuser Rd., Hamilton Twp. Bring snacks, water, and lunch. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required. Joanne P. jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com (C)

Jan 8 (Sun): NJ State Museum (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m. Let's enjoy an "indoor outing" to the NJ State Museum. Interested in dinosaurs? The Museum has NJ life-size fossil casts in the exhibit "Written in the Rocks: Fossil Tales of New Jersey." The Lower-Level Gallery has an exhibition, "Preserving Traditions of the Delaware Indians," which offers visitors a glimpse into the lives of the Delaware Indians in New Jersey over a 200-year span. Website, www.state.nj.us/state/museum/ Please register to confirm participation. Co-leaders: Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com and Joanne P. at jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com (C)

Jan 14 (Sat): Hike Ramapo Valley Reservation, Mahwah, NJ (Bergen Co.) 10 a.m., 7 miles in 4 hours, hilly terrain. Rest rooms at the parking lot. No pets. Hiking boots and daypack with water required. Bring a 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)

Jan 14 (Sat): Educational Lecture and Walking Tour at The Raptor Trust, Millington (Morris Co.) 10 a.m. Short, easy hike through the facility. Leave 2 hours for the activities. The Raptor Trust provides free medical care to injured, sick, and orphaned wild birds. Those too injured to return to the wild can be viewed on site. No pets. Supportive footwear recommended, bring plenty of water. Restrooms available. Preregistration required; group size is limited. Contact Leader Kevin O'Brien, 908-403-0900 or kbkob@aol.com to register. Meet at 1390 Whitebridge Rd., Millington, NJ, in the Raptor Trust parking lot. (L)

Jan 15 (Sun): Hike Tatum Park, Middletown (Monmouth Co.) OUTING **CANCELLED** Tatum offers a grove of mature holly, another of tulip trees, and many open meadows and a variety of terrain, with some opportunities for short climbs. We will walk about 4 miles in about 2 hours. Supportive footwear recommended, bring plenty of water. Leader: John Luard. Register online at www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-shore Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Jan 22 (Sun): "Photo Safari" and Hike at Sandy Hook (Monmouth Co.) 11 a.m. Situated in Sandy Hook Bay, the tip of Skeleton Hill Island has the unique advantage of being the winter host of many restful and weary harbor seals. There is no guarantee that we will see the seals, but they usually arrive sometime in December from their breeding grounds up in Northern New England and Southern Canada. They forage at night and during the day mostly sleep and take it easy. Bring binoculars, dress warmly in layers and bring a hot beverage and snacks; planning for 2 hours out-doors to observe seals and waterfowl that overwinter in New Jersey. Meet at Gateway National Recreation Area, 128 South Hartshorne Dr., Highlands, 07732. Facilities are available. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at johnworks3@aol.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (RV)

>continued on page 8

Jan 29 (Sun): Hike on the D&R Canal (Mercer/Burlington Cos.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. It's National Hat Day, so wear your favorite chapeau! Cross over the Lock 1 "swinging bridge" as we walk along the towpath; perhaps see the resident **bald eagles**. Meet at the River Line parking lot in Bordentown City. Option for late lunch at Heart of Bordentown (HOB) Tavern. Leashed dogs are welcome. There are no facilities. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Joanne P. at jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com and Leona F. at Leona@pineypaddlers.com (C)

FEBRUARY

Feb 2 (Thurs): World Wetlands Day Hike at Jakes Branch County Park (Ocean Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. Jakes Branch has a nature center with interesting hands-on exhibits and an observation deck that offers a 360° view of the Pinelands. Meet at Jakes Branch Park, 1100 Double Trouble Rd., Beachwood, NJ. Option for late lunch at Shady Rest Restaurant. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather/icy conditions cancel. Preregistration is required. George & Leona F. leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Feb 11 (Sat): Cross Country Ski at High Point State Park, Sussex, NJ (Sussex Co.) 10 a.m. There is a full-service cross-country ski center at the park with rentals and a ski lodge. <http://www.xcskhighpoint.com/> We expect to take 4-5 hours for fun in the snow. Features: Incredible views all around. No pets. XC skis and boots and a day-pack with water required. Bring a 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)

Feb 12 (Sun): Hike Huber Woods Park, Middletown (Monmouth Co.) **OUTING CANCELLED** We love this park. It has a 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 wel-come, supportive footwear recommended, bring plenty of water. Leader: John Luard. Register online at: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-shore Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Feb 14 (Tues): Valentine's Day Hike at Smith's Woods (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace at Smith's Woods and Historic Smithville Park. The park features a diverse collection of habitats and terrain with vistas of the Rancocas Creek. Meet at the Smith's Woods access parking lot, East Railroad Ave. Facilities are available. Hiking poles recommended. Bring snacks and water. Option for late lunch at the Vincentown Diner. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com and Joanne P. at jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com (C/W)

Feb 18 (Sat): Presidents Day Weekend Hike at Whitesbog Village (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. Whitesbog is a NJ historic site and was a village built to house workers in the local cranberry bogs. We'll look for wintering Tundra Swans as we hike around the bogs. Directions www.whitesbog.org Meet in the Village parking lot across from the General Store. Leashed dogs are welcome. Facilities are available. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required. George & Leona F. Leona@pineypaddlers.com (W)

Feb 21 (Tues): Mardi Gras Hike at Thompson Park Conservation Area (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. It's also "Paczki Day" (Polish doughnut). A highlight of our hike is the Natural Spring located in the park; one of 12 in New Jersey. Thompson Park is dominated by heavily wooded forests and lowland swamps along the Manalapan Brook. We will meet at the Thompson Park Trailhead next to the Off-Leash Dog Area on Fir Drive, off Perrineville Rd., Monroe Twp. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Facilities are available. Hiking poles recommended. Leashed dogs are welcome. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Sindhu P. at spjersey@gmail.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (RV)

Feb 26 (Sun): Hike at Wharton State Forest (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. Last year Wharton State Forest opened the 1808 Hiking Trail and the Sand and Water Hiking Trail. The 1808 Trail follows a 200-year-old trail to where the Buttonwood Campground is today, where we'll have lunch. The trail is lined with massive, towering Atlantic white cedars in several places and cuts through Mordecai Swamp, affording fantastic views deep into it. Good footwear and hiking poles are recommended. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bring water, snacks, and lunch on the hike. Inclement weather cancels. Meet at the Batsto Village Visitors Center parking lot, 31 Batsto Rd., Hammonton. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian at tfboghosian44@gmail.com and Leona F. at Leona@pineypaddlers.com (S)

MARCH

Mar 11 (Sat): Hike Wawayanda State Park, Vernon Township (Sussex Co.) 10 a.m., 7 miles in 4 hours in moderately hilly terrain. Features: Wawayanda Lake. Facilities: There is a bathroom building a short walk from the parking lot. Requirement: hiking boots. Bring a day-pack with water and lunch. No pets. 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)

Mar 12 (Sun): DST Hike at Turkey Swamp Park (Monmouth Co.) **Note later meeting time at 11 a.m.**, 3-4 miles, easy pace. The park is about 2,300 acres with trails through fields, forests, and wetlands. Park information and directions: www.monmouthcountyparks.com/ Turn into the Main Entrance—200 Georgia Road, Freehold—drive to the Oak Point picnic area parking lot. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bring lunch, water, and snacks. Hiking poles are recommended. Inclement weather cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at johnworks3@aol.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (RV)

Mar 19 (Sun): Hike Cheesequake State Park, Old Bridge (Middlesex Co.) **OUTING CANCELLED** We'll use a couple of trails to create nearly 5 miles of walking in uplands near salt marsh. There are some ups and downs, and it can be muddy—bring plenty of water; supportive footwear rec-ommended. Leader: John Luard. Register online at: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-shore Leader will provide meeting place after you register. (JS)

Mar 26 (Sun): Hike at Estell Manor (Atlantic Co.) 10 a.m., 4 miles, easy pace. Meet at the Warren E. Fox Nature Center, on 109 Blvd., 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. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian at tfboghosian44@gmail.com and Leona F. at Leona@pineypaddlers.com (S)

APRIL

Apr 1 (Sat): A Lighthearted Day (No Pranks!) Hike at Mercer County Park (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. We'll meet at the East Picnic Area parking lot 1346 Edinburg Rd., Princeton Junction, NJ 08550. We'll hike the East Trails and see the campground available for overnight camping on the trail to the Casperson Rowing Center. Bring lunch, water, and snacks. Leashed pets are welcome. Facilities are available. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Joanne P at jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com and Leona F. at leona@pineypaddlers.com (C)



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	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Vice Chair	Celeste Martin *	onecentral@mac.com
Conservation Chair	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Political Co-Chairs	Karen Becker *	karbecker@gmail.com
	Amy Weeder *	aweeder@comcast.net
Outings	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Treasurer, Secretary	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Warren County Issues	Pat Banes *	patrick_banes@comcast.net
Webmaster/Listmaster	John Kashwick	jkashwick@gmail.com
Excom at Large	Jonathan D. Wall	docjdwall@gmail.com

* Group Executive Committee Member

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

Jan 4 (Wed): 7 p.m. Flatwater Kayaker Jeremy Travers will talk about his time spent kayaking the Upper Musconetcong Watershed and surrounding waters. For the last 10 years he has explored the Upper Musconetcong Watershed from Lake Hopatcong to Saxton Falls dam. Relying on video and photographs (many displayed in his newly published book), he will discuss his passion for kayaking while serving as a steward

and advocate for our local waters. **In-person at the North Hunterdon County Library in Clinton, NJ**

Feb 1 (Wed): 7 p.m. Dams and Dam Removals in New Jersey, Beth Styler Barry, director of river restoration for The Nature Conservancy in New Jersey, and former executive director of the Musconetcong Watershed Association, will give an overview of dams and dam removals in New Jersey. There are 1,700 regulated dams in the state's rivers and many more unregulated dams. According to experts, the fragmentation of our river systems plays a huge role in loss of biodiversity and abundance of freshwater species and the ecosystems that depend on them, problems that will likely worsen as our climate warms. Case studies on the Musconetcong and other local rivers will be featured. **In-person at North Hunterdon County Library**

March 1 (Wed): 7:30 p.m. Industrializing the Countryside: Tracey Heisler of the Skylands Preservation Alliance will discuss how to derail efforts to bulldoze farms and fields to build massive warehouses. She will review legal, regulatory, and community-based strategies to mitigate watershed and environmental impacts. Tracey is president of the Skylands Preservation Alliance Board of Trustees and a long-time environmental advocate who resides in Warren County. **In-person at North Hunterdon County Library**

OTHER EVENTS

Jan 11 (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 proposed for Hunterdon and Warren counties. Please consider representing our group at local, county and state meetings which may permit these projects.

Night Skies: The Hunterdon Warren Group and the Light Pollution and Dark Skies Committee (LPDSC) are encouraging municipalities to curb light pollution by introducing ordinances that encourage proper lighting. We need citizens to 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. 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/northjerseysierraclub

Twitter: @sierraclub_nj

Instagram: sierraclubnorth_nj

OFFICERS

Co-Chair	Diane Scarangella*	diascat@hotmail.com
Co-Chair & Treasurer	Buddy Jenssen*	buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
Secretary	Ron De Vos	rondevos58@outlook.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
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
Youth Outreach/Outings Chair	Erica Cowper*	ecowper22@gmail.com
Co-Chair	Rebecca Wilkin	rebeccawilkin@gmail.com
Diversity/Environmental Justice Co-Chair	Bushra Asfare*	bushra_c.e@hotmail.com
Special Events/Membership	Open position!	
Consulting Engineer Member	Bushra Asfare*	bushra_c.e@hotmail.com
	Bob Weiss*	bobweiss1967@gmail.com

*Elected North Jersey Group Executive Committee Members.

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 upon 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 NJ and Don't Gas the Meadowlands, and with other NJ groups to advocate for renewable energy and a moratorium on fossil fuel usage, preserve our waterways and protect our parklands.

UPCOMING ACTIONS/ISSUES

Join Sierra LGBTQ+: Join the North Jersey Group of the Sierra Club, the Bergen County Lesbian & Gay Alliance (BCLA), and Lavender Treks in outdoor, social and environmental justice events for adults and youth! Join the **NJ Sierra LGBTQ group** in planning events for LGBTQ adults and youth. **If interested contact Diane Scarangella, diascat@hotmail.com** AND read about upcoming events and actions in the next edition of the Sierran!

Preserving open spaces in Bergen and Passaic counties: Contact Diascat@hotmail.com or Buddy.jenssen@gmail.com for more information about what you can do to preserve open spaces in Bergen and Passaic counties.

Restore the Overpeck County Park Area IV Woodland

- **Demand** the replanting of the 100-plus trees taken down and call for a return of natural habitat.
- **Demand** the creation of only unpaved walking paths throughout the woods!
- **Oppose** the creation of great lawns, paved walking paths, bike paths, and roadways in Area IV.

Protect the Climate: Contact Jeff at jefrap@optonline.net and keep your eye out for actions related to...

- The Tennessee Gas Pipeline upgrades in Sussex and Western Passaic County, which would provide gas for New York City, although its pollution would affect local residents and climate change in general;
- The NJ Transit gas backup plant in Kearney;
- The Passaic County Sewerage Commission's backup gas plant in Newark to provide power for sludge processing—We strongly support Newark citizens in their quest for environmental justice and to protect their children from asthma and other health issues;
- The transportation of liquefied natural gas through New Jersey from Pennsylvania (Gibbstown Terminal); and,
- The Williams Transco Regional Energy Access Expansion Project, which would include multiple existing facilities and two new pipeline facilities.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Political Action Committee Co-Chair Wanted:** Contact Ron De Vos at rondevos58@outlook.com
- **Event Planning and Membership Committee: Chair/Co-Chair Positions Open!**
- **Conservation Committee: Co-Chair Open Position!** Contact Mary at north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
- **Marketing/Social Media Committee: Chair/Co-Chair Positions Open!** Contact Marie at mmannino@yahoo.com
- **Outings Committee:** Contact Mary at north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org or Buddy at buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
- **Youth Outreach/Outings:** Contact Erica at ecowper22@gmail.com
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Environmental Justice Committee: *Chair Position Open!* Contact Bushra Asfare at bushra_c.e@hotmail.com

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

>continued on page 10

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.

HUDSON COUNTY GROUP

Webpage: www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hoodson-county

Email: hoodsonsierraclub@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 hoodsonsierraclub@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

This quarter has been highlighted by our efforts to help re-elect our endorsed candidates, Tom Malinowski in the 7th Congressional District (CD) and Mikie Sherrill in the 11th CD. Allen and other members have attended rallies and street fairs, supporting the candidates, in a number of towns. We have had our great new green Loantaka Group canopy present in Chatham, New Providence, and Westfield.

We are looking toward creation of the Loantaka Community Action Group. We hope to have representatives from communities throughout the Group area to discuss actions we can take at the local level to advocate for climate action plans, green infrastructure projects, local education, and more depending on the needs identified. Contact Allen for additional details.

Allen has continued speaking before groups on environmental and Sierra Club issues. If you are interested in presentations on green infrastructure, offshore wind, or the Green Amendment, contact Allen. He is also always adding new topics to his presentations.

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 Programs	George and Leona Fluck	Leona@Pineypaddlers.com
Conservation Chair	Joanne Pannone	Jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
Recycling and Zero Waste Coordinator	Kip Cherry	Kipatthesierraclub@gmail.com
Trails	Sylvia Kay	Sylviakay222@gmail.com
Webmaster	Dave Mattek	MattekDC@aol.com
Group Executive Committee Members	Benjamin Steinberg	
	Joanne Pannone, Kip Cherry, Sylvia Kay	

Central and Raritan have teamed up for outings to the Pinelands and Thompson Park (Lindcroft) and Grounds for Sculpture (Hamilton). We have outings planned throughout the year.

Our conservation work continues with input into warehouse projects at Robbinsville (Mercer Corporate Park) and West Windsor (Bridge Point). We also participated in a special meeting at Wharton State Forest and joined a special Pinelands walk with Anjuli Ramos-Busot and the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. The Delaware Riverkeeper Network had an educational mission to show Trenton-area residents the Assunpink Creek watershed, making stops along the waterway to see eight projects for flood control and cleanup.

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	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;
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: Compressor stations are proposed for Old Bridge (CS 207) and Neshanic Station in Branchburg (CS 505). Liquid natural gas (LNG) storage is also proposed at Neshanic Station. Raritan Valley Group and members of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club testified in opposition at the public state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) hearing on the air permit at the Raritan Valley Community College. We were outnumbered by pipeline industry workers bussed to the hearing. The DEP air permit is still pending.

• **Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE):** The DEP has renewed Transco's air permit application for another 5 years (expires 2027).

• **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.

• **Old Bridge Township:** Woods along Route 9 South have been stripped to the bare earth to pave the way for new warehouses. Warehouses totaling more than 1.4 million square feet will be sited on 200 acres there.

• **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 treatment facility can be brought up to code (estimated for June 2023). "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** is increasingly flooding due to the climate crisis and fatal storms such as Tropical Storm Ida. The DEP has proposed the Inland Flood Protection Rule to replace out-of-date flood maps from 1999. The regulations would raise elevations of the first floor of dwellings on new construction by 2 to 3 feet. The comment period ends February 3, 2023.

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		
Secretary	Bob Grize		
Conservation Chair	Stan Greberis	908-415-9060	grapefruit@msm.com
Fundraising Co-Chair	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com
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
Climate Chair	Steve Miller	732-671-5917	SteveMiller@Comcast.net
Letter-Writing Committee	Chris Foley		ccfoley359@gmail.com

Open Positions!
Vice Chair, membership chair, high school coordinator, outings leaders

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		JPLighton1@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
Delegate 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

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

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

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.

Jan 11: The Native Plant Society of New Jersey will discuss how to plant your garden with native plants. 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 annecaridi@yahoo.com or Gina Carola ginaceee@verizon.net Or visit our Facebook page for the link to join the presentation.

Mar 8: To be Announced

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	tfboghosian44@gmail.com
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. One alternative is to fold back into the West Jersey Group (from which we originated in the mid-1970s). Please contact Dick Colby for a discussion. Otherwise, our consuming conservation issue, adopted just after the Group was founded, continues to be protection of the Great Egg Harbor Wild & Scenic River, and continues to demand the energies of those few officers who remain active both within the Sierra Club and in the Watershed Association (GEHWA) that spun off from the South Jersey Group. Very few of our local members seem interested in the meetings we once scheduled (monthly, from the early 1980s until 2005). For now, we'll continue to be listed in this Newsletter, and offer a point of contact for Club members in South Jersey who want help with local issues. 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.

Tom Boghosian is an avid kayaker (certified as a Maine Guide!), both oceangoing and in fresh waters, possibly willing to lead trips. 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. Julie Akers also works with Atlantic County Friends of the Parks, and is President of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association.

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.

After a two-year pause because of Covid-19 we are trying to reinvigorate the section. If you want to get involved, please contact one of the leaders below!

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

Meetup: www.meetup.com/njsierraclub

>continued on page 12

Facebook: www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt

OFFICERS
Chair *Open Position!*
Secretary Diane Scarangella diascat@hotmail.com
Treasurer Jonathan Wall docjdwall@gmail.com
Outings Chair Robert Zitzman robertmzi@yahoo.com
Webmaster/Listmaster John Kashwick John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Please check website for meetings and events.

Jan 7 (Sat): Great Swamp Walk: 1 pm. Our first in-person event in over two years! Please join us for an easy social walk of 3-4 miles along the roads in Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in Basking Ridge. Bring water and a snack, and wear sturdy walking shoes. Participants must sign a waiver online or in-person. Leader: Jonathan Wall. For meeting location and to register, please visit <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/lgbt>. Rain, falling snow, or extreme cold may cancel. Please check our website for updates

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 listserv, 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.

More about Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section is available 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.

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: Jan. 14, Feb. 11, March 11, April 8



SIERRA CLUB

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Executive Committee Members
 Judy Minot, Stan Greberis, Kip Cherry, Rich Isaac, John Kashwick, Paul Sanderson, Karen Becker, Renée Pollard, Joe Testa

Chapter Chair and Group Effectiveness Chair
 Rich Isaac (973) 716-0297 richard.isaac@sierraclub.org

Chapter Vice-Chair and Legislative Committee Chair
 John Kashwick john.kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Conservation Chair
 Greg Gorman ggorman07419@embarqmail.com

Conservation Vice-Chair
 Gina Carola (856) 848-8831 ginaceee@verizon.net

Political Committee Chair
 Karen Becker • political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Secretary and Grant Writing Editor
 Judy Minot Secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Parliamentarian and Council (CCL) Delegate
 Joe Testa CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Treasurer
 Paul Sanderson (908) 233-2414 Treasurer@NewJerseySierraClub.org

Co-Vice Treasurers
 George Denzer (609) 799-5839 GDenzer73@gmail.com
 Jim Andreano • Jimandreano@gmail.com
 Sunil Somalwar • sunil.somalwar@gmail.com

Membership Co-Chairs
 Pramod Raju pramodraju@newjersey.sierraclub.org
 Wael Kanj • waelkanj@gmail.com

Outings Chair
 Leona Fluck (609) 259-3734 leona@pineypaddlers.com

Newsletter Editor
 Tony Hagen (609) 499-8678 editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Webmaster
 Loraine Terrell webmaster@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Advisors and Liaisons
GIS (Geog. Info. Systems) Advisor
 Abdel Alfahham • adiaa.kc@gmail.com

School Liaison
 Raghav Akula • 23akular@mtps.us

Inspiring Connections Outdoors Chair (ICO)
 Oscar Nazar • ICOChair@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Legal Chair (Compliance Officer)
 Bill Singer, Esq. (908) 359-7873 wsinger@singerfedun.com

Transportation Outreach Coordinators
 Matthew Bewley • 14bewley@gmail.com
 Jordan Rosenbloom • rosenbloomjordan@gmail.com

Regional Issues Liaison
 Joan Denzer • JDenzer73@yahoo.com

Committees
Delaware Water Gap National Park and Preserve
 John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Elections Committee
 S. Pasricha, Chair • spjersey@gmail.com

Environmental and Social Justice Committee
 Renée Pollard, Chair • rpollard16@comcast.net

Facilities Committee (office, meeting sites)
 Paul Sanderson, Chair • treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Finance Committee
 Paul Sanderson, Chair • treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Forest Conservation Committee
 Greg Gorman, Chair • ggorman07419@embarqmail.com

Fundraising Committee
 Judy Minot, Co-Chair • Secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org
 Jim Adreano, Co-Chair • Jimadreano@gmail.com

Information Technology Committee
 Joe Testa, Chair • CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Legislative Committee
 John Kashwick, Chair John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Light Pollution and Night Sky Committee
 Jonathan Wall • docjdwall@gmail.com;
 John Kashwick • John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Nominating Committee
 Renée Pollard, Chair • rpollard16@comcast.net

Offshore Wind Committee
 Denise Brush, Chair offshorewind@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Personnel Committee
 Rich Isaac, Chair • richard.isaac@sierraclub.org

PFAS Committee
 Gary Frederick, Chair garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Transportation Committee
 Bill Beren, Chair • Beren1@verizon.net

Volunteer Communications Committee
 Allen Swanson, Chair • afswanson@hotmail.com

Youth Committee
 Raghav Akula, Chair • 23akular@mtps.us

Issue Coordinators
Air Quality and Clean Air
 Paul Ehrlich • p.w.ehrlich-nj@gmail.com

Alaska
 Amy Weeder • aweeder@comcast.net

Asbestos and Toxic Dust
 Francie Goldstein, MD • franciegoldstein@mindspring.com

Building Electrification
 Steve Miller • SteveMiller@Comcast.net

Clean Energy Campaign /Ready for 100
 Faris Jebara • faris.jebara@gmail.com

Community Solar
 Dick Colby • dick.colby@stockton.edu

Delaware River
 Gina Carola • ginaceee@verizon.net

Endangered Species/Wildlife
 Jamie Zaccaria • zaccaria@udel.edu

Gender, Equity, & Environment (Population)
 Priti Thakker • pthakker@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Genetically Modified Organisms
 Joanne Pannone • jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com

Home Solar
 Abbas Salim • azas786@yahoo.com

Noise Pollution
 Michael Compétielle • mcompétielle@gmail.com

Offshore Wind
 Denise Brush • offshorewind@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Passaic River
 Steve Yafet • syafet@gmail.com

Pinelands
 Jamie Philpot • jpot345@gmail.com

Regional
 Joan Denzer • jdenzer@yahoo.com

Tiger Conservation
 Sunil Somalwar • sunil.somalwar@gmail.com

Toxics Legal
 Leila Marcovici • leilamarcovici@gmail.com

Trails
 Dave Mattek • trail.coordinator@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Utah Wilderness
 Debbie Young • debyoung31@comcast.net

Watershed
 Faith Teitelbaum • faithtei@aol.com

Wetlands
 Robert “Bo” Petrillo • RPetrillo22@gmail.com

Wildlands
 John Kashwick • John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org

Zero Waste and Recycling
 Sylvia Kay • SylviaKay222@gmail.com

New Jersey Chapter Office
 145 West Hanover Street
 Trenton 08618
609-656-7612

Professional Staff
Chapter Director
 Anjuli Ramos-Busot anjuli.ramos@sierraclub.org

Chapter Conservation Program Manager
 Taylor McFarland taylor.mcfarland@SierraClub.org

Communications and Outreach Coordinator
 Jackie Greger jackie.greger@sierraclub.org

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



THE JERSEY Sierran

Vol. 52, No. 1 • Winter, 2023

Editor Tony Hagen • editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org
 Assisted by Sylvia Kay, George Moffatt, Joe Testa, and Judy Minot

Designer Karen Crosby • karonna@yahoo.com

Publisher Paul Sanderson • paulmsanderson@aol.com

Editorial Board: Tony Hagen, Chair; John Kashwick; Sylvia Kay; Joe Testa; Joan Denzer; Judy Minot; Allen Swanson; Taylor McFarland; Denise Brush; Jackie Greger

The Jersey Sierran appears in January, April, July and October. The deadline for copy for the 2023 April to June issue is Feb. 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.

Opinions, unless otherwise indicated, are the writer's only. Advertised products and services carry no Club endorsement.

Thank you to all who contributed to this issue! This newsletter is produced mostly by volunteers.

Members, please send address changes to: address.changes@sierraclub.org, or Sierra Club Membership 2101 Webster St., Suite 1300 Oakland, CA 94612 or 415-977-5653, and NJ Sierra Club, 145 West Hanover St. Trenton, NJ 08618

Advertising Information: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/jersey-sierran-information-advertisers>

Printed by Witherspoon Media, Kingston Addressed by Digital Dog Direct, Princeton Periodical postage paid at Princeton, NJ.

The Jersey Sierran is published quarterly by the Sierra Club's New Jersey Chapter, 145 West Hanover St., Trenton, NJ 08618

Copyright 2023
 Permission to reprint (with source acknowledgement) is granted to other Sierra Club entities.

MEMBERSHIP COUPON

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club
 Mastercard Visa American Express

Exp Date ____/____/____

Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____

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

Enclose check and mail to:
Sierra Club Member Services
 2101 Webster St., Suite 1300
 Oakland, CA 94612

SIERRA CLUB

F94Q **W 4000** -1

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Credit: Adobe Stock, CrizzlyStudioPhotos

OPINION

Can More Trees Reduce CO₂ Emissions?

By George Moffat • gmoffattgt@aol.com

Since our carbon dioxide (CO₂) level today may be the highest in almost [4 million](#) years, will planting trees help sequester the CO₂ driving our catastrophic climate problems? Yes? Maybe? Probably not?

Rapidly changing circumstances make all three answers debatable. Some argue trees will significantly reduce CO₂, and some are doubtful.

We should try, anyway, but succeeding in planting trees depends on many factors: growing impacts of local climate change; soil conditions; available water and sunlight; and how fast the tree will grow, its average lifetime, and the total CO₂ it can sequester. All plants absorb CO₂ through photosynthesis, but trees' large leaves and canopies make them the most efficient. Choosing a species can be tricky. Many fast-growing trees absorb CO₂ quickly, while slow growers can store more over their life spans. For the undecided, the [US Forest Service](#) has listed the best temperate zone "carbon sinks": London plane, Douglas fir, scarlet oak, red oak, Virginia live oak, and bald cypress.

During photosynthesis the tree needs the sun's energy to absorb water from the air and soil, and CO₂ from the atmosphere. The CO₂ then breaks down into glucose (simple sugars), which nourishes the tree and is combined with water to create oxygen that is released into the atmosphere. The CO₂ remains behind. However, when the tree dies, its decay slowly releases all that stored CO₂.

Sequestration Is Not a Forever Thing.

Earth naturally emits about 100 billion tons of CO₂ each year from undersea volcanos and hydrothermal vents, while its oceans, forests, and soils absorb an equivalent amount. These processes kept Earth's CO₂ in balance since trees started to appear about [395 million years](#) ago. But as the Industrial Revolution began during the 1700s, we started increasing CO₂ emissions, which today amount to an estimated 36 billion tons each year across the globe. If you count other greenhouse gases, such as methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorocarbons, the total goes much higher.

If we plant a tree that will absorb an average of about 22 pounds of CO₂ per

year, or 2,200 pounds in 100 years, we may feel righteous. However, the average US citizen creates about 22 tons of CO₂ a year, equivalent to 2,205 tons in 100 years.

Nevertheless, planting trees will lower our CO₂ emissions, if only somewhat. The US Forest Service [reported](#) in 2021 that in 2019 forest land, woodlands, and urban trees sequestered enough carbon to offset more than 11% of the

“By fully restocking federal, state, and private forests that have lost trees, carbon sequestration could be increased by 20%.”

total US greenhouse emissions. And it is estimated—optimistically—that that by fully restocking federal, state, and private forests that have lost trees, carbon sequestration could be increased by 20%.

However, climate change may make it difficult to fully restock many traditionally forested areas, given heatwaves, droughts, forest fires, and pest destruction. Today, up to [135 US tree species](#) face extinction, including one in six native species. Worldwide, of about 58,500 tree species, [one-third](#) are threatened with extinction, while at least 140 species are already extinct.

While trees alone will not offset our additional 36 billion tons of CO₂ a year, we should support reforestation “tree speers.” After all, they sequester some CO₂; cool the air; and absorb other greenhouse gases, including ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, methane, and carbon monoxide. And don't forget their photosynthetic bonus—creating our oxygen.

Trees also serve other ecological needs: absorbing rainfall; controlling runoff, erosion, flooding, and water pollution; providing wildlife habitat; moderating temperatures (somewhat); providing cover for other vegetation; plus providing beauty and serenity for our frazzled psyche.

Unfortunately, both old growth trees and saplings are increasingly succumbing to shifting weather patterns, such as droughts and hotter temperatures, forest fires, invasive insects, and declining flora and fauna that sustain their overall ecology.

So, while trees in the United States may sequester just [16%](#) of domestic CO₂ each year (955 million tons), compared with the 36 billion tons we create, they have the potential to do a lot more, if we let them.



Credit: Renée Pollard

Electric Vehicles on Display

Some awesome electric vehicles (EVs) were showcased at a Tri-County Sustainability and South Jersey Electric Vehicle Club event, Saturday, Oct. 29 at The Promenade at Sagemore shopping center in Marlton. Owners showed off their vehicles and shared information about them. Also, an NJ Transit electric bus now operating out of Camden was on display. NJ Chapter Sierra Club Executive Committee Member Renée Pollard said it was great to see so many models from various manufacturers on display. EV options are becoming more numerous for those who want to switch to electric. “My hope is within the next five to 10 years all we see is electric vehicles on the road. Let's work on making it a reality—the Earth will thank you!” Pollard said. Autos, top to bottom: Tesla Roadster, Tesla Model 3, Lucid.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

The Bear Hunt Is Back

On Nov. 15 the NJ Fish and Game Council voted to approve the return of New Jersey's black bear hunt, over the objections of many. No bear hunting had been allowed on state lands since 2020. This hunt was scheduled to take place in early December, with a limit to the total number of bears taken. Humane limitations include a ban on hunting cubs less than 75 lbs. or adults in the presence of cubs.

Despite Gov. Phil Murphy's previous opposition to the hunt, his office supported the move. The rationale is the growing bear population. The number of NJ bears has doubled from 1,500 to 3,000 since 2018 and is expected to grow to 4,000 by 2024. Bears have moved out of their natural areas to seek food, with a resulting rise in dangerous interactions with humans. According to the state Department of Environmental Protection, in the first 10 months of 2022, incidents grew 237%, and these included aggressive encounters with humans (62), one human attack, home entries (12 actual, 15 attempted), animal attacks (12 dogs, 52 livestock), and 84 incidents of property damage over \$1000.

The Sierra Club urged state officials to try nonlethal strategies first. “In order to reduce nuisance cases with bears, we need a real management plan that will deal with educating the public on how to live with bears and bear-proofing their property,” said NJ Chapter Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Biden Pushed to Make Good on IRA Promises

By George Moffatt • gmoffattgt@aol.com

A coalition of about 160 local and national advocacy groups, including the Sierra Club’s NJ Chapter, are pushing the Biden administration to quickly implement the environmental provisions of the federal Inflation Reduction Act. The coalition also urged him to implement 20 federal protections proposed in the coalition’s [Solutions for Pollution Action Plan](#) to make good on his promises to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and airborne toxins.

Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director for the Sierra Club’s NJ Chapter, praised Biden for signing the Inflation Reduction Act, and also urged that his administration “use its existing authority like the Clean Air Act to advance the strongest possible climate, public health, and toxic pollution protections possible.”

Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ) also supported the coalition’s efforts, stating that “New Jersey families deserve a healthy environment in which to raise their children, and the next generation deserves to inherit a planet protected from the worst of climate change.” Many pundits believe that the outcome of November’s election might encourage the president to push harder on his environmental agenda during the next few years.

The Solutions for Pollution campaign is a broad coalition, organized by the Climate Action Campaign. You can co-sign the Biden letter by visiting bit.ly/3gIqG9B

REPORT FROM TRENTON

NJ Wants to Move Construction Higher Up

With its four tornadoes, 30 deaths, intense rainfall, and flooding, Tropical Storm Ida in September 2021 confirmed what many authorities already knew: New Jersey’s flood maps and building restrictions are out of date. In October 2022, Gov. Phil Murphy and the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) proposed an [Inland Flood Protection Rule](#) (IFPR) that would require higher elevations for at-risk housing construction and reconstruction: 2 feet higher than indicated on DEP flood maps and 3 feet higher than indicated on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps.

Current standards are based on historical flooding data compiled 20 to 40 years ago and don’t take climate change and increasing precipitation into account. “Tropical Storm Ida caused flooding as much as 3 feet or more above FEMA’s 100-year flood elevation,” the proposed rule notes.

Hundred-year floods in parts of northwest New Jersey could involve as much as 50% more rainfall than current models allow, NJ officials say.

In-house flood maps at the DEP do allow for stiffer building restrictions based on worsening flooding, but the FEMA maps contain no such safety factor, which is why the state is calling for different building elevations based on which set of flood maps are used. “The DEP finds that the factor of safety found in FEMA mapping needs to increase to a total of 3 feet to adequately protect the public from extreme flood events.”

IFPR concerns river flood zones, not oceanfront floods caused by sea level rise or severe storms, which are serious problems, too. In January 2020, Murphy [ordered](#) the DEP to incorporate sea level rise into land use permitting decisions, although the DEP missed its deadline for action this year. Meanwhile, the NJ Business and Industry Association, a powerful business lobby, complained that to them the proposed building standards seem excessively strict.

The DEP is accepting public comment on the IFPR through February 3, 2023, with a public hearing set for January 11, 2023. It is essential that members of the NJ Chapter submit public comments and help support this important flood protection effort.

Resources

Inland Flood Protection Rule: bit.ly/3O5uzSp

New Jersey Protecting Against Climate Threats, NJPACT: bit.ly/3E8n7S2

NJBIA response: bit.ly/3V8xhti

Unfinished Business

Chapter Treasurer Paul Sanderson encountered this evidence of a naturally occurring logging operation in the Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area.



Credit: Paul Sanderson

Water Quality Improvement

By Patricia Hilliard • Conservation Chair, Hudson County Group

Whether you think the glass is half full or half empty, the real concern is whether the water is safe to drink! “Decades old drinking water infrastructure systems, declining water use, costs of regulatory compliance, and stagnant federal funding have resulted in many water utilities struggling to fund the cost of operations and maintenance of these systems,” the [American Society of Civil Engineers](#) said in a report. New Jersey residents need to keep up the pressure for improvements. Below are some recent highlights of water quality improvement efforts:

Water Quality, Past to Present

Although Gov. Chris Christie’s administration (2010-2018) obstructed water quality improvement efforts, Gov. Phil Murphy’s administration has ushered in higher standards for safe drinking water, worked to mitigate lead contamination, and more. Needed [upgrades](#) have been posted, including for Trenton, Newark, and Jersey City.

The Star-Ledger reported in April of 2022 that Newark began a \$23 million water quality and capacity upgrade at Pequannock Water Treatment Plant at West Milford. Newark Mayor Ras Baraka spoke to Congress on how quickly and efficiently 23,000 lead-containing service lines were replaced in Newark (in three years as opposed to the 10 projected), making Newark’s effort a model. Other communities in New Jersey are seeing improvements as well.

In August 22, 2022, the Star-Ledger reported that “[Feds shortchanged N.J.](#)” on lead pipe replacement funds. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) misallocated funds based on incomplete data. New Jersey got \$138 in federal funding for each lead-containing connection in need of replacement, but Hawaii got \$10,098. Democratic lawmakers have asked the EPA to fix this.

On March 3, 2022, the Philadelphia Inquirer [reported](#) an analysis by Environment New Jersey and the Black Church Center for Justice and Equality that noted lead in 66 of 72 school water systems in Atlantic County’s 25 school districts.” It said lead contamination in Atlantic County was “just the tip of the toxic iceberg” for NJ schools. The analysis was based on data from 2017 to 2022, although one school administrator told the Inquirer her district had begun remediations.

Can It Get Any Worse Than Lead? PFAS!

What are PFAS? Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances—carbon-based chemicals that are used in firefighting foams, coatings for upholstery and carpets, and in water- and grease-resistant coatings on clothing and food containers. PFAS are widespread throughout New Jersey, [although new standards have been imposed](#).

What Is Being Done?

On June 1, 2020, the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) established maximum contamination levels of 14 parts per trillion (ppt) for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and 13 ppt for perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS). These members of the PFAS family are linked to serious illnesses, including cancer. The rules were initially far stricter than the EPA’s guidelines, which were [amended](#) last summer to 0.004 ppt for PFOA and 0.02 ppt for PFOS.

The Biden administration is offering funds for PFAS cleanup. Many NJ water systems exceed PFAS maximums. In April 2022, a Superior Court judge ruled [allowed](#) a class-action lawsuit against Middlesex Water Company, which exceeded limits of PFOA in drinking water.

Monitoring Water Quality

Practically all schools in New Jersey are [required](#) to test their water and make the results publicly available on the school’s website and in the school four days after receipt of final laboratory results.

Here is the [guidance](#) for school districts on lead testing requirements.

How to monitor your home/business drinking water: Click on the [link](#) and see the highlights box on the right. Click on “get a copy of your Consumer Confidence Report.” If you have private water, you will need a testing service.

Resources

ASCE 2021 Infrastructure Report Card: bit.ly/3zTMVQg

Needed NJ Upgrades: bit.ly/3hopGYF

Your school’s water quality:

bit.ly/3WIuxEc

Lead guidance for schools:

bit.ly/3tadOw4

Monitoring home/business water:

bit.ly/3fIyCHF

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