



# THE JERSEY Sierran

Vol. 52, No. 2

Fighting for a cleaner and healthier New Jersey for all!

April-June 2023

Help Us Save Trees! Printing *The Jersey Sierran* uses paper. To opt for the digital newsletter, write to [editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

## Mold in the Garden State: A Failure to Regulate

By Gary Frederick • Conservation Chair, Raritan Valley Group

Imagine discovering one day a thin, black, fuzzy crack running beneath your windowsill. Upon closer inspection, parts of the drywall are wet and crumbling. The carpet is squishy. Then you notice black specks on the baseboard and more black fuzz behind the furniture. Mold has invaded your apartment.

According to a December 2021 article in the *Asbury Park Press*, that's what happened to Asbury Park Gardens residents Charlotte and Derrick Jackson. It would eventually cause them to flee with their four children to a relative's home in South Carolina after a doctor suspected their rashes, fatigue, and various respiratory problems were probably caused by the mold. Charlotte notified the property manager of their apartment complex, who replaced the carpet and moldy drywall but not much else. The mold predictably came back. Incredibly, after Charlotte called the Monmouth County Health Department and the Asbury Park Department of Code Enforcement, she was told they lacked the authority to do any testing or remediation.

### Lack of Protection

The lack of state and local regulations on mold is a national problem that starts with the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA). The agency, which clearly states on its website that its mission is to "protect human health and the environment," has not set any enforcement regulations for mold. Its site ([epa.gov/mold](http://epa.gov/mold)) mostly addresses how to clean up mold in your own home. Until the EPA actually sets standards, states will be reluctant to set their own standards and enforcement.

For residents in New Jersey, including about 1 million renters, protections exist for lead, asbestos, and radon, but there are no protections for mold. Landlords are not required to remediate mold, and the state has no cleanup standards. The consequences for public health are severe. According to Cleveland Clinic, about 1 in 5 people have environmental allergies, of which mold is one. The symptoms of a mold allergy are runny nose or nasal congestion, itchy eyes and/or throat, wheezing, coughing and/or sneezing, headaches, skin rash, asthma attacks, and lung infections, which can be life-threatening.

Among lower-income renters in general, mold is an insidious problem.

>continued on page 2



### POLITICAL CHAIR'S REPORT

## NJ Chapter Endorses State Senators Smith, Greenstein, and Zwicker

By Karen Becker • Political Committee Chair, [political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

Each year there is an important race that catches our attention. In 2022 we voted for our federal (congressional) candidates to serve in the House. This year, all 120 members of the NJ Legislature will appear on the ballot in their respective districts. New Jersey has 40 districts, each comprised of one state senator and two assemblypersons. We will begin looking at candidates who most closely align with Sierra Club values and consider endorsing their campaigns.

Our attention immediately turns to three state senators who have been strong leaders for the environment and have demonstrated their commitment through legislation that they have sponsored or supported. Sens. Bob Smith (NJ-17), Linda Greenstein (NJ-14), and Andrew Zwicker (NJ-16) have each received an early endorsement from the Sierra Club. Here's why:

Smith and Greenstein, as chair and vice chair of the Senate Environment and Energy Commission, respectively, have sponsored numerous bills designed to protect our drinking water, regulate plastic in products, and divest state pension and annuity funds from

fossil fuel companies. Together they have led the state toward tackling these and many other environmental issues. Most recently, Greenstein took a hard stand on implementing the Inland Flood Protection Rule, which would raise the "design flood elevation"—the minimum level of the habitable first floor of a new building in nontidal areas—by 2 feet from existing DEP flood maps, and by 3 feet from maps drawn by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Zwicker, a leading physicist at Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, has been an advocate of fusion energy, giving numerous talks and lectures on the subject. Zwicker's advocacy for fusion energy moves us further away from fossil fuel dependency and closer to having zero-carbon fusion energy powering our society.

We hope you will consider voting for Sierra Club-endorsed candidates. You must be registered to vote by May 16 to vote in the June 6 primary.

A press release announcing the endorsements was issued February 3 and can be read in full [here](#).



## The Law That's Not the Law: S232

By Renée Pollard • Environmental and Social Justice Committee Chair

Environmental justice communities across the state have long been subjected to the burden of poor air quality and airborne toxins. Community leaders and environmental leaders came together and made the bold statement that enough is enough. They are tired of their children being sick from asthma; they are tired of being sick themselves from chronic lung diseases and cancers; and they are tired of loved ones dying from these diseases. Power plants, incinerators, sewerage plants, landfills, and the like are all major sources of pollution in their neighborhoods.

Some years ago, the conversation began on how to best create a change for better health conditions in overburdened communities. These concerns were brought to the attention of a few longtime environmentalists, NJ Sens. Loretta Weinberg, (NJ-37), and Troy Singleton, (NJ-7). They joined forces to create a bill that would help provide some health protections to smog-filled communities in the state. Out of this partnership championed by Singleton, the Overburdened Communities Cumulative Impacts bill (A2212/S232) was crafted. The original bill, sponsored by retired Sen. Ronald Rice,

was introduced back in 2008.

The bill was designed to stop polluters from adding to the air quality problems already in environmental justice communities. It allows for a checks-and-balances system of public hearings for any permit applications.

Is the bill perfect? No, but it sets the standard of protecting the public's health against toxic polluting facilities. It is historic and serves as a model for other states to adopt. Gov. Phil Murphy signed the Overburdened Communities Cumulative Impacts bill into law at a momentous event in 2020. In establishing this law, New Jersey gave notice to polluters that they will no longer be allowed to poison the residents in our state. New Jersey is now on the path to clean air and protecting the health of the residents in the state.

Or so we thought. Two years later, this historic landmark law has not been implemented. Why the delay? Final rule adoption was [slated](#) for late in 2022 but had not happened even as this newsletter went to press. Facilities across the state, like Covanta in Camden, have continued to try and request modification permits for new projects. Covanta contends it will [expand](#) its waste-to-energy plant but at the same

time install pollution measures that reduce its harmful impact. The new law is not perfect, but it will provide some protections for overburdened communities. It is an opportunity for a different trajectory for New Jersey, a state that is promoting clean energy programs, a green economy, offshore wind and solar programs, and an end to fossil-fuel consumption.

Enough of the excuses. It's time to move forward together. Overburdened communities deserve better than this. They have suffered enough. No more sacrifices. It's time to deliver on the promises that were made two years ago. No more delays.

For more about S232, see the related story on page 6 by Sia Satish.

*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."*  
Martin Luther King Jr.



NJ Chapter endorsements:  
[bit.ly/3JFhtqc](https://bit.ly/3JFhtqc)



### Inside This Issue

So. Jersey Bus Ridership .....	2
Chapter Chair's Message .....	3
2022 Donors .....	3
ExCom Highlights.....	3
Hydrogen Cars .....	4
Headline Hijinks.....	5
Drive Electric Earth Day .....	5
Water Quality .....	5
Anti-Polluter Law .....	6
Building Electrification.....	6
On the Trail .....	7
Outings .....	7-8
Group News.....	8-12

**Electronic Supplement**  
(Available from the Chapter website)

E-Bikes, Invasives, Bear Hunt, Covanta, Coal Plant Demolition, Clean Energy, State House Notes, FERC Pipeline Ruling, Plastics ..... 13-15

# NJ Transit Struggles With South Jersey Bus Ridership

By Tony Hagen • [editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

NJ Transit has been engaged in a redesign of the bus routes in Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties (BCG), but like some of NJ Transit's buses and trains, this overhaul is running behind schedule.

Final recommendations for change were due out at the turn of this year, but as of this writing even the draft recommendations had yet to be released. The "NewBus BCG" redesign is essential because BCG bus routes have not been comprehensively updated in at least two decades, and during that time ridership declines have been steady and precipitous, not merely because of the pandemic.

The agency is about to embark on a \$250 million [overhaul](#) of BCG's bus and train transportation hub, the Walter Rand Transportation Center (WRTC).

NJ Transit and professional planners would agree that appropriate analysis is essential to ensure the reasons for ridership declines are understood and further investments succeed in bringing them back into the system.

It is essential to ask whether NJ Transit is still going where the people are going, and if it is, why aren't they riding the buses in BCG?

Despite promises of regular updates and public involvement, very little information about the NewBus BCG overhaul has been provided. The information for the analyses described below was obtained by Open Public Records Act requests. It is important for the public to know more about the methodology underlying the NewBus BCG overhaul to have confidence that the money earmarked for this and the WRTC makeover will be well spent.

## Falling Ridership

The pandemic crushed ridership all over New Jersey, but in BCG ridership was already in steep decline before the arrival of Covid-19 ([Figure](#)).

For 26 BCG bus routes in operation between October 2005 and October 2022, median weekday passenger volume declined 58% (from 35,083 to 14,544). Excluding the pandemic dip, BCG ridership from October 2005 to October 2019 fell 33%. The pandemic low point was 12,330 passengers.

October 2022 BCG bus ridership was down 38% from the pre-pandemic high, indicating that ridership levels are not close to recovery from just that 3-year aberration. It appears that the pandemic has accelerated a trend in ridership decline that was already

well established. One bus route in the BCG area was carrying as few as eight passengers a day in October 2022, down from a high of 65 in October 2007.

Some cutbacks in Philadelphia service are known to have hurt ridership, and the trend toward mail-order shopping and remote working are potential culprits. Chronic bus operator shortages have afflicted South Jersey bus routes, causing service interruptions that weigh heavily on rider numbers. NJ Transit should acknowledge this and begin publicizing missed trip data by NJ bus operating region, as was done for rail transport.

As part of NewBus BCG, NJ Transit did a ridership survey, and the most frequent comments, in descending order, were a desire for more frequent service, more weekend service, more reliable service, more destinations, and earlier and later hours.

A squeaky wheel analysis showed that most comments came from passengers on seven of the most heavily traveled bus routes. For 12 routes, there were at most eight comments for each; and in total there were 248 comments for 27 bus routes in all, which was a response rate of less than 2%.

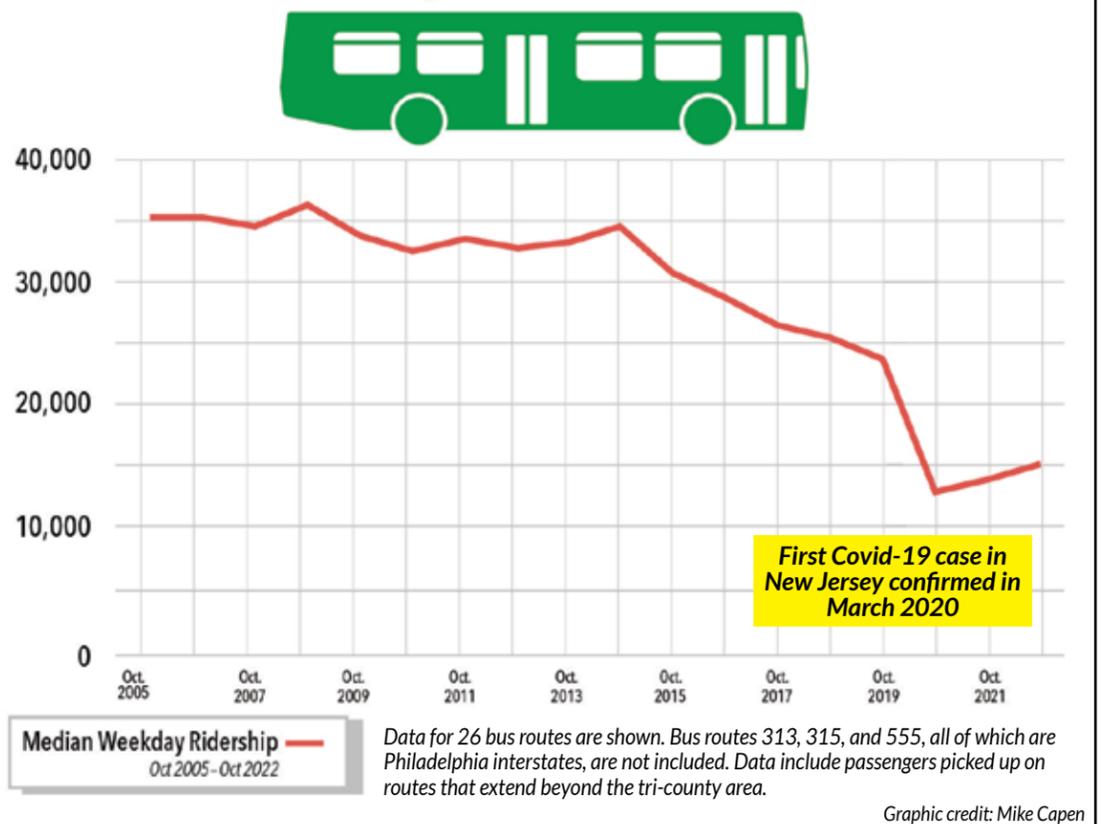
While it is important to hear from riders about their concerns, it is equally or more important to hear from the thousands of riders who once used the system and no longer do, or from those who could but won't.

## The Demographic Picture

Development and demographics tell a different story from the ridership totals. Growth maps indicate tremendous development has occurred in BCG over the past 20 years, much of it in the form of single-family housing developments, which are inappropriate for bus service due to huge walking distances to stops. There has also been much concentrated retail/industrial development that is appropriate for bus service.

The BCG population increased 4.7% from 2005 to 2021, and poverty (2014-2022) has increased in Burlington

## NJ Transit Bus Ridership for Burlington, Gloucester, and Camden Counties



Graphic credit: Mike Capen

County (7.1% vs 7.6%), while declining in Camden and Gloucester (13.1% vs 12% and 8% vs 7.7%, respectively), according to US Census Bureau data. This might suggest a static or rising need for public transportation. The sharp rise in inflation and the prospect of recession could also drive people back to public transportation.

## Overhauling WRTC

In Camden the \$250 million WRTC makeover is the centerpiece of a plan to revitalize the downtown, improve connectivity, and streetscape safety. It is designed also to support major expansion of academic, medical, and business facilities. One of the most comprehensive reports on this project stresses its potential to counter the perception that downtown Camden is not safe or walkable.

The security problem is verified by literally hundreds of comments NJ Transit received in response to a survey asking about improvements needed at WRTC. Commuters said the terminal is overrun by the homeless, drug addicts, drug dealers, and panhandlers. They said it is filthy, poorly lit and signed, and smells overpoweringly of urine. Many said their personal safety is their constant preoccupation and they use WRTC only when necessary.

"I love taking public transportation, but I am scared to get off the train in Camden," one commuter wrote. "The drug usage and potential danger with lack of police presence keeps me driving my car in New Jersey."

These views were reiterated during a well-attended NJ Transit public information session in Camden January 30, 2023, at which spokespeople acknowledged that while \$250 million has been allocated for the project, NJ Transit has not determined how to deal with the problems of illicit activity and vagrancy at WRTC. Some attendees expressed fears that added security would only push these problems into neighboring residential areas.

It's clear that no matter how well designed and attractive the new facility is, riders are not coming back unless NJ Transit has an effective plan for managing loitering and illicit activity.

WRTC is key to any ridership revitalization in Camden, but what's missing from the equation so far is a comprehensive study by NJ Transit that explains how the agency can do a better job of getting people out of their cars and back onto trains and buses throughout the BCG area.

## Resources

NewBus BCG: [bit.ly/3HOplYC](https://bit.ly/3HOplYC)  
WRTC Overhaul: [bit.ly/3I97DjV](https://bit.ly/3I97DjV)

## MOLD IN THE GARDEN STATE

*continued from page 1*

According to the *Asbury Park Press* article, the problem is particularly severe for those living in federally subsidized housing, which makes it a crisis for the Department of Housing and Development (HUD). A 2019 US Census Bureau survey found that tenants in HUD-subsidized housing are almost twice as likely to live in mold-infested dwellings. Higher-income families have the means to live in private homes or better-maintained apartments, and they can often remediate mold problems on their own. Renters in standard, subsidized housing fall through the cracks of sparse landlord maintenance and minimal attention by state and local officials to mold problems.

## Legislation Keeps Getting Introduced

After Hurricane Sandy in 2012, the mold problem exploded along the Jersey

Shore, with some local contractors calling it the worst they had ever seen. State Sen. Robert Singer (NJ-30) has repeatedly introduced legislation (S81) that would protect renters from mold infestation. The proposed Mold Safe Housing Act calls for mold inspections whenever a new tenant moves into an apartment. It also declares the premises must be free of "visible or detectable indications of the substantial presence of mold." If the mold problem requires tenants to move out during remediation, the landlord would be forced to reimburse the cost.

That legislation has been reintroduced every year since 2013 with little movement. But recently state Sen. Linda Greenstein (NJ-14) has signed on as a cosponsor. And an identical bill has been introduced in the Assembly (A4039). The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club stands ready to help move these bills forward in

the legislature, along with a discussion on amendments to strengthen them even further.

## What You Can Do

In the meantime, what can you do if you find mold? The NJ Department of Environmental Protection, in a brochure titled "Mold: Guidelines for New Jersey Residents," suggests:

Hire an experienced mold assessor to evaluate the severity of the problem. The assessor should not be the one doing the remediation, which would be a conflict of interest.

Get a written report from the assessor, including any sampling results, areas inspected, cause of mold growth, and remediation recommendations.

Obtain several estimates from remediation contractors and be sure they are bidding on the identical work listed in the assessor's report.

Find out how the contractor will be doing the work and if it complies with local building codes.

Ask if the contractor has liability insurance that covers mold or microbial work.

Avoid any contractor who claims the work will make your home mold-free. That's an impossible claim to make.

As for dealing with a landlord who refuses to make the necessary repairs, there are two approaches renters can take: Withhold rent if the apartment is uninhabitable because of mold, or 2) fix the mold on your own and withhold rent to cover the cost. But be aware the landlord can initiate eviction proceedings in both cases and the dispute will probably land in court. Unfortunately, for low-income renters, the lack of state protections and regulations leaves them particularly vulnerable to the ravages of mold.

# Thanks for Your Support!

Supplied by Judy Minot • Fundraising Committee Co-Chair

The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club wishes to thank all those who provided the Chapter with financial support during 2022. We value every donor and every donation. 100% of your gift stays within New Jersey to fund our local activities. Listed below are members and friends who contributed \$100 or more during the calendar year.

## Benefactors (\$1000 or more)

Kenneth and Winifred Johanson  
William Rogers  
Daniel Higgins  
Frederick Fultz  
Neil Baldwin and Roberta Plutzik  
Barbara Chigas  
Noreen Ciaston and S. Weisman  
Siro A Del Favero  
Mark Ferguson  
Susan B Hammell  
Imelda Sobilloff  
Marian R Stuart

## Patrons (\$500-999)

Anonymous  
William and Lois Black  
Richard H. Colby  
George and Leona Fluck  
Linos Frantzeskakis  
John Luard  
Rudy and Melonie Marano  
Pat Mundy  
Paul M. Sanderson  
Margaret and Glen Skar

## Partners (\$250-\$499)

Richard and Karin Beaty  
Richard Brail  
Gina Carola  
Barrie T. Fahey  
Jeanne M. Fox  
Greg and Jamie Gorman  
Kim Haren  
Elizabeth Kohn  
Stephen S. Rose  
Patricia A. Rosenberg  
Jessica Seaton and Linda Swartz  
Irene Stein and Susan Davis  
Robert and Loraine Terrell

Joseph Testa and Anne Mandal  
Mr. and Mrs. Roger Thompson  
Edward and Gail Wojczechowski

## Supporters (\$100-249)

Dennis and Carol Anderson  
James Andreano  
Anonymous  
V. Auerbach and A. Ceterski  
Stephen Baginsky  
Mary Ellen Banisch  
Noyes Bartholomew  
Mark Belasco  
Russell Bershad  
William Bitter  
Raymond Cassetta  
Grace K. Chen  
Ari Cohen-Hausman  
Susan Cohen  
Michael Cooreman  
Heather Danz  
Linda DeLap  
Carolyn and Ernest Dorflinger  
Susan and Irwin Dunietz  
Russell and Martha Eidmann-Hicks  
William Einreinhofer  
Joseph Epstein  
Rita Fand  
Eileen Feurey  
Mohan Gawande  
Theodore and Norma Glatzer  
Roe W. Goodman  
Linda Grau  
Stephen Gruber  
Tony Hagen  
Gillian Hauptman  
Wendy Heller and Jack Hill  
Ray A. Hemphill  
Megan Hnath-Brown  
Amelia Holstein  
Bradley John Huke

R.L. Jensen and C.T. Tully-Jensen  
Deborah Jindela  
Beresford Jones  
Wilhelmina Juhlin  
Maureen Kennedy  
Regina and Stephen Knowlton  
Sybil Kramer  
J. Ward Kuser  
Maddalena and Alfred Lanzoni  
Stephen R. Lax  
James and Barbara Liati  
Lawrence Lipkin  
George Logeman  
Loneragan Family  
Lois Maloney  
Stephen Marcella  
Joe McKenzie  
John Mintz  
Lori E. Montes  
Pam Mount  
Fee O'Brien  
Jonathan Ochs  
Carl Onuchovsky  
Cymie Payne  
Lisa Quartararo  
Jeffrey Rapaport  
Gunvor Satra  
Laraine and Steven Sauer  
Jane Schluter  
Kirsten Schulz  
J. Schwarzbauer and D. Winkelmann  
Thomas Simmonds  
Erwin Sloan  
Debra Sofer  
J. Stanley and C. Holloway  
Howard and Lyn Stein  
Julia Stoller  
Denise S. Szabo  
Ann Thorsell  
Gladys Urbanowitz  
Drs. David and Melissa Brown  
Dr. Mark Walzer  
Melissa Williams  
David M. Zaiser

## CHAPTER CHAIR'S MESSAGE

# A Warm Welcome and Deep Appreciation!

By Richard Isaac • [Richard.Isaac@sierraclub.org](mailto:Richard.Isaac@sierraclub.org)

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

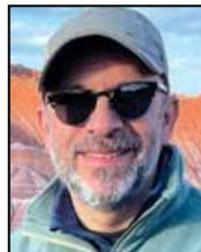
### Joe Bennett, Environmental and Social Justice Committee Member

Born and raised in Los Angeles, California, Joe has a BA in economics and is pursuing a masters in integrative leadership focusing on data and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) leadership. Next fall he will start a doctoral program focusing on DEI change leadership. Joe has been a teacher and school leader for the last 30 years, primarily in areas serving low-income families. He is passionate about advocating for the education, health, and safety of those living in underserved communities. Regarding their health and safety, Joe is helping us pass legislation that will ensure mold remediation is done correctly and in a timely fashion in these communities.



### Seth Kantor, Chapter Co-Chair of Membership

Seth Kantor inquired about the volunteer opportunity for Chapter membership chair featured in a recent newsletter. From that inquiry, he now finds himself in the position of being one of our Chapter membership co-chairs! "I developed my love and appreciation for all that mother nature offers when I first joined Boy Scouts and started going on scouting trips as a kid," Seth wrote. "Now I spend my time outdoors cycling, camping, hiking and pursuing landscape and nature photography." Seth's professional background is in marketing and advertising, he's familiar with customer relationship management software (a mainstay in nonprofits), and he previously volunteered and worked part time at the NJ Conservation Foundation. "There is so much pressure on the natural landscape here in New Jersey that I have always felt good knowing that Sierra Club and other organizations were out there working hard to protect what we have. Having



been a Sierra Club member for many years I have decided it's time to do my part to help protect the limited natural resources we have in New Jersey," Seth wrote.



### Jill Costa, Chapter Co-Chair of Membership

Jill Costa has been newly appointed as our Chapter membership co-chair. She has worked with the Climate Reality Project and Environment New Jersey in the past and looks forward to continuing her environmental advocacy journey with the Sierra Club's NJ Chapter. In her spare time, she enjoys community theater, hiking, and organizing forest restorations and being with her niece and nephew.



### Vicky Brown Varela, Digital Outreach Intern

Our Chapter extends warm thanks to Vicky Brown Varela for her services as our digital outreach intern. She was excited to help our Chapter build and strengthen its relationships with youth and environmental justice communities to cultivate a clean, safe, and just future for everyone, and we were very glad to have her. Vicky earned her BA in international studies from American University, where she focused on environmental sustainability and peace, global security, and conflict resolution. Her academic and professional interests include political ecology, food sovereignty movements, and environmental peacebuilding. Vicky has worked on organic farms in Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine, and has conducted research in Costa Rica. Among the many things she did for us, Vicky translated two Chapter press releases for our Spanish-speaking readership. We are seeking a volunteer translator to continue this offering. Contact me at [Richard.Isaac@sierraclub.org](mailto:Richard.Isaac@sierraclub.org) if you are interested.



## ExCom Meeting Highlights

**February:** The following appointments were made: Mike Capen, graphics designer; and Paul Ehrlich, senior section chair. Diane Scarangella has been named LGBTQ+ section chair by members of the section. It was noted meetings will be held every two months with group chairs and group leaders to discuss ways the NJ Chapter's 12 groups can be better supported, engage with the community, and grow membership. The ExCom is weighing a return to in-person meetings. These might be hybrid, involving an online participation option. An outdoor venue, such as a park pavilion, also is under consideration.

**January:** It was announced that Pat Hilliard, Rich Isaac, and Paul Sanderson won election to the ExCom and will serve 3-year terms through 2025. Rich Isaac was reappointed Chapter chair for 2023. Judy Minot was appointed vice chair. Congratulations to these individuals and thanks for your service! The ExCom approved (13-4) a resolution rescinding the Chapter's support for redesignating the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DWGNRA) as a National Park and Preserve, but members committed to finding ways to further protect the DWGNRA and surrounding areas while having indigenous and community voices at the forefront. The Chapter will establish a committee to formalize this work. The ExCom approved a resolution (12 yes, 5 no, 1 abstention) to support the Department of Environmental Protection's Forest Resource Management Plan for Bass River State Forest, which includes creation of firebreaks along pre-existing roads via removal of 2.4 million trees, much of them dense undergrowth. The ExCom voted to endorse state Sens. Bob Smith (NJ-17), Linda Greenstein (NJ-14), and Andrew Zwicker (NJ-16). Electronic voting was authorized for 2023. The following communities were reassigned to the Loantaka Group: Watchung, Towaco, and Montville.

**We've moved! Our offices are now located in the Social Profit Center at Suite A220, Building A; 1 N. Johnston Ave.; Hamilton, NJ 08609. The sustainably built, adaptive reuse project has a green roof, solar power, and high-efficiency heating and cooling.**



Members of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club went to Bass River State Forest November 20, 2022, to learn about the State Department of Environmental Protection's plan to cut large swaths of undergrowth to prevent the spread of fire and restore native ecosystems. Photo credit: Allen Swanson

# What Role Will Hydrogen Cars Play in a Green Future?

By George Moffatt

Just as we are beginning to appreciate emissions-free electrical vehicles (EVs), hydrogen-powered vehicles (HVs) also are vying for consumers' attention. In theory you can hop into an HV and start motoring down the road with no concerns about greenhouse gas or nitrous oxide (NOx) emissions, although the hydrogen you use should come from a "green" source.

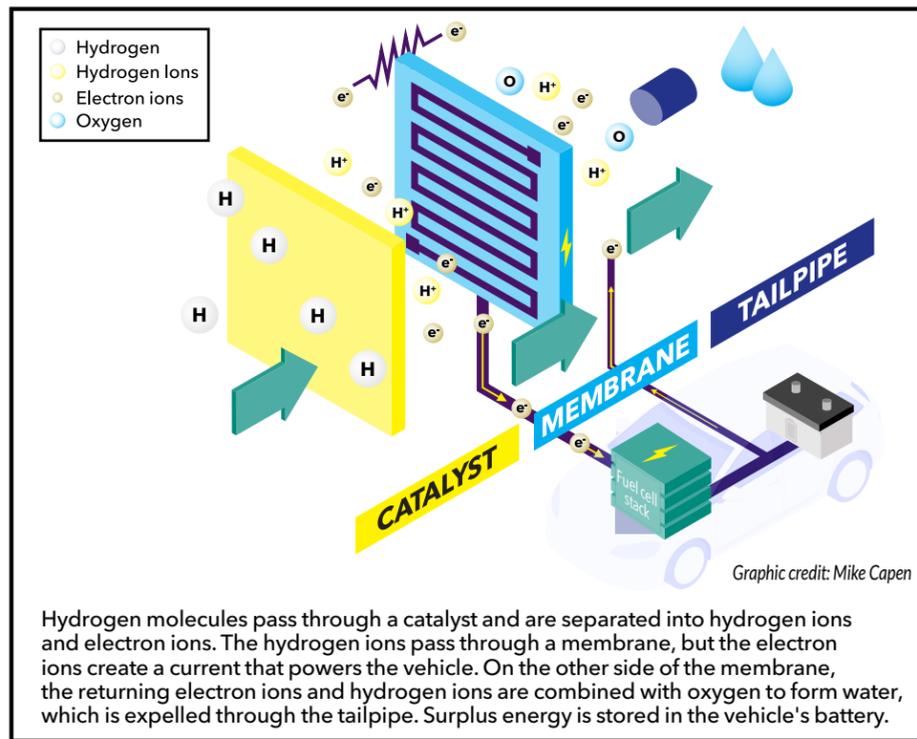
After careful review, the Sierra Club has [concluded](#) that "hydrogen should not be used to power most vehicles" and it should be sourced only from solar or wind energy.

HVs use hydrogen gas and fuel cell stacks—multiple specialized cells—that create the electricity that powers electric motors, unlike EVs that use lithium-ion batteries. And unlike gasoline engines, HVs have clean tailpipe emissions—just water and oxygen.

HVs generate their own electricity through electrochemical reactions with hydrogen gas, known as reverse electrolysis (Figure). This chemical reaction uses hydrogen gas and oxygen to create electricity, with water as a by-product. The chemically created electricity powers the HV's motor, which is refueled with more hydrogen gas.

HVs are pollution free, have few moving parts, are easy to operate, and are reliable and quiet. They also feature quick refueling (3-5 minutes), low maintenance, simple repairs, steady acceleration (sorry, no pedal-to-the metal), and consistent power.

However, HVs are pricey, beginning at \$50,000 to \$65,000, and options for refueling them are very limited. There are just [54 refueling stations](#) in the United States, and all but one are located in California. The other is in Ha-



Hydrogen molecules pass through a catalyst and are separated into hydrogen ions and electron ions. The hydrogen ions pass through a membrane, but the electron ions create a current that powers the vehicle. On the other side of the membrane, the returning electron ions and hydrogen ions are combined with oxygen to form water, which is expelled through the tailpipe. Surplus energy is stored in the vehicle's battery.

waii. Hydrogen fuel is not cheap: \$5.00 to \$8.50 for an amount equivalent to a gallon of gas in California.

If you're willing to travel only in California and Hawaii, you'll get about [350 to 400 miles](#) on a tank of compressed hydrogen.

As far as safety goes, hydrogen gas, like gasoline, is explosive; but it is 14 times lighter than air and 57 times lighter than gasoline vapor. This means leaking hydrogen quickly floats upward as it dissipates, making explosions less likely, while heavier gasoline fumes concentrate on the ground.

As a fuel source, green hydrogen produced by electrolysis from wind or solar energy is the ideal. Fossil fuel-based techniques for producing hydro-

gen cause pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, inefficiencies, and hydrogen leakage into the environment. Hydrogen is a much more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

Energy or hydrogen produced from biomass or biogas is not technically renewable, as it, too, involves greenhouse gas emissions, although it is often falsely promoted as a renewable form of energy.

Hydrogen is found only in combination with other elements, such as water (H<sub>2</sub>O), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), electrolyzed water, natural gas, and—no kidding—cow manure. Of all the techniques used to create hydrogen gas, the dominant process is [steam methane reforming](#) (SMR), which amounts to 10 million

tons annually or 99 percent of all hydrogen produced industrially.

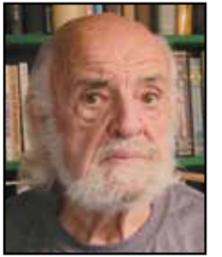
Unfortunately, SMR requires steam at 1,300°F to 1,800°F, which is created by burning gas, coal, and even wood. As a result, SMR releases [8 to 10 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub>](#) per 1 kilogram of hydrogen, or about 915 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year. About 76% of these emissions come from using natural gas, 22% from coal gasification, and 2% from electrolysis. They also consume 6% of the world's natural gas and 2% of its coal.

SMR hydrogen is known as "blue" or "gray" hydrogen, as opposed to genuinely "green" hydrogen that is created by sustainable wind or solar energy, which is favored by the Sierra Club.

Unfortunately, the energy industry "has been pushing for blue hydrogen development with the dubious argument that investing in sub-optimal (or harmful) hydrogen infrastructure today might allow the deployment of green hydrogen in the future," wrote Cara Botorff, managing senior analyst for the Sierra Club. Very few pipeline distribution systems in the United States are suitable for hydrogen delivery, as hydrogen molecules degrade steel pipes and leak into the environment.

For now, hydrogen fuel cells are probably best employed in the long-distance trucking industry, where prototype trucks are still in development, Botorff wrote.

Nevertheless, HVs today are where EVs were in the 1990s: taking their first steps toward emissions-free transportation.



## 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](http://www.icshvac.com)

# Don't Read This Headline!

By Judy Minot • Secretary; Communications Committee Co-Chair

We're awash in headlines. They beckon us from the home screen of our smartphones, our inboxes, social media feeds, and on many websites. Whether or not we read the underlying news articles, we see the headlines. They influence us more than we realize. Awareness of our human bias and how digital media manipulates us can help us be stronger environmental champions.

## We're Only Human

Two relevant terms help illuminate the mental processes at work when we read headlines: *confirmation bias* and *source amnesia*.

Confirmation bias describes the tendency to interpret information in a way that confirms preexisting beliefs. We dismiss articles, perhaps never reading them, if the headlines point to a different conclusion (e.g., "The Politicians in New Jersey Are Corrupt"; "Wind Power Will Never Be a Viable Source of Clean Energy.")

Source amnesia means we tend to remember the things we heard or read, but not where or how we encountered them. As we surf the net, we may read a memorable headline. As related headlines appear, the story builds in our minds. The more headlines, the more believable it seems. We forget what the sources were or that we never read anything but the headlines. It's easy to see how the viral effect of certain headlines contributes to their believability.

## Headlines: Not What They Used To Be

The shift to digital sources for our news means we "consume" news differently. Media scholars contrast "sit-back media"—such as watching TV news—with "lean-forward media," where we interact by opening apps, scrolling, selecting, and even commenting. Increasingly, we get our information from lean-forward digital news sources, where we may read dozens of headlines before clicking on a single story.

In print media, the role of the headline is to sum up the content of the story. There's an expectation that the headline relates truthfully to the article content.

The job of the digital headline, on the other hand, is to persuade you to click on or share the article. For the publisher, that click or share is how they make their income. The more clicks, the more they can charge for ads.

Because online content providers need your eyeballs, they create headlines that get them. They will write controversial-sounding headlines if their data show viewers will click on those headlines. Since viewers often share articles without reading them, the headline can be more important to a company's revenue than the article itself.

## An Example

A recent New Jersey environmental story provides a great example. Scientists have been concerned in recent years by a sharp and unexplained increase in whale strandings along the Atlantic coast. Many of these whale strandings have taken place in New Jersey. This winter, in December and January seven whales washed up on the New Jersey coast.

Suddenly, news articles began to appear, first in New Jersey-based news, then Philadelphia, and finally nationally. A typical headline was this one in *USA Today*: "Whale Deaths Along NJ East Coast Prompt 12 Mayors to Call for Offshore Wind Moratorium." Or this from *Politics & The Nation*, "Dead Whales Raise More Uncertainty for Wind Power Push." What was happening? Opponents to offshore wind had seized on these whale deaths, blaming them, with no scientific evidence, on the building of wind turbines.

Every scientist quoted said there was no relationship between offshore wind and whale deaths. Several of the whales had died from being struck by a vessel. The headlines, however, focused only on the controversy. The articles were widely shared, which caused more and more news organizations to pick up the story.

Understandably, many good people care about whales! Reading only the headlines, anyone could be forgiven for believing there actually is a connection between whale deaths and offshore wind. But the headlines were misleading and contributed to what many have called a disinformation campaign against offshore wind power. While the reporting may have been accurate—that some mayors were calling for a moratorium on wind development in connection with the whale deaths—reading just the headlines would lead a reader to draw the wrong conclusions about the merits of wind power.

Armed with a little knowledge of our human biases and the business side of online news, we can be more informed consumers of media, and more effective environmental advocates. Don't take headlines at face value, even from reputable news sources. Especially if a headline raises your eyebrows, don't trust it. Read the article and draw your own conclusion.

The NJ Chapter is working to shift the narrative, and mobilize in support of offshore wind. Please sign up for our action alerts to stay informed.

## Resources

Action Alerts: [bit.ly/41jUpsd](https://bit.ly/41jUpsd)  
USA Today: [bit.ly/3xLTxPo](https://bit.ly/3xLTxPo)



# Drive Electric Earth Day

By Bill Beren • Transportation Committee Chair

Once again, the Sierra Club is a national sponsor of Drive Electric Earth Day. Local groups, including The NJ Chapter's Gateway Group, are sponsoring events during Earth Week at which owners exhibit their electric cars and talk one-on-one to individuals who want to learn more about owning and operating them. The Gateway Group's event will be at Erie Lackawanna Plaza in Montclair on Saturday, April 22, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Another event will be in Madison at the Sunday Motor Company Café on April 19. Anyone who wishes to display their vehicles can sign up at [driveelectricearthday.org](https://driveelectricearthday.org). People interested in owning an electric car can just show up, but pre-registration is requested.

## Electric School Buses

New federal and state grant programs for electric school buses are available. Please look at our electric bus [webpage](#) for the latest information regarding these grant programs. Members who are interested in getting involved should attend their local school board meetings and urge the district to apply directly or through their school bus contractor. Technical help in applying for the grant is available from

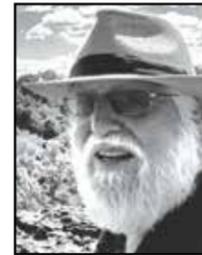
the local school bus distributors, such as H.A. DeHart for Thomas Built Buses and Hoover Truck for Blue Bird.

Our webpage includes a number of nontechnical articles and reports that provide helpful advice to districts and parents interested in purchasing and operating electric school buses, including an *NJ Buyers' Guide to Electric School Buses* that was written by members of our Transportation Committee.

Electric bus webpage: [bit.ly/3K8qWv3](https://bit.ly/3K8qWv3)

## Turnpike Expansion

The proposed replacement and expansion of the NJ Turnpike extension through Bayonne and Jersey City from 4 to 8 lanes has hit a snag, as new cost projections raised the price of the expansion to \$10.6 billion from the original estimate of \$4.7 billion. While the Sierra Club supports state-of-good-repair projects, including the rebuilding of the 8-mile extension and bridge, we oppose doubling the capacity of the roadway, which will increase vehicular traffic without reducing congestion.



# Water Quality Expected to Improve in New Jersey!

By Patricia Hilliard • Executive Committee Member

## A Bad Taste in the Water

There are various poster children lately for water quality crises. In 2014 Flint Michigan's water supply was switched from Detroit to the Flint River to save money, thus inadvertently [poisoning](#) the drinking water. In 2022 the headlines pointed to Jackson, Mississippi, where flooding of the O.B. Curtis Water Treatment Plant brought years-long water quality [problems](#) to a head. Infrastructure repairs were neglected due to a shortage of money. Where had the funding gone?

It is arguable that our nation's water infrastructure might be in much better repair had we been more mindful of our spending. Seventeen years ago, former President George W. Bush told a big lie about weapons of mass destruction, kicking off the largely unsuccessful [\\$8 trillion](#) war on terror. Many activists protested the war and the neglect of our nation's infrastructure.

## The Covid-19 Silver Lining

In 2021, during the global pandemic, President Biden signed the [American Rescue Plan Act](#), allowing billions in federal aid to flow into water infrastructure projects. That money is still arriving, and New Jersey has not been left out. On December 8, 2022, Gov. Phil Murphy's administration earmarked [\\$9.95 million](#) of this money for water quality improvement projects. More than \$8 million of the grants will fund projects on lakes in or next to overburdened communities in New Jersey, resulting in improved water quality and increased recreational opportunities for residents of these communities. Although it's a small sum relative to the need, that's not all there is:

>continued on page 6



## 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](mailto:giftplanning@sierraclub.org) • [myplan.sierraclub.org](https://myplan.sierraclub.org)

## NJ Chapter Seeks Volunteer Press Release Translator

The press release translator translates about two Chapter press releases each week so that the Hispanic community can learn about current environmental issues in their state and community. This job takes between 4 and 6 hours a month. For more information or to volunteer in another area, please contact NJ Chapter Chair Richard Isaac at 973-716-0297, [risaac@aol.com](mailto:risaac@aol.com)

## Capítulo de Nueva Jersey Busca Voluntario para Traductor De Comunicados De Prensa

El traductor de comunicados de prensa traduce alrededor de dos comunicados de prensa del Capítulo cada semana para que la comunidad hispana pueda aprender sobre los problemas ambientales actuales en su estado y comunidad. Este trabajo lleva entre 4 y 6 horas al mes. Para obtener más información o para ser voluntario en otra área, comuníquese con Richard Isaac 973-716-0297, [risaac@aol.com](mailto:risaac@aol.com)

## WATER QUALITY

continued from page 5

Other Aid for Clean Drinking Water came through Biden's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which was passed by Congress in 2021. This allocated money for infrastructure improvement for bridges, internet broadband, sewer systems and drinking water systems. New Jersey can expect to receive \$1 billion over five years to improve water infrastructure and water quality.

### What the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Did

In June 2022, the EPA stepped up its focus on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) with new guidance and invited states and territories to apply for \$1 billion, the first installment of \$5 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law grant funding, to address PFAS and other drinking water contaminants, "specifically in small or disadvantaged communities."

The EPA took another step on January 5, 2023, when it announced a \$500 million loan to the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank to modernize wastewater and drinking water systems serving

over 10 million people throughout the state. This was the first loan issued through the State Infrastructure Financing Authority Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (SWIFIA) program.

Officials were ecstatic about the funding. "This historic infusion of federal funds will help New Jersey implement vital water infrastructure projects," said Sen. Cory Booker, former mayor of Newark, where the water system has been plagued with lead contamination. "This funding will create hundreds of jobs and advance water infrastructure projects to address contaminants in drinking water, install water filtration systems, and replace lead pipes across our state."

### The Time of Neglect Is Over

We need to get the work done! But will these efforts be stalled by the struggles in Congress? We, the people, need to keep an eye on this infrastructure work and make sure the repairs are made. Join Sierra Club and get active on water quality advocacy and other important issues!

# NJ Law Would Give Overburdened Communities a Say

By Sia Satish • NJ Chapter Youth Committee

The state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) proposed the final rules of New Jersey's environmental justice law (S232) on June 6, 2022. The law states that the environmental and public health of overburdened communities in New Jersey must be considered before allowing permits for the expansion and new construction of polluting facilities in those areas.

This bill was passed in 2020 and is often deemed one of the nation's most aggressive environmental justice laws. It ensures that disadvantaged communities have a say in the development of incinerators, sludge processors, sewage treatment plants, transfer stations and other major polluters.

As defined in the law, overburdened communities are areas where at least 35% of households are low-income, at least 40% of residents identify as a minority, or at least 40% of households have limited English proficiency. This classification encompasses 348 municipalities or close to 5 million people statewide.

Overburdened communities tend not to benefit nearly as much as middle class communities when anti-pollution environmental laws are enacted, and due to high living costs and residential discrimination, low-income and minority communities are often found near factories, truck routes, ports, and other sources of pollution. Thus, in many cases, predominantly minority communities are impacted disproportionately by air pollution. High levels of air pollution lead to various illnesses, from cardiovascular disease to cancer.

The law explains that the adverse health effects caused by pollution may

impair a child's potential to succeed and that long-term impacts also can limit growth, stability, and familial well-being.

The environmental justice law will not affect permitting of facilities unless they would be new, undergo a significant use change, or have a major expansion. An expansion is defined as any change that increases the environmental impact of a facility, such as paving or increased energy generation.

Moreover, applicants who wish to build or expand in overburdened communities must host a public hearing, allow public comments for at least 60 days, and provide an environmental and public health impact statement for the proposed project. The law has required the DEP to publish a list of all overburdened communities in New Jersey, and this must be updated at least once every two years.

The state Legislature declared that no community should suffer environmental injustice from economic growth and minority communities must have a voice in decisions regarding these facilities. Despite these protections, developers may still win permits for their projects if they can demonstrate a "compelling public interest." In addition, the law does not require pollution reductions at facilities if their expansion would not increase pollution.

For these reasons, the Lewis and Clark Law School, located in Oregon, contends the law should give impacted communities the final say in accepting these projects, and minor sources of pollution also should be covered by the law.



# Highlights of Recent Building Electrification Webinars

By Steve and Pat Miller • NJ 50x30 BE Team

The NJ 50x30 Building Electrification Team hosts regular talks on reducing your building's energy consumption and lowering emissions. Below, we've highlighted three webinars that include tips and examples for achieving these goals. To help you find them in the online list of webinar recordings and slides (<https://qrd.by/y8noi>), each is indexed according to the date it occurred. You can also [sign up for webinar announcement emails](#).

**2022-11-17** Bob Morrow summarizes the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which is estimated to reduce US greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions up to 40% by 2030. It provides for individual tax credits up to \$22,000 (available now) and rebates up to \$14,000 (when the NJ process is defined and approved sometime in 2023-2024).

The IRA relies on carrots (no sticks) to cut emissions by giving money to homeowners, renters, state/local governments, and businesses. Morrow states, "We are counting on people and institutions...to actually eat the carrot." He demonstrated an [online calculator](#) for viewing individual benefits.

Pat and Steve Miller describe the path toward net zero emissions for their own home and their church. The path begins, for all buildings, with an energy audit, and then continues with recommended changes to use less energy.

### Residential

The following Big Three will eliminate almost 90% of GHG emissions: Choose a heat pump when replacing an air conditioner, furnace, or water heater; buy a hybrid or electric vehicle (EV) when replacing a car; and prioritize use of renewable electricity. Home solar panels produce the highest return, community solar reduces utility electric bills by 21%, and third-party wind/solar is available but currently costly.

### Case Example

A church's 20-year journey of GHG reduction is detailed, and homeowners can follow a similar journey. The initial 18 years included many projects, including insulating and switching to more energy-efficient lights and appliances (such as an electric heat pump vs a gas water heater). These efforts reduced GHG 49%, from 70 tons in 2003 to 36 tons in 2019.

The last three years have been a game-changer. The church switched six gas furnaces to electric heat pumps with gas as backup. Then, rooftop solar was installed to power most of the church's electric load, including the heat pumps.

Using 2019 as a baseline, projected 2023 savings are impressive: Electric and gas bills will decline 65% and GHG emissions will decline 58% to 15 tons per year. Viewers are invited to follow this example and are encouraged to practice "[drawdown](#)" principles to reduce their remaining GHG. Most drawdown actions don't require a big lifestyle change, and they improve your quality of life.

**2022-12-15:** Matt Kavanagh details a step-by-step plan and presents 4-year results of energy transformation and decarbonization at his home. He states, "What we need to accomplish across society and across the world to mitigate the risks of climate change... re-

quires everybody's actions." Kavanagh installed a ground source heat pump, solar roof, energy storage, and amped-up insulation. He also purchased two hybrid EV vehicles.



Kavanagh achieved a greater than 80% reduction in gross energy and a zero-carbon footprint. His cash flow turned positive flow after 5.5 years with a 6% annual return on investment (ROI; 54% total ROI) and \$25,000 in additional rebates. Remarkably, this high return was possible even before the passage of the IRA, which will dramatically increase ROI for others.

Kavanagh (and his consulting company) have gained wisdom and are available to help those who need information or assistance to follow his footsteps!

**2023-1-19:** Ken Levenson, executive director of Passive House Network, describes "The Five Principles of Passive House." These principles can be incorporated into any type of building, from the smallest house to the largest commercial building.

Levenson states, "Passive House is the world's most rigorous building standard. It really implicates business-as-usual practices and forces us to make high-quality architectural enclosures." Buildings are insulated to provide maximum thermal retention with minimal heating or cooling. Fresh air is filtered in, and stale air is exhausted through heat recovery units. New passive construction costs only a few percent more than standard construction.

### The Five Key Principles for New Construction and Building Rehab

1. Climate-specific, continuous insulation. Insulation thickness is designed to meet the temperature range of the location, and there are no gaps in it, under, around, or above.

2. Airtightness. This protects against wind, outdoor pollution, and noise.

3. Thermal bridge-free connections. No heat escapes through intersections of building enclosure elements, such as wall to attic, or wall to foundation.

4. High-performance windows and doors with solar protection. This protects against solar heat gain.

5. High efficiency heat recovery ventilation. Ventilation adds to the healthiness of inside air and reduces allergies and asthma. Only the incoming ventilated air needs to be heated or cooled.

**Result:** 90% reduction in operational energy and zero carbon emissions from fossil fuel.

Pat and Steve Miller are co-founders of the NJ 50x30 Building Electrification Team. Steve Miller is the NJ Sierra Club Building Electrification Issues Coordinator. Email the authors at [stevemiller@comcast.net](mailto:stevemiller@comcast.net) and [patmiller@comcast.net](mailto:patmiller@comcast.net)

### Resources:

Webinar recordings, slides, and sign-up <https://qrd.by/y8noi>

IRA Benefit Calculator: <https://bit.ly/3YmrG3F>

Drawdown principles: <https://bit.ly/3l3zHw1>

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](mailto:editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org)



# Sandy Hook Offers Wildlife Viewing Opportunities

By John Miraglia

Imagine Sandy Hook without the huge crowds and long lines of cars vying for parking spaces and you've got the best place in Central New Jersey for a day's viewing of marine wildlife and more. On January 22, 16 Sierra Club members and friends took advantage of the off-season to try our luck at spotting seals on the bay side of Sandy Hook Gateway National Recreation Area on this, our first "Photo Safari."

We drove north to the Sandy Hook Lighthouse and Post Chapel area at Fort Hancock and found a pod of seals resting just offshore. They were in a cooperative mood and treated us to plenty of opportunities for taking photos. Also on hand were sea ducks and a mom and dad vulture team roosting on the top of a chimney of an abandoned military building. Refusing to be ignored, resident seagulls gave us an exhibition of aerial gymnastics.

Our next stop was as close as you can get to Skeleton Hill Island on the south end of the "hook." A short causeway leads to a viewing platform of the Island. No seals (or skeletons) were in sight that day but the Island and surrounding waters were home to, or at least a way station for, a wide variety of sea ducks.

In addition to marine wildlife, Sandy

Hook is home to a large herd of white-tailed deer. These deer appeared very accustomed to humans. A young family with a leashed dog stood among a harem of whitetails who seemed unconcerned about the human presence—a great photo opportunity.

A paved bike path facilitates hiking



Photo credit: Patrick Compagnucci

and biking on Sandy Hook and there are open stretches of beach on the ocean side for surf fishing.

### If You Go:

The seals inhabit the waters around Sandy Hook in the winter, starting in December. They hunt at night and rest up during the day. It is best to go at low tide. Parking is free in the off-season.

Note that some areas are marked "closed" to protect environmentally fragile sections of the park.



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

## GROUP OUTINGS COORDINATORS

- Chapter Outings Chair:** Leona Fluck [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com), (609) 259-3734
- Skylands:** Dave Alcock, [dwhooob@hotmail.com](mailto:dwhooob@hotmail.com)
- Hunterdon Warren:** Jonathan Wall [jonwall@jonwall.com](mailto:jonwall@jonwall.com)
- North Jersey:** Co-Chairs: *Open Position!* and Mary Walsh, [north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org)
- Gateway:** Steven Yafet, [syafet@gmail.com](mailto:syafet@gmail.com)
- Hudson Co:** Steve Krinsky, [stevekrinsky@comcast.net](mailto:stevekrinsky@comcast.net)
- Loantaka:** Kevin O'Brien, [kbkob@aol.com](mailto:kbkob@aol.com)
- Central Jersey:** Leona & George Fluck [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com)
- Raritan Valley:** John Miraglia, [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com)  
S. Pasricha, [spjersey@gmail.com](mailto:spjersey@gmail.com);  
Bernadette Maher
- Jersey Shore:** John Luard, [John.Luard@gmail.com](mailto:John.Luard@gmail.com)
- Ocean County:** Terrance Brown, (848) 333-7331 [terrybrown@comcast.net](mailto:terrybrown@comcast.net)
- West Jersey:** *Open Position!*
- South Jersey:** Tom Boghosian, [fboghosian44@gmail.com](mailto:fboghosian44@gmail.com)
- Singles Section:** *Open Position!*
- LGBTQ+ Section:** Wanda Ashbrook, [pridegrlnj@gmail.com](mailto:pridegrlnj@gmail.com)
- Inspiring Connections Outdoors:** [chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com)
- River Touring:** Fred Tocce, (908) 453-2205 (H) RD-1, Box 277, Washington 07882

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. Participants may bring pets on outings only if the event description specifically says pets are allowed.

Sierra Club outings are arranged and conducted by volunteer leaders who are 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 assure a safe and pleasant outing. Contact trip leaders for cancellation information.

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 day-pack. 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—call or message the trip leader for more information. If the weather is questionable on the date of the outing, you may assume that it will take place, unless the hike description 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 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.

Watercraft trips let you experience the unspoiled parts of our region, but water safety does impose special requirements. The size and skill of each participant must be appropriate to each water

## In Memoriam

Margit Hildegard Meissner-Jackson, a longtime member of the Ocean County Group, passed away November 22, 2022, at 85 years old. She was chair of the group and was passionate about the outdoors and protecting the environment. Current Group Chair Laura Stone described her as a fighter who was active on many fronts, including efforts to address environmental contamination and other harm caused by New Jersey's nuclear power plants. "She and all of us were very concerned and connected to the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. We're going to have Carlton

Montgomery, executive director of the Alliance, come and give a talk, and we'll make a donation in her name," she said.

Margit was a resident of the West Creek neighborhood of Eagleswood Township and served on the town's Environmental Commission from 2009 until her passing. She was also active with the PTA, Amnesty International, and Greenpeace. She was a seamstress by trade.



excursion, so participation is at the discretion of the leader. We ask you to register at least one week in advance. Unless a phone number is provided, please send an email with an honest assessment of your paddling experience, whether you need or can offer a ride, your phone number, and any questions you may have. You will receive a description of the trip, with directions, where you can rent a canoe or kayak, and what you will need to bring. Unless stated otherwise, rental boats are available, trips do not require advanced paddling skill or exceptional physical conditioning, public transportation is not available, nonmembers may participate, and responsible smokers are welcome.

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 Chapter group leading each outing is given at the end of the write-up, as follows:

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

## APRIL

**Apr 1 (Sat): A Lighthearted Day (No Pranks!) Hike at Mercer County Park** (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. The trails are through the woods and can be wet in some places with narrow boardwalk crossings over streams and wet areas as we hike to the Casperson Rowing Center and back. Meeting at the East Picnic Area parking lot 1346 Edinburg Rd., Princeton Junction. Bring water and snacks on the hike. Lunch will be at picnic tables after the hike. Leashed dogs are welcome. Facilities are available. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Joanne P at [jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com](mailto:jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com) and Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (C)

**Apr 8 (Sat): Garret Mountain to Great Falls Hike, Paterson** (Passaic Co.) 10 a.m., 6 miles in 4 hours, hilly terrain. We will start by hiking around Garret Mountain Park and admiring the views. Then we will hike down to the Great Falls in Paterson and see the falls from all vantage points then return. Facilities: Rest rooms near the parking lot. Portable toilets at the falls. Requirements: Hiking boots and day pack with water required. Bring lunch. No pets. Register at [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar). Directions will be sent via email to those who register. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak [the\\_hikist@mac.com](mailto:the_hikist@mac.com) and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

**April 12 (Wed): Cherry Blossoms at Colonial Park Gardens and D&R Canal Towpath Walk** (Somerset Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. Colonial Park Gardens is one of the treasures in Somerset County. It features a 144-acre Arboretum, Perennial Garden and much more. We'll enjoy the cherry blossoms and then continue our walk on the D&R Towpath (surface is sand and crushed stone) to East Millstone to the restored Bridge Tender's Station. Meeting at Colonial Park Garden's Parking Lot F, near the Lilac Garden. There are facilities. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com) and Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (RV)

**Apr 16 (Sun): Spring Hike at Parvin State Park** (Salem Co.) 10 a.m., option for 3 or 5 miles, easy pace. The Green and Red trails through the woods are well-maintained but have exposed tree roots in some sections. Situated around Parvin Lake on the edge of the Pine Barrens, the park not only has pine forests typical to the area but also a swamp hardwood forest. Spring bursts out in bright colors and rich fragrances. Bring water, snacks, and lunch on the hike. Good footwear recommended. Meet at the Visitors Center, 701 Almond Rd., Pittsgrove. There are facilities. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Tom Boghosian at [fboghosian44@gmail.com](mailto:fboghosian44@gmail.com) and Leona F. at [Leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:Leona@pineypaddlers.com) (S)

**April 19 (Wed): Barnegat Bay Blitz Land Cleanup** (Ocean Co.) 9 a.m.-noon. This is the 9th year that the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club is participating in the «Blitz» cleanup. We'll meet Lauren Keltos, NJ Department of Environmental Protection Team Captain, Barnegat Township, at the Barnegat public launch area. From there we'll travel to nearby places identified as needing cleanup. Garbage bags and gloves will be provided. Bring water and snacks. After the cleanup, option for late lunch at Sweet Jenny's Restaurant. Preregister to confirm participation. George & Leona F. at 609-259-3734 or [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (S)

**Apr 22 (Sat): Earth Day Cleanup at Mercer County Park** (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m.-noon. We will walk trails along Lake Mercer and the woods and fields. Lake Mercer was formed by Assunpink Dam #20 and is part of the Delaware River Watershed. Today is the 53rd anniversary of Earth Day. Join the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club and enjoy the outdoors as we clean up litter. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. Leashed dogs are welcome. Heavy rain cancels. Bring water and lunch. There are facilities. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) and Joanne P. at [jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com](mailto:jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com) (C)

**Apr 24 (Mon): Hike at Davidson's Mill Pond Park** (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. We begin our hike on the Yellow Trail, a grassy/rocky section that includes narrow boardwalks over swampy areas. The forested Blue Trail has elevations, exposed roots to step over, and large stones for steps in some sections. Hiking poles and good footwear recommended. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. We'll have lunch after the hike. Leashed dogs are welcome. Portable toilet at parking lot. Address: 42 Riva Ave., South Brunswick. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com) and Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (RV)

**Apr 29 (Sat): Eagle Rock Reservation Cleanup** (Essex Co.) 9 a.m.-noon. We will clean litter along the trails in the reservation. Bring water and snacks. Meet at the main entrance of the Essex County 9/11 Memorial, Prospect Avenue and Eagle Rock Avenue, West Orange. There are facilities. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. Leader: Ron Pate at [Ronpate31@verizon.net](mailto:Ronpate31@verizon.net) (G)

**Apr 29 (Sat): Cattus Island County Park Nature Festival and Hike** (Ocean Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. We'll walk Pinelands woods trails, the sandy trails around marshes, and along Silver Bay's beaches while looking for osprey in nesting platforms. The park is celebrating 43 years of "Connecting Community with Nature." The festival will have nature walks, kayak trips, live animal talks, music, and food vendors. Meet us at the Cooper Environmental Center, 1170 Cattus Island Boulevard, Toms River. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, and lunch. Leashed dogs are welcome. Preregister with George & Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (O)

>continued on page 8

**MAY**

**May 3 (Wed): Merry May Hike at The Watershed Institute** (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. We'll walk through a diversity of habitats on forest trails and along meadows. Keeping the water and natural environment clean, safe, and healthy in Central New Jersey through conservation, advocacy, science, and education is the heart of the Institute's mission. There are a dozen geocaches at the preserve! Leashed dogs are permitted. Meet at 31 Titus Mill Road Pennington. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) and Joanne P. at [jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com](mailto:jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com). (C)

**May 6 (Sat): Friends of Monmouth Battlefield Bird Walk at Monmouth Battlefield State Park** (Monmouth Co.) Meet 9 a.m. at the Visitors Center. The Friends of Monmouth Battlefield will be leading a guided bird walk on the battlefield trails, wood paths and field edges. Their walk will identify birds who live there or pass through in the spring. Check this link for more information and the Friends 2023 schedule of events: [www.friendsofmonmouth.org/](http://www.friendsofmonmouth.org/) There are facilities. Bring binoculars, water, and snacks. No pets on this walk. To receive further information if cancelled due to inclement weather, please register with John Miraglia at [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com) or Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (RV)

**May 11 (Thurs): Hike at Double Trouble State Park/Village** (Ocean Co.) 10 a.m., 4-5 miles, easy pace. We'll walk woods trails through pine forests and cedar swamps and sandy trails around the bogs. Originally a cranberry farm and packing plant, the former company town called Double Trouble is a window into past and current industries in the Pinelands. Meeting location 581 Pinewald Keswick Road, Bayville. There are facilities. Leashed dogs are welcome. Bring lunch, snacks, and water. Heavy rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Leona and George F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (W)

**May 13 (Sat): The Manors Hike, Ringwood** (Passaic Co.) 10 a.m., 7 miles in 4 hours, moderately hilly terrain. We will hike from Ringwood Manor to Shepherd Lake, NJ Botanical Gardens, Skyland Manor, and back. Facilities: indoor restrooms at both manors and at Shepherd Lake. Requirements: Hiking boots and day pack with water required. Bring lunch. No pets. Register at [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar) Directions will be sent via email to those who register. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak [the\\_hikist@mac.com](mailto:the_hikist@mac.com) and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

**May 13 (Sat): Hike Eagle Rock Reservation** (Essex Co.) 11 a.m., moderate pace. We will hike 5-6 miles on forested and sometimes rocky trails. The Eagle Rock Reservation is a 400-plus acre park and forest reserve along the First Watchung Mountain ridge line; the mountains are predominately volcanic basalt formations. Wear hiking boots, bring lunch and water. Rain cancels. No dogs. Meet at the main entrance of the Essex County 9/11 Memorial, Prospect Avenue and Eagle Rock Avenue, West Orange. There are facilities. Leader: Ron Pate at [Ronpate31@verizon.net](mailto:Ronpate31@verizon.net) (G)

**May 16 (Tues): Mercer Meadows Pole Farm Hike** (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. Broad, well-maintained gravel trails wind through woods and meadows. The Pole Farm is an Important Bird Area (IBA). Once used as the nerve center for AT&T overseas radio transmissions, this site encompasses 800 acres of grasslands and forested tracts. Meet at the corner of Keefe and Cold Soil roads, Lawrence Township parking lot. Bring binoculars to observe returning birds and resident **hawks**. Facilities are available. Bring water and snacks. Leashed dogs are welcome. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) and Joanne P. at [jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com](mailto:jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com) (C)

**May 20 (Sat): Spring Walk at Duke Farms (Somerset Co.)** 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, leisurely walk with stops along the way. The walking trails are paved and gravel, generally flat, as they wind through woodlands and meadows, past fountains, and sculptures, around lakes and lagoons. Meet at the Farm Barn Orientation Center ([www.dukefarms.org/](http://www.dukefarms.org/)). Bring your camera, water, and lunch on the hike. Facilities are available. Pets are not permitted. Rain cancels. Preregistration is required; group size is limited. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com) and Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (RV)

**May 21 (Sun): Silas Condict County Park** (Morris Co.) 1 p.m., 3 miles, easy pace. This will be a paved/forest trails combination walk. Address: 100 Kinnelon Road, Kinnelon. Park and meet near the covered Pavilion. There are facilities. Look for the Pride colors and flag. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Wanda at [pridegrlnj@aim.com](mailto:pridegrlnj@aim.com) (LGBTQ+)

**May 25 (Thurs): Spring Hike at Mountain Lakes Nature Preserve, Princeton** (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m., 3-4 miles, easy pace. This 75-acre natural area is mostly flat wooded terrain but with several small stream crossings on rocks, a few steep banks, and occasional tree roots. We'll have a break to read the interpretive signage at the man-made ice ponds and dams. They were created for harvesting ice by the Princeton Ice Company before refrigeration. Meeting at 30 Mountain Ave, parking lot. There are facilities. Hiking boots are recommended since trails can be muddy in some places. Rain cancels. Option for late lunch at Conte's Pizza, recommended by "Barstool Sports." Preregistration is required. George and Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (C)

**May 27 (Sat): Van Saun County Park Walk** (Bergen Co.), noon. This is a hybrid event that involves a combination of meet and greet with a walk of varying lengths throughout sections of the park. Join us by parking lot P9 and look for the Pride flag by the covered pavilion. We will gather and start our walk around the paved lake. We can add a walk over to Washington Springs for those who want a longer hike. Park address: 216 Forest Ave, Paramus. Bring water and snacks. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Wanda at [pridegrlnj@aim.com](mailto:pridegrlnj@aim.com) (LGBTQ+)

**JUNE**

**June 1 and 11 (Thurs/Sun): June is Pride Month in New Jersey.** Noon. Hike, stroll and walk your way to the many Pride celebrations. Volunteer to be a greeter at the Rutherford Pride Fest on June 1 in Rutherford or the New Jersey Pride Festival in Maplewood on June 11. Stop by the booth to support your fellow NJ Chapter Sierra Club group members. For more information: [www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt/](http://www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt/) [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/lgbt](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/lgbt) [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey) Contact Diane at [diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:diascat@hotmail.com) (LGBTQ+ and North Jersey)

**June 5 (Mon): Canoe/Kayak at Lake Mercer in Mercer Park** (Mercer Co.) 10 a.m. It's World Environment Day! We'll paddle the 365-acre lake and explore Assunpink Creek. We'll see Blue Herons fishing at the water's edge and many other birds. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Meet us at the marina boat parking lot to unload boats on the ramp. Pre-registration is required. Rentals are not available in the morning. Rain cancels. George & Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (C)

**June 7 (Wed): Hike Cheesequake State Park, Old Bridge** (Middlesex Co.) 10 a.m., 3 miles, easy pace. Cheesequake is unique since it lies in a transitional zone between two different ecosystems offering hikers a diversity of native flora and fauna. This is a moderate hike with ups and downs on the Green Trail through forests, with inclines and a long boardwalk. Good footwear recommended and hiking poles. Facilities are available. Bring water and snacks. Rain cancels. Park address: 300 Gordon Road, Matawan. Meet in the parking lot. An option for a late lunch at Big Ed's BBQ and Ribs. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com) and Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (RV)

**June 10 (Sat): Blue Mountain Lakes Hike, Walpack Township** (Sussex Co.) 10 a.m., 7 miles in 4 hours in moderately hilly terrain. Features: Blue Mountain Lake and Hemlock Lake in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Facilities: Next to the parking lot there is an

outhouse building with a sink and water. Requirements: hiking boots, backpack. Bring a daypack with water and lunch. No pets. Register at [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/calendar) Directions will be sent via email to those who register. Leaders: Jimi Oleksiak [the\\_hikist@mac.com](mailto:the_hikist@mac.com) and Jerry Ruocco (SS)

**June 10 (Sat): Roebling Museum Garden Tour** (Burlington Co.) 10 a.m. Join us for the Roebling Museum Garden Tour to celebrate the beautiful spring weather and local gardens in the company town famous for building America's most iconic bridges! Purchase a ticket for the garden tour which includes access to the museum exhibits as well as a walking tour of the former company town, with stops at lovely home gardens. Our guided walking tour will begin at the Roebling Museum where we will check in and receive a map of the locations. There are facilities. Tours run at the hour from 10 a.m. through 2 p.m. Bring water and snacks. Please contact leaders to coordinate a tour meeting time before you register. Co-leaders: George and Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (W)

**June 11 (Sun): South Mountain Reservation Hike** (Essex Co.) 10 a.m., moderate pace. We will hike 6-7 miles on a moderately difficult hilly trail on mostly dirt trails. The reservation covers 2,000-plus acres between the First and Second Ridges of the Watchung Mountains. We will meet at the Turtleback Loop Trail parking area off 374 Walker Road, West Orange. There are facilities. Wear hiking boots, bring lunch and water. Rain cancels. No dogs. Leader: Ron Pate at [Ronpate31@verizon.net](mailto:Ronpate31@verizon.net) (G)

**June 14 (Wed): Rose Day Walk at Colonial Park Gardens** (Somerset Co.) 10 a.m., a walk to "Stop and Smell the Roses." In the heart of the park, the Rudolf W. van der Goot Rose Garden displays thousands of roses of many varieties, with both modern and historic significance. Colonial Park Gardens is one of the treasures in Somerset County. It features a 144-acre Arboretum, Perennial Garden, and much more. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Rain cancels. There are facilities. Meet us at 156 Mettlers Rd., Somerset. Preregistration is required. Co-leaders: John Miraglia at [johnworks3@aol.com](mailto:johnworks3@aol.com) and Leona F. at [leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com) (RV)

**June 21 (Wed): Pride Summer Solstice Sunset Hike** (location TBD): This may be an RSVP event. Follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt/](http://www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt/)) for location and registration for the event. RSVP for location to Wanda at [pridegrlnj@aim.com](mailto:pridegrlnj@aim.com) (LGBTQ+).



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](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/skyland)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC](http://www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC)  
**Email:** [chachabacon@yahoo.com](mailto:chachabacon@yahoo.com); phone: 973-886-7950

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

<b>Chair</b> (12/31/24)	Greg Gorman	<a href="mailto:chachabacon@yahoo.com">chachabacon@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Vice Chair</b> (12/31/23)	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b> (12/31/24)	Norene Haberski	<a href="mailto:norenehaberski2@gmail.com">norenehaberski2@gmail.com</a>
<b>Treasurer</b> (12/31/24)	Norene Haberski	<a href="mailto:norenehaberski2@gmail.com">norenehaberski2@gmail.com</a>
<b>ExCom at large</b> (12/31/23)	Dave Alcock	<a href="mailto:dwhoob@hotmail.com">dwhoob@hotmail.com</a>
	(12/31/24) Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>
	(12/31/23) Allison Orsi	<a href="mailto:aorsi@hotmail.com">aorsi@hotmail.com</a>
	(12/31/24) Jill Aquino	<a href="mailto:jda1timeforchange@gmail.com">jda1timeforchange@gmail.com</a>
	(12/31/23) Chris Dunbar	<a href="mailto:chrisdunbar458@gmail.com">chrisdunbar458@gmail.com</a>
	(12/31/23) Joanne Morgan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Greg Gorman	<a href="mailto:chachabacon@yahoo.com">chachabacon@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Outings Chair</b>	Dave Alcock	<a href="mailto:dwhoob@hotmail.com">dwhoob@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Outreach Chair</b>	Joanne Morgan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Environmental Justice</b>	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Political Co-Chairs</b>	Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>
	Susan Williams	<a href="mailto:SkylandsGroup@gmail.com">SkylandsGroup@gmail.com</a>
<b>Publicity Chair</b>	Joanne Morgan	<a href="mailto:jojommorgan@yahoo.com">jojommorgan@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Recycling/Zero Waste</b>	Jill Aquino	<a href="mailto:jda1timeforchange@gmail.com">jda1timeforchange@gmail.com</a>
<b>Chair Webmaster</b>	Nicole Guerrieri	<a href="mailto:SierraClubNicole@gmail.com">SierraClubNicole@gmail.com</a>

**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](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren)

**Meetup:** [www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/](http://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/groups/sierraclub.hunterdonwarren/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/sierraclub.hunterdonwarren/)

## OFFICERS

<b>Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Celeste Martin *	<a href="mailto:celeste.martin@sluhn.org">celeste.martin@sluhn.org</a>
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Political Co-Chairs</b>	Karen Becker *	<a href="mailto:karbecker@gmail.com">karbecker@gmail.com</a>
	Amy Weeder *	<a href="mailto:aweeder@comcast.net">aweeder@comcast.net</a>
<b>Outings</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Treasurer, Secretary</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Warren County Issues</b>	Pat Banes *	<a href="mailto:patrick_banes@comcast.net">patrick_banes@comcast.net</a>
<b>Webmaster/Listmaster</b>	John Kashwick	<a href="mailto:jkashwick@gmail.com">jkashwick@gmail.com</a>
<b>ExCom at Large</b>	Jonathan D. Wall	<a href="mailto:docjdwall@gmail.com">docjdwall@gmail.com</a>

\* Group Executive Committee Member

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

**May 3 (Wed): 7 p.m. The Path to Fusion Energy – Is it the Future?** Dr. Andrew Zwickler of Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory (PPPL) will guide us through the research and breakthroughs in the scientific basis for producing fusion energy. If fusion becomes a power one day, it would provide us with an endless source of carbon-free energy. We will learn about the challenges and the progress that has been made in recreating the same energy that powers the sun and stars and the research that is being done to reproduce it here on earth. **In-person at the North Hunterdon County Library in Clinton, NJ**

## CURRENT ISSUES

**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](mailto: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](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey)

**Meetup:** [www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/](http://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/northjersseysierraclub](http://www.facebook.com/northjersseysierraclub)

**Twitter:** @sierraclub\_nj

**Instagram:** sierraclubnorth\_nj

## OFFICERS

<b>Co-Chair</b>	Diane Scarangella*	<a href="mailto:diascat@hotmail.com">diascat@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bob Weiss*	<a href="mailto:bobweiss1967@gmail.com">bobweiss1967@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Ron De Vos	<a href="mailto:rondevos58@outlook.com">rondevos58@outlook.com</a>
<b>Political Action Committee Chair</b>	Ron De Vos	<a href="mailto:rondevos58@outlook.com">rondevos58@outlook.com</a>
<b>Outings Committee</b>		
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Mary Walsh*	<a href="mailto:north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org">north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Conservation Committee</b>		
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Mary Walsh*	<a href="mailto:north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org">north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Member</b>	Judy Green*	<a href="mailto:jugreen547@gmail.com">jugreen547@gmail.com</a>
<b>Climate Change Committee Chair</b>	Jeff Rapaport*	<a href="mailto:jefrap@optonline.net">jefrap@optonline.net</a>
<b>Marketing/Social Media</b>		
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Marie Mannino	<a href="mailto:mmannino@yahoo.com">mmannino@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Youth Outreach/Outings Chair</b>	Erica Cowper*	<a href="mailto:ecowper22@gmail.com">ecowper22@gmail.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Rebecca Wilkin	<a href="mailto:rebeccawilkin@gmail.com">rebeccawilkin@gmail.com</a>
<b>Diversity/Environmental Justice</b>		
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Bushra Asfare*	<a href="mailto:bushra_c.e@hotmail.com">bushra_c.e@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Co-Chair</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Special Events/Membership</b>	Open Position!	
<b>Consulting Engineer</b>	Bushra Asfare*	<a href="mailto:bushra_c.e@hotmail.com">bushra_c.e@hotmail.com</a>

\*Elected North Jersey Group Executive Committee Member

**INITIATIVES:** The North Jersey Group is committed to coalition building. 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 NJ Sierra LGBTQ+ Section:** The North Jersey Sierra Section, the Bergen County Lesbian & Gay Alliance (BCLA) and Lavender Treks invite LGBTQ+ identified people to participate in outdoor, social, and environmental justice events for adults and youth! Help us table at the **North Jersey Pride event at noon on June 11 in Memorial Park, Maplewood or at the Rutherford Pride Fest on June 1. If interested contact Diane Scarangella, [diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:diascat@hotmail.com).** Look for other upcoming LGBTQ+ events under the LGBTQ+ Section in this edition of the Sierran!

**Preserving Open Spaces in Bergen and Passaic counties:** Contact [Diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:Diascat@hotmail.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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org) or Diane at [diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:diascat@hotmail.com)
- **Marketing/Social Media Committee:** Chair/Co-Chair Positions Open! Contact Marie at [mmannino@yahoo.com](mailto:mmannino@yahoo.com)
- **Outings Committee:** Contact Mary at [north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org) or Diane at [diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:diascat@hotmail.com)
- **Youth Outreach/Outings:** Contact Erica at [ecowper22@gmail.com](mailto:ecowper22@gmail.com) or Rebecca Wilkin at [rebeccawilkin@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccawilkin@gmail.com)
- **Diversity, Inclusion, and Environmental Justice Committee:** Chair Position Open! Contact Bushra Asfare at [bushra\\_c.e@hotmail.com](mailto:bushra_c.e@hotmail.com)

# GATEWAY GROUP

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

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Gateway/](http://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](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782)

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.

## OFFICERS

<b>Chair</b>	Bill Beren*	973-746-9661	<a href="mailto:Beren1@verizon.net">Beren1@verizon.net</a>
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Caroline Kane*	646-961-9003	<a href="mailto:ckane678@verizon.net">ckane678@verizon.net</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Rachel Tarzia*	908-531-2168	<a href="mailto:Rtarzia6@outlook.com">Rtarzia6@outlook.com</a>
<b>Program Co-Chairs</b>	Suzanne Trimel*	973-509-8335	<a href="mailto:suzanne.trimel@gmail.com">suzanne.trimel@gmail.com</a>
	Steven Yafet	908-354-2537	<a href="mailto:syafet@gmail.com">syafet@gmail.com</a>
<b>Publicity Chair</b>	Amanda Zhong		<a href="mailto:zhong.amanda@yahoo.com">zhong.amanda@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Political Chair</b>	Claire Ciliotta	973-746-0438	<a href="mailto:ccili279@gmail.com">ccili279@gmail.com</a>
<b>Fundraising Chair</b>	Rachel Tarzia	908-531-2168	<a href="mailto:Rtarzia6@outlook.com">Rtarzia6@outlook.com</a>
<b>Membership Chair</b>	Steven Yafet*	(see above)	
<b>Newark Issues Chair</b>	Jamie Bruno	973-393-2154	<a href="mailto:jjjjebruno@gmail.com">jjjjebruno@gmail.com</a>
<b>Passaic River Issues</b>	Steven Yafet*	(see above)	
<b>Outings Chair</b>	Ron Pate		<a href="mailto:ronpate31@verizon.net">ronpate31@verizon.net</a>
<b>Webmaster</b>	Christy Morganstein	732-718-4343	<a href="mailto:christy@medartsweb.com">christy@medartsweb.com</a>

\*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.

>continued on page 10

**EVENTS**

Three outings are scheduled for Sierra Club members and friends this spring. On Saturday, April 29 we will be sponsoring a clean-up at Eagle Rock Reservation. Hikes are scheduled for Eagle Rock Reservation on May 13 and at South Mountain Reservation on June 11th. Look in the outings section or in the Gateway Group webpage for more details.

**CONSERVATION NEWS**

Gateway is working with Montclair Climate Action to sponsor a Drive EV event on April 22nd at Erie Lackawanna Plaza in Montclair. Volunteers who wish to exhibit their electric vehicles, bikes, and battery electric lawncare devices should sign up at <https://driveelectricearthday.org> The Drive Electric Earth Day event will be adjacent to the Earth Day festival in Crane Park sponsored by the Northeast Environmental Coalition.

A fundraising auction will be held this spring. Look for emails announcing the items available for auction this spring.

**HUDSON COUNTY GROUP**

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/ HUDSON-county](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/ HUDSON-county)

**Email:** [HUDSONsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:HUDSONsierraclub@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** @HCSierraClub

**Instagram:** @HCSierraClub

**Twitter:** @HCSierraClub

**OFFICERS**

<b>Chair</b>	Patricia Hilliard*
<b>Secretary/Treasurer</b>	<i>Open Position!</i>
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Anne Arguelles
<b>Political Chair</b>	Ricardo Pereira*
<b>Delegate to Chapter</b>	Ricardo Pereira*
<b>Membership</b>	Meera Jaffery
<b>Publicity</b>	Spencer Rubino Finn
<b>Outings / Events</b>	Steve Krinsky*
<b>At-Large</b>	Nancy Booth*
(*ExCom)	

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**LOANTAKA GROUP**

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

**Contact:** Allen Swanson, chair [afswanson@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:afswanson@newjersey.sierraclub.org)  
908-721-7014

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC](http://www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC)

The Loantaka Group has launched a new Climate Action Committee. The committee's goal is to encourage local awareness and action of climate change effects and ways to mitigate those effects. The hope is to develop a grassroots network of representatives across the region to monitor and advocate climate-related issues.

In other news, Group Chair Allen Swanson spoke before the Madison Borough Council to congratulate them on completion of the first year of their Climate Action Plan. Swanson expressed a desire to work with Madison to promote their forward-thinking approach to other towns in the area.

Loantaka is looking for volunteers to join in the upcoming meetings of the Climate Action Committee and other activities. Contact Allen Swanson for details.

**CENTRAL JERSEY GROUP**

*(Mercer County and neighboring towns in adjoining counties)*

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey) Or find us from the NJ Chapter's website.

**OFFICERS**

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

Outings are listed on the Sierra Club website/calendar and in the Sierran.

Location, location, location is what we are watching and testifying about at local meetings to ensure protection from environmental destruction caused by warehouses, hotels, and other developments. We oppose new fossil fuel infrastructure and look forward to wind farms in the Atlantic ocean, community solar farms, and green infrastructure. Also, electrification of public transportation and we want to work with the Environmental Protection Agency and NJ Department of Environmental Protection to see the funding provided by President Biden's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act distributed. We encourage participation in Rutgers Extension Service Stewardship programs as well as Stockton University's and those from the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. Our monthly presentations are now on Zoom.

We welcome everyone to get involved and volunteer with us!

**RARITAN VALLEY GROUP**

*(Middlesex and Somerset counties and surrounding areas)*

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/raritan-valley)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC](http://www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC)

**Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/RaritanSierra](http://www.twitter.com/RaritanSierra)

**OFFICERS**

<b>Group Chair</b>	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Gary Frederick	609-203-3382 garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org
<b>Membership Chair</b>	John Miraglia	johnworks3@aol.com
<b>Political Co-Chairs</b>	<i>Open Positions!</i>	
<b>Publicity Chair</b>	<i>Open Position!</i>	
<b>Treasurer</b>	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
<b>Co-Webmasters</b>	<i>Open Positions!</i>	
<b>Outings/Events Co-Chairs</b>	John Miraglia, S. Pasricha, Bernadette Maher	
<b>Student Liaisons</b>	Varin Dharia, Jonah Segal	
<b>Group Executive Committee Members</b>	Gary Frederick*, S. Pasricha*, Teresa Callahan**, Kevin Corcoran**, and Bernadette Maher*	

\*Jan 2023-Dec 2024

\*\*Jan 2022-Dec 2023

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**

• FERC has approved the Regional Energy Access Expansion Project (REAE). They've stated that the Sierra Club's position that New Jersey and Pennsylvania do not need the gas is insufficient to deny the project, as other states may need fracked gas energy. The Club will appeal. The REAE project by Williams Transco proposes new compressors for Old Bridge (CS 207) and Neshanic Station, and at Branchburg (CS 505). Liquid natural gas storage is also proposed at Neshanic Station. See FERC's excuses here: <https://bit.ly/3YTBWAR>

• The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) responded to the public comments given at Raritan Valley Community College regarding the REAE air permit. The DEP stated that the air pollutants will be negligible. See the DEP's gaslighting here: <https://bit.ly/3XwXLEg>

• **Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE):** The DEP 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 as part of a 'warehouse park'. The increase in truck traffic will raise air pollutant levels and congestion along Route 9.

• **A class action suit** is moving forward against Middlesex Water Company for Perfluorooctanoic acid (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).

• **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/](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/](https://www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/sierraclub\\_jerseyshore/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/sierraclub_jerseyshore/?hl=en)

### OFFICERS

<b>Group Chair</b>	Dennis Anderson	732-970-4327	dennisaza@aol.com
	6 Maple Ave, Matawan NJ 07747		
<b>Secretary</b>	Bob Grize		
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Stan Greberis	908-415-9060	grapefruit@msm.com
<b>Fundraising Co-Chair</b>	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jim Baye		jimbaye@optonline.net
<b>Political Co-Chairs</b>	Robin and Harold Zullo		drzullo@optonline.net
<b>Outings Chair</b>	John Luard	732-708-9221	John.Luard@gmail.com
<b>Climate Chair</b>	Steve Miller	732-671-5917	SteveMiller@Comcast.net
<b>Letter-Writing Committee</b>	Chris Foley		ccfoley359@gmail.com

### Open Postions!

Vice Chair, membership chair, high school coordinator, outings leaders

### EVENTS

**April 24:** Science Monday. 6:30 p.m., Brookdale Community College. Jersey Shore Group Chair Dennis Anderson, a retired high school chemistry teacher, will describe recent extreme global weather events and possible solutions. Meet at Brookdale's Twin Lights Rooms I and II, Warner Student Life Center, 765 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, NJ.

### 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](mailto:Mary@reillygreen.com)

If you are not getting emails announcing our webinars, please send one to Wael at [waelkanj@gmail.com](mailto: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

<b>Chair and Treasurer</b>	Laura Stone	<a href="mailto:LauraS36@yahoo.com">LauraS36@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Political Chair</b>	Margaret Mary Piccolo	<a href="mailto:gogreenp1@yahoo.com">gogreenp1@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Membership Chairs</b>	Ray and Cathy Kozakerich	<a href="mailto:raykozak@comcast.net">raykozak@comcast.net</a>

<b>Group ExCom Members</b>	William Rodgers	
	Joyce Isaza	<a href="mailto:realtymstr@aol.com">realtymstr@aol.com</a>

**Activities director, 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.

The group is looking to build up its membership and welcomes new volunteers and people simply interested in getting outdoors. Interested persons should contact Ray and Cathy Kozakerich at [raykozak@comcast.net](mailto:raykozak@comcast.net)

Ocean County Group works closely with the Barnegat Bay Partnership and meetings are held in their building in Toms River.

## WEST JERSEY GROUP

(Camden, Gloucester, and Burlington counties, approximately)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/west-jersey)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC](https://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC)

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

Log on and Like Us!

### OFFICERS

<b>Group Chair</b>	Gina Carola	856-848-8831	ginaceee@verizon.net
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Denise Brush		denise.brush111@gmail.com
<b>Secretary</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Treasurer</b>	Trish Clements		patri3210@gmail.com
<b>Publicity Chair</b>	Anne Caridi		annecaridi@yahoo.com
<b>Political Chair</b>	Linda Rubiano		Linda_Maritza@yahoo.com
<b>Greenways Coords.</b>	Frank and Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Stacey Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
<b>Pinelands Rep</b>	Jennifer Lande		jenuinelauren@outlook.com
<b>Delegate at Large</b>	Aida Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
<b>Membership Chair</b>	Mike Brown	856-547-9221	eyebrown@verizon.net
<b>Media &amp; Communications</b>	Tony Hagen		editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org

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

Smart growth chair, programs chair, social media coordinators, outings chair.

**GENERAL MEETINGS** are held at 7:30 p.m. on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of ALTER-NATE 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](mailto:ginaceee@verizon.net) to get an invitation and link to participate.

**May 10:** To be Announced

This may be a Zoom meeting or may be in person at the Haddonfield 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](mailto:annecaridi@yahoo.com) or Gina Carola [ginaceee@verizon.net](mailto:ginaceee@verizon.net) or visit our Facebook page for the link to join the presentation.

**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](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/south-jersey)

### OFFICERS

<b>Group, Outings Chair</b>	Tom Boghosian	609-335-6907	<a href="mailto:tfboghosian44@gmail.com">tfboghosian44@gmail.com</a>
<b>Vice-Chair</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Conservation Chair</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Political Chair, Calendars</b>	Dick Colby	609-965-4453	<a href="mailto:dick.colby@stockton.edu">dick.colby@stockton.edu</a>
<b>Membership Chair</b>	Open Position!		
<b>Secretary/Treasurer</b>	Julie Akers	609-432-3280	<a href="mailto:julieakers56@gmail.com">julieakers56@gmail.com</a>
<b>At Large</b>	Allie Horn		

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. (3) We continue to hope for Community Solar opportunities for each municipality in South Jersey.

## SINGLES SECTION

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

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles)

### OFFICERS

<b>Interim Co-Chairs</b>	Ron Pate	<a href="mailto:ronpate31@verizon.net">ronpate31@verizon.net</a>
	Jimi Oleksiak	<a href="mailto:The_Hikist@Mac.com">The_Hikist@Mac.com</a>

### 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 list on the online calendar on the Chapter's web site: [sierraclub.org/new-jersey](http://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 section of the Sierra Club – all members of the LGBTQ+ community are invited to join us in any or all of the following events!

And visit us at our **North Jersey Pride table on June 11 at noon in Memorial Park, Maplewood OR at Rutherford Pride Fest on June 1 at 115 Highland Cross in Rutherford.** For more information or to help out, contact Diane at [Diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:Diascat@hotmail.com)

**Webpage:** [www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/](http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/)

**Meetup:** [www.meetup.com/njsierraclub](https://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt](https://www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt)

>continued on page 12

**OFFICERS**

**Chair** Diane Scarangella diascat@hotmail.com  
**Secretary** *Open Position!*  
**Treasurer** Jonathan Wall docjdwall@gmail.com  
**Webmaster/Listmaster** John Kashwick John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org  
**Outings Chair** Wanda Ashbrook pridegrlnj@aim.com

Please bring something to drink and a snack (if desired) and appropriate dress and footwear. Pets on leash are welcome and pictures for posting on social media can be taken of events but NOT of people's faces. Tick, bug, and sunblock protection is recommended.

**May 21 (Sun): Silas Condict County Park.** 1 p.m., 100 Kinnelon Road, Kinnelon, NJ. Park and meet near the covered pavilion. Look for the pride colors and flags. This will be a paved/forest combination walk.

**June 2023 – Pride Month:** Join a Pride Month hike, stroll, walk your way to the many pride celebrations. Volunteer to be a greeter at the Sierra booth at the **Rutherford Pride Fest on June 1** or the **North Jersey Pride in Maplewood on June 11**. Stop by the booth to support your fellow Sierra group members. For more information, contact Diane at [diascat@hotmail.com](mailto:diascat@hotmail.com)

**June 21 (Wed): Pride Summer Solstice event – sunset hike.** 5 p.m., location TBD. This may be a RSVP event. Follow us on Facebook for location and registration for the event. RSVP for location to Wanda at [pridegrlnj@aim.com](mailto:pridegrlnj@aim.com)

**SENIOR SECTION / FIFTY-PLUS SECTION**

The Senior Section is a chapter-wide special interest section for members over 50 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 the Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section is available online at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/senior-section>. Visit our webpage to find out about activities and events, including hikes, cleanups, social gatherings, dinner get-togethers, and other activities for members over 50.

Section Chair Paul Ehrlich (p.w.ehrlich@gmail.com) is seeking volunteers for the vice chair and conservation coordinator roles. If you are interested in one of these positions, send an email to Paul and include your resume. If you are interested in working on other goals, send an email with both a resume and justification for the proposed activity.

**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](mailto:secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Upcoming Meetings: March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10**



**NEW JERSEY CHAPTER LEADERSHIP**

**Executive Committee Members**

Judy Minot, Stan Greberis, Kip Cherry, Rich Isaac, Paul Sanderson, Karen Becker, Renée Pollard, Joe Testa, Pat Hilliard

**Chapter Chair and Group Effectiveness Chair**

Rich Isaac (973) 716-0297  
[richard.isaac@sierraclub.org](mailto:richard.isaac@sierraclub.org)

**Chapter Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Grant Writing Editor**

Judy Minot  
[Secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:Secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Conservation Chair**

Greg Gorman  
[ggorman07419@embarqmail.com](mailto:ggorman07419@embarqmail.com)

**Conservation Vice-Chair**

Gina Carola (856) 848-8831  
[ginaceee@verizon.net](mailto:ginaceee@verizon.net)

**Political Committee Chair**

Karen Becker  
[political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Parliamentarian and Council (CCL) Delegate**

Joe Testa  
[CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Treasurer**

Paul Sanderson (908) 233-2414  
[Treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:Treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Co-Vice Treasurers**

George Denzer (609) 799-5839  
[GDenzer73@gmail.com](mailto:GDenzer73@gmail.com)  
 Jim Andreano • [Jimandreano@gmail.com](mailto:Jimandreano@gmail.com)  
 Sunil Somalwar • [sunil.somalwar@gmail.com](mailto:sunil.somalwar@gmail.com)

**Membership Co-Chairs**

Jill Costa • [jillcosta73@gmail.com](mailto:jillcosta73@gmail.com)  
 Seth Kantor • [sdk4100@outlook.com](mailto:sdk4100@outlook.com)

**Outings Chair**

Leona Fluck (609) 259-3734  
[leona@pineypaddlers.com](mailto:leona@pineypaddlers.com)

**Newsletter Editor**

Tony Hagen (609) 499-8678  
[editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Webmaster**

Loraine Terrell  
[webmaster@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:webmaster@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Advisors and Liaisons**

**GIS (Geog. Info. Systems) Advisor**  
 Abdel Alfahham • [adiaa.kc@gmail.com](mailto:adiaa.kc@gmail.com)

**School Liaison**

Raghav Akula • [23akular@mtps.us](mailto:23akular@mtps.us)

**Inspiring Connections Outdoors Chair (ICO)**

Oscar Nazar • [ICOChair@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:ICOChair@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Legal Chair (Compliance Officer)**

Bill Singer, Esq. (908) 359-7873  
[wsinger@singerfedun.com](mailto:wsinger@singerfedun.com)

**Transportation Outreach Coordinators**

Matthew Bewley • [14bewley@gmail.com](mailto:14bewley@gmail.com)  
 Jordan Rosenbloom • [rosenbloomjordan@gmail.com](mailto:rosenbloomjordan@gmail.com)

**Regional Issues Liaison**

Joan Denzer • [JDenzer73@yahoo.com](mailto:JDenzer73@yahoo.com)

**Committees**

**Communications Committee**

Allen Swanson, Co-Chair • [afswanson@hotmail.com](mailto:afswanson@hotmail.com)  
 Judy Minot, Co-Chair • [Secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:Secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Elections Committee**

S. Pasricha, Chair • [spjersey@gmail.com](mailto:spjersey@gmail.com)

**Environmental and Social Justice Committee**

Renée Pollard, Chair • [rpollard16@comcast.net](mailto:rpollard16@comcast.net)

**Facilities Committee (office, meeting sites)**

Paul Sanderson, Chair • [treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Finance Committee**

Paul Sanderson, Chair • [treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:treasurer@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Forest Conservation Committee**

Greg Gorman, Chair • [ggorman07419@embarqmail.com](mailto:ggorman07419@embarqmail.com)

**Fundraising Committee**

Judy Minot, Co-Chair • [Secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:Secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org)  
 Jim Andreano, Co-Chair • [Jimandreano@gmail.com](mailto:Jimandreano@gmail.com)

**Information Technology Committee**

Joe Testa, Chair • [CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:CCLDelegate@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Inspiring Connections Outdoors Committee**

Oscar Nazar, Chair • [chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:chair.njico.sierraclub@gmail.com)

**Legislative Committee**

John Kashwick, Chair  
[John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Light Pollution and Night Sky Committee**

Jonathan Wall • [docjdwall@gmail.com](mailto:docjdwall@gmail.com);  
 John Kashwick • [John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:John.Kashwick@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Nominating Committee**

Stan Greberis, Chair • [grapefruit@msn.com](mailto:grapefruit@msn.com)

**Offshore Wind Committee**

Denise Brush, Chair  
[offshorewind@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:offshorewind@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Personnel Committee**

Rich Isaac, Chair • [richard.isaac@sierraclub.org](mailto:richard.isaac@sierraclub.org)

**PFAS Committee**

Gary Frederick, Chair  
[garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Product Sustainability Committee**

Sylvia Kay, Chair • [SylviaKay222@gmail.com](mailto:SylviaKay222@gmail.com)

**Transportation Committee**

Bill Beren, Chair • [Beren1@verizon.net](mailto:Beren1@verizon.net)

**Warehouse Committee**

Stan Greberis, Co-Chair • [grapefruit@msn.com](mailto:grapefruit@msn.com)  
 Gary Frederick, Co-Chair  
[garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Youth Committee**

Raghav Akula, Chair • [23akular@mtps.us](mailto:23akular@mtps.us)

**Issue Coordinators**

**Air Quality and Clean Air**

Paul Ehrlich • [p.w.ehrlich@gmail.com](mailto:p.w.ehrlich@gmail.com)

**Alaska**

Amy Weeder • [aweeder@comcast.net](mailto:aweeder@comcast.net)

**Asbestos and Toxic Dust**

Francie Goldstein, MD • [franciegoldstein@mindspring.com](mailto:franciegoldstein@mindspring.com)

**Building Electrification**

Steve Miller • [SteveMiller@comcast.net](mailto:SteveMiller@comcast.net)

**Clean Energy Campaign /Ready for 100**

Faris Jebara • [faris.jebara@gmail.com](mailto:faris.jebara@gmail.com)

**Community Solar**

Dick Colby • [dick.colby@stockton.edu](mailto:dick.colby@stockton.edu)

**Delaware River**

Gina Carola • [ginaceee@verizon.net](mailto:ginaceee@verizon.net)

**Endangered Species/Wildlife**

Jamie Zaccaria • [jamiezaccaria@gmail.com](mailto:jamiezaccaria@gmail.com)

**Genetically Modified Organisms**

Joanne Pannone • [jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com](mailto:jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com)

**Home Solar**

Abbas Salim • [azas786@yahoo.com](mailto:azas786@yahoo.com)

**Noise Pollution**

Michael Competielle • [mcompetielle@gmail.com](mailto:mcompetielle@gmail.com)

**Passaic River**

Steve Yafet • [syafet@gmail.com](mailto:syafet@gmail.com)

**Pinelands**

Jamie Philpot • [jpot345@gmail.com](mailto:jpot345@gmail.com)

**Regional**

Joan Denzer • [jdenzer@yahoo.com](mailto:jdenzer@yahoo.com)

**Tiger Conservation**

Sunil Somalwar • [sunil.somalwar@gmail.com](mailto:sunil.somalwar@gmail.com)

**Toxics Legal**

Leila Marcovici • [leilamarcovici@gmail.com](mailto:leilamarcovici@gmail.com)

**Trails**

Dave Mattek • [trail.coordinator@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:trail.coordinator@newjersey.sierraclub.org)

**Utah Wilderness**

Debbie Young • [debyoung31@comcast.net](mailto:debyoung31@comcast.net)

**Watershed**

Faith Teitelbaum • [faithtei@aol.com](mailto:faithtei@aol.com)

**Wetlands**

Robert "Bo" Petrillo • [RPetrillo22@gmail.com](mailto:RPetrillo22@gmail.com)

**New Jersey Chapter Office**

Suite A220, Building A  
 1 N. Johnston Ave.  
 Hamilton, NJ 08609  
**609-656-7612**

**Professional Staff**

**Chapter Director**  
 Anjali Ramos-Busot  
[anjuli.ramos@sierraclub.org](mailto:anjuli.ramos@sierraclub.org)

**Chapter Conservation Program Manager**

Taylor McFarland  
[taylor.mcfarland@SierraClub.org](mailto:taylor.mcfarland@SierraClub.org)

**Communications and Outreach Coordinator**

Jackie Greger  
[jackie.greger@sierraclub.org](mailto:jackie.greger@sierraclub.org)

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



Vol. 52, No. 2 • Spring, 2023

**Editor** Tony Hagen • [editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@newjersey.sierraclub.org)  
 Assisted by Sylvia Kay, George Moffatt, Joe Testa, and Judy Minot  
**Designer** Karen Crosby • [karonna@yahoo.com](mailto:karonna@yahoo.com)  
**Publisher** Paul Sanderson • [paulmsanderson@aol.com](mailto:paulmsanderson@aol.com)

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

*The Jersey Sierran* appears in January, April, July and October. The deadline for copy for the 2023 July to September issue is May 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 own. 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](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org), or  
 Sierra Club Membership  
 2101 Webster St., Suite 1300  
 Oakland, CA 94612  
 or 415-977-5653, and  
 Sierra Club NJ Chapter  
 Suite A220, Building A  
 1 North Johnston Ave.  
 Hamilton, NJ 08609

**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.

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

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES	INDIVIDUAL JOINT	
	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

FROM NATIONAL

# E-Bike Use on Trails? Sierra Club Offers Guidance

By Vicky Hoover and Jim Catlin • Recreation Issues Team

E-bikes—bicycles powered by electric motors—have rapidly gained popularity and seem to be all around us. With an e-bike, you can go faster, farther, and higher. E-bikes are claimed to “do everything you want but better.” They now share roads and trails with walkers, cars, buses, bicyclists, horses, and wildlife. They are great for urban transportation, but in off-road places e-bikes can lead to serious conflicts.

This rise of e-bikes challenged the Sierra Club to understand how to accommodate this new form of travel and still protect the environment and help people get out into nature. In the past year, Club volunteers and leaders have discussed how to address this new challenge. The Recreation Issues Sub Team of the national Wildlands Team led the revision of our Off-Road Use of Bicycles and our Off-Road Use of Motorized Vehicles policies. These were adopted in May 2022.

The revised policies acknowledge the benefits of e-bikes and promote their use in urban and developed areas. They make clear that e-bikes must be managed as motorized vehicles. In wildlands, where motorized use is prohibited, e-bikes also should be prohibited.

## Industry Advocacy

When e-bikes first appeared, they had to meet the requirements for motorcycles and mopeds. Because these

limitations were forecast to hurt sales, e-bike distributors and manufacturers formed an organization, the People-ForBikes Coalition, to change federal and state laws and policies to favor e-bikes. This group campaigned to convince the public that e-bikes should go everywhere conventional bicycles go. Today this organization has 27 full-time employees and a yearly budget of \$3.7 million.

To facilitate and expand use of electric motorized bikes, the e-bike industry invented a system that ranks e-bikes as Class 1, 2, or 3. They contend that Class 1 e-bikes are similar to traditional bicycles because they operate only when riders are pedaling and go no faster than 20 mph. A conventional bicycle typically goes just over 10 miles per hour. Class 2 and 3 e-bikes are faster, heavier, and more powerful.

There is a practical problem with allowing Class 1 e-bikes wherever bicycles are allowed. It is not possible for a bicyclist or an enforcement officer to look at an e-bike and determine its “class.” There is no distinctive marking. Many e-bike models may be identical whether they are Class 1, 2, or 3. Also, it is easy for e-bike owners to modify these bikes to increase power and speed.

The class distinctions are unenforceable, and thus, if fully adopted, would open any non-motorized trail to any



NREL employees test ride electric bikes at the 2015 Earth Week Green Commuting Expo. Credit: Dennis Schroeder, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

motorized bike.

PeopleForBikes has been very successful: 43 states have passed e-bike legislation that adopts their recommendations.

## 30x30, Wildlife, Hikers, and Equestrians

Human recreation has the potential to disturb wildlife and cause animals to avoid otherwise suitable habitat. Studies have shown that because e-bikes go faster and farther, they affect some wildlife more than hikers, cyclists, and horseback riders. Some hiking and horseback trails should be off-limits for vehicles.

Vehicular recreation conflicts with a critical need to protect biodiversity. Sierra Club champions the 30x30 cam-

paign to conserve 30% of natural habitat by 2030. Motorized use may prevent achieving 30x30 goals and disqualify candidate natural areas for federal wilderness designation.

E-bikes are here and may benefit many. It will be our challenge to promote these and still respect others on trails and, of course, protect habitat and wildlife.

For more information, request a copy of the Sierra Club’s Recreation Issues Team e-bike background paper. This explains in detail our concerns relating to e-bike use on public lands and can serve as a resource for Chapters in responding to e-bike proliferation.

Reach out to the authors by writing to [vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org](mailto:vicky.hoover@sierraclub.org) or [jm@wildutahproject.org](mailto:jm@wildutahproject.org)

# Invasive Plants and Bugs Pose Ecological Threat in NJ

By George Moffatt

We *homo sapiens* are probably the most invasive species of all, but nature, no slouch at getting even, constantly fights back. In New Jersey, we highlight recent invasives, such as the elegantly named porcelain ivy and the colorfully named spotted lanternfly, plus an old friend, the stink bug.

In 1950, there were no known invasive plants in the state, but today about 50 are firmly established, with about 150 labeled as “emerging.” These invasives have spread rapidly, displacing native plants, threatening agricultural produce, and affecting the ecological balance of native birds and insects.

A recently emerging invasive plant, [porcelain ivy](#) (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*), is a stealthy vine imported from Asia in 1870. It is now an out-of-control invasive with green leaves and red tendrils that overruns and smothers other plants, shrubs, and trees. In mid-summer, clusters of small white grape-like fruit appear. By September, these berries turn pink, lavender, turquoise, blue, and black, and these resemble porcelain, hence the name.

There is another invasive, mile-a-minute (*Persicaria perfoliata*), that looks and behaves just like porcelain ivy but has small barbs on its vines that allow it also to climb up tree bark.

To control both of them, remove, bag, and dispose of the berry clusters before they turn color. Otherwise, birds and mammals will eat the berries, scatter

the seeds, and next year you’ll have even more plants entwining your ornamentals.

The Virginia Nursery Society suggests making a weed killer of vinegar, salt, and liquid soap to sprinkle on the plants’ roots, avoiding, of course, your other plants. We shudder, however, to think of the sprays desperate farmers might be using.

One invasive insect disaster is the [emerald ash borer](#) (*Agrilus planipennis*), which arrived in Central New Jersey in 2014 and by 2020 was recorded all over the state. This bug from Northeastern

Asia is destroying ash trees across the United States and in Canada.

Another bug, the attractively named spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*), is such a scourge that the state’s very concerned Department of Agriculture (NJDA) has quarantined all [21 counties](#), hoping that residents and businesses take efforts to contain the spread. The NJDA is no longer asking residents to report sightings of these bugs.

Technically a plant hopper, the lanternfly is a native of China and Japan that was first reported in Pennsylvania in 2014 and in New Jersey in 2018. Its voracious appetite is devastation personified for over 70 host species, according to NJDA. For more information about this winged grim reaper, click [here](#).

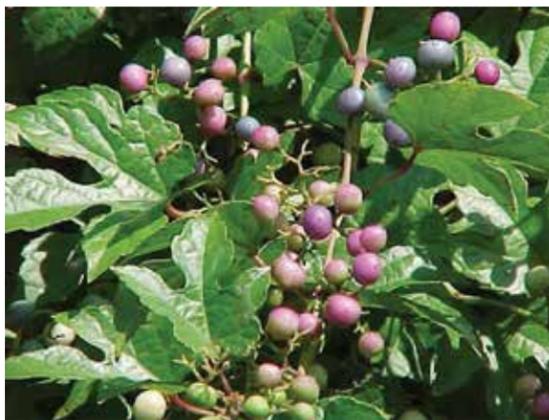
But don’t hit them with pesticides. Instead, the NJDA has an unofficial

solution: Squish ‘em. Using your foot, it’s easy but messy. Whether through affection or stupidity, the flies will walk up to you and even land on your shoulder. For those who are squeamish about squishing, vacuum them up or catch them on fly paper if they’re indoors, and if you find them outside, plant milkweed, which is poisonous to lanternflies but not to pollinators, or spray them with vinegar.

A third invasive bug is an unfortunately very familiar plant eater, the brown marmorated stink bug (*Pentatomidae*). It also came from Asia and was discovered in the mid-1990s in Allen-



Stink bug. Source: Rutgers University



Porcelain ivy. Source: Missouri Botanical Garden



Emerald ash borer. Source: USDA

quired more than a squishing.

Use a wet paper towel to quickly catch and dispose of the occasional indoor bug. Why wet? The soggy paper entraps the bug, while the water contains its defensive spray, if it is one of the spraying types of stink bug. The foul odor can linger for hours.

These are just a few of a long list of invasive insects and plants in the United States and in New Jersey.

Several anti-invasive bills that the state Legislature considered in the past went nowhere. However, a pending bill ([S-2186](#)) being championed by Sen. Linda Greenstein would require an NJDA permit for anyone who wants to propagate, distribute, or sell 27 species of invasive plants.

A second bill ([A-2629](#)), initially sponsored by the late Assm. Ronald Dancer, calls for an Invasive Species Task Force to study how to control invasive species. They are both welcome steps, albeit tentative.

Since our rivers and streams are already polluted with harmful pesticides and herbicides, we should fight these invasives “mano a mano”—one-on-one—using the hoe and the toe.

TRENTON REPORTS

# Hearing Closes on Bear Hunt

The public hearing on New Jersey’s plans to restore bear hunting closed on February 3. State officials including the New Jersey Fish and Game Council, maintain that lethal management of the bear population is essential to control the rapidly growing population and reduce the rise in bear-human encounters. The Sierra Club opposes the state’s comprehensive bear management policy and amendments and urges Gov. Phil Murphy to implement stronger non-lethal management efforts.

We recommend that NJ DEP’s non-lethal management plan include requirements for bear proof containers in bear country and provide financial support for municipalities to pay for them. Human-bear conflicts are greatly influenced by human behaviors associated with food and waste management and the abundance of food waste. Without this critical component of enforcing garbage management in bear country, New Jersey will continue to have nuisance cases even with a hunt.

“There are better proven solutions to limit human/bear interactions than hunting. Bears show up in human spaces because we’ve cut them off from access to their spaces. The bears of NJ need connected natural habitats so bears and other wildlife can migrate and thrive without approaching human spaces. We can solve this ‘emergency’ of more bear/human interactions while getting us closer to the global goal of conserving 30% of land by 2030,” said Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club.

The number of bears in New Jersey has doubled from 1,500 to 3,000 since 2018 and is expected to reach 4,000 by 2024.

# Logan Coal Plant Demolition Heralds New Era

Thanks to substantial lobbying by the Sierra Club and other environmental and public interest groups, the Logan and Chambers coal-fired plants in Gloucester and Salem counties are now history. In December 2022, Sierra Club President Ramón Cruz and Sierra Club New Jersey Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot bore witness to the dramatic demolition of the Logan facility.

Both plants were shuttered at the end of the summer, and energy obtained from a less polluting source could result in net CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction of 3.9 million tons over three years, according to a [report](#) by FTI Consulting.

Also significant is that the replacement energy will be cheaper, resulting in up to \$30 million in ratepayer savings through 2024. Starwood Energy Group Global, the owner of the plants, says it will redevelop the sites with a clean energy focus. Particularly, \$1 billion will be invested to develop a battery power storage operation at the Logan Township site.

Solar cells and wind turbines produce electricity only when there is sunlight or the wind is blowing, and often this energy production does not coincide with demand, so batteries are required to store it for use when needed. Logan will be among the largest energy storage projects in the state.

The electricity storage center will be hooked up to the power transmission lines from New Jersey’s nascent offshore wind industry.

The Logan and Chambers plants were the last active coal-fired plants in New Jersey. Logan and Chambers were “peaker plants” that operated when the grid needed extra support during periods of high demand. Energy from the plants was distributed by Atlantic City Electric, whose rates left its customers paying more for electricity than other energy consumers in New Jersey.

“The Logan demolition marks the end of the coal era in New Jersey and a major step towards the state’s clean energy future,” Cruz said. “Battery storage will play an instrumental role in bolstering a clean grid, all without polluting our air or endangering the health of vulnerable communities. Sierra Club encourages other states to follow this example.”



Sierra Club NJ Chapter Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot and Sierra Club President Ramón Cruz witnessed the Logan coal plant demolition.



Jeanne Meyers and Gina Carola at the Burlington County Volunteer Fair.

# Stop the Camden Waste Incinerator Expansion

A public hearing was held in December 2022 on a potential \$60 million expansion of the Covanta Camden Energy Recovery Center, which the Sierra Club strongly opposes. Covanta intends to install additional pollution controls, but at the same time it wants to set up operations to accept liquid waste, which would include paint and adhesive residues.

Covanta Camden is a “waste to energy” (WTE) incinerator that produces nitrous oxides, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, and volatile organic compounds, all of which are highly harmful to human health. Another byproduct of WTE is ammonia gas, which also is harmful to humans.

The resource recovery facility is located in one of the poorest areas of New Jersey, making this an environmental justice issue. The Sierra Club’s official position on incinerators is that they should not be used to manage hazardous waste unless it can be demonstrated there are no other technically feasible methods for management of waste.

Covanta is seeking modification and renewal of its Title V operating permit to allow the changes and extend operations. According to Covanta’s proposed plan, liquids processing would begin in the first quarter of 2025. These requests are under review by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

WTE facilities recapture valuable materials from the waste stream, and incineration of the remainder produces electricity that goes into the grid. It is argued that if this waste went to landfills, much more CO<sub>2</sub> would be generated. These are the positives, but WTEs represent a failure to address the waste stream at its source, where more harm could be prevented through reduced waste generation and proper recycling and separation activities.

Covanta argues that its facility produces toxins in amounts that are well below federal maximum allowances, but some emissions is still a far cry from no emissions at all.

“Covanta has made some strides in community outreach and beautification but it cannot escape the fact that it is still a waste incinerator processing facility,” said Renée Pollard, chair of the Environmental Justice Committee of the Sierra Club’s NJ Chapter. “Why does it always have to be about money at the cost of public health? The residents don’t want it there and why should they be the recipients of poor decisions.”

The DEP’s public comment period for this project ended in early January, but regardless of the outcome, residents of New Jersey can help by reducing the amount of waste they produce, recycling more carefully and thoroughly, and consuming fewer single-use plastic items.

# Raiding the Clean Energy Fund Cookie Jar

New Jersey’s Clean Energy Fund (CEF) pays for energy efficiency measures and renewable energy infrastructure, both of which are sorely needed. According to a New Jersey Policy Perspective [report](#), 95% of the energy consumed in New Jersey comes from non-renewable sources, and 89% of the energy produced in New Jersey is nonrenewable.



Sierra Club members and other clean energy advocates participated in the rally at the State House in January.

Funds for the CEF come from a surcharge on energy consumers’ bills—an estimated \$380 million in 2021 alone, NJPP said. Unfortunately, successive administrations have made a practice of raiding the fund for nonclean energy activities. A total of \$1.98 billion has been diverted in this way since 2010.

Gov. Phil Murphy’s administration is no stranger to doing this. He has taken \$533 million out of the CEF cookie jar. Given the urgency of the need to address climate peril, the CEF should be regarded as sacrosanct—too precious to be meddled with.

Labor, environmental, business, and health advocacy groups have [repeatedly](#) asked Murphy to end the practice of raiding the CEF. They underscored the message with a rally at the State House in January.

“The state’s reliance on fossil fuels threatens the health and safety of everyone, especially people of color who disproportionately live closest to sources of pollution,” said Alex Ambrose, NJPP policy analyst and report author.

The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club has called upon Murphy to make good on his gubernatorial promise to stop raiding the CEF.

“We demand the fund gets used for its intended purpose—clean energy—and for our government to use the ratepayer’s money responsibly,” said Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club.

**Resource**

NJPP Report: [bit.ly/3RYhWed](https://bit.ly/3RYhWed)

## State House Notes

On February 3, 2023, the public comment period closed on a proposed Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) [Inland Flood Protection Rule](#), intended to ensure the use of current precipitation data and reliable climate science to protect NJ communities in against increased intensity of precipitation events and stormwater runoff.

“The current methodologies for managing stormwater and determining the extent of flood hazard areas utilize outdated and inherently backward-looking precipitation data and do not account for either current conditions or the expected impacts of climate change on precipitation events,” according to the DEP.

In his January 2023 [State of the State Address](#), Gov. Phil Murphy mentioned the [Garden State Greenway](#) railbed purchase as a standout achievement during his administration. The Greenway would extend over a 9-mile, 100-foot-wide linear corridor spanning Essex and Hudson Counties through eight municipalities (Montclair, Glen Ridge, Bloomfield, Belleville, Newark, Kearny, Secaucus, and Jersey City).

The DEP acquired this property from Norfolk Southern on August 19, 2022. The DEP’s vision is “to convert this blighted corridor into a thriving recreation and transportation corridor traversing two of the most densely populated Counties in New Jersey.”

Murphy also mentioned plans for a “boardwalk fund” that would provide for upgrades to these “wooden Main Streets” at the Jersey Shore. NJ Chapter Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot cautioned against building permanent infrastructure in areas vulnerable to sea-level rise. “Calling boardwalks wooden Main Streets sounds like a slippery slope to new development in flood prone areas.”

The following bills were released by the Senate Environment and Energy Committee in December. The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club supports them.

**S2712** (Singleton): Would prohibit sale and use of firefighting foam containing perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, which are highly toxic to human health.

**S2186** (Greenstein/Smith): Would prohibit the sale, propagation, or distribution of certain invasive plants without a permit. The Department of Agriculture would adopt rules for the safe use of invasives. “This is work long overdue for the state since we are one of five states in the entire country that does not prohibit the sale of invasive species,” Ramos-Busot stated.

**S3362** (Greenstein/Codey): Would provide \$53 million for state acquisition of land for recreation and conservation purposes, including Blue Acres projects, which address flooding concerns, and the Green Acres program, for the development of interconnected open spaces.

**S418** (Smith/Greenstein): Would set standards for food date labeling, public education, and food safety guidelines. Confusing labels cause families and grocery stores to dispose of food before it has truly expired, creating waste, greenhouse gas, and economic problems.

**S3305** (Smith/Ruiz): Would allow low- and moderate-income families to self-attest to their income, thereby facilitating participation in community solar programs.

**S3361** (Smith/Stanfield): The sum of \$64 million would be earmarked for DEP recreation and conservation projects in Trenton and the state park system.

### Resources

Flood Protection: [bit.ly/3jEBvLP](https://bit.ly/3jEBvLP)

DEP Greenway: [bit.ly/3jOpnb1](https://bit.ly/3jOpnb1)



## FERC Sides With Polluter on Pipeline Ruling

In a setback for the race to mitigate climate warming, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has approved plans by Williams Companies to expand natural gas pipeline capacity across New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

The Transco Regional Energy Access Expansion Project (REAE) would involve miles of new pipeline construction, expansion of two compressor stations in New Jersey (in Branchburg and Old Bridge), and construction of a new compressor station in West Deptford, Gloucester County.

It would expand pipeline capacity by 829,000 dekatherms and greenhouse gas emissions in New Jersey by 16%. One dekatherm is 1,000 cubic feet of natural gas. The Sierra Club and other environmental groups plan to appeal the decision and are urging NJ Gov. Phil Murphy to block the pipeline expansion, as it would undermine the state’s goal to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and perpetuate the state’s reliance on fossil fuels.

The FERC decision ignores a New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and Ratepayer Advocate filing with FERC that found the REAE project to be unnecessary for the state’s energy supply. A BPU-commissioned report shows current gas infrastructure will be able to meet demand through 2030, even during peak usage in cold winter weather.

“Once again FERC rubber-stamped another fossil fuel project that is unneeded in New Jersey. It will contribute to an increase of methane gas releases and exacerbate climate change. There is no need for more natural gas in New Jersey, and our residents certainly do not need to be paying for it,” said Anjuli Ramos-Busot, director of the NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club.

“The expansion of more fossil fuel projects like the REAE will make it more difficult to advance clean renewable energy investments, and for New Jersey to meet its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets,” she said.

Other groups in opposition to REAE include New Jersey League of Conservation Voters, Food & Water Watch, ReThink Energy NJ, and Clean Air Council.

## Getting Tough on Plastics Producers

Less than 6% of plastics are recycled. What happens to the rest? It piles up in landfills, it litters the roadsides, it gets washed out to sea—by the millions of metric tons.

Plastic waste comprises thousands of toxic chemicals, including endocrine disrupting substances, which interfere with healthy bodily processes. Microplastics are turning up in mothers’ breast milk, even in the snows of Antarctica. They are in our drinking water and the food we consume.

“What we are finding is this is much worse than we thought,” said John Myers, founder of Environmental Health Sciences, in testimony at the first congressional [hearing](#) on plastic waste, held in December 2022.

Over the last five decades, there has been a 50% decline in adult male sperm count, for which endocrine disruptors are believed responsible. The rate of decline is speeding up, and by the 2040s sperm counts could approach zero, he said. “Reproducing the old-fashioned way will become much less common.”

Also testifying at that hearing was Judith Enck, founder of Beyond Plastics and a former Environmental Protection Agency regional administrator. She spoke also in a February 2023 webinar with Sierra Club NJ Chapter Director Anjuli Ramos-Busot about the need for plastics reduction and the fallacies of plastics recycling, which releases harmful substances into the environment.

Plastics are so diverse they cannot be efficiently recycled and are increasingly converted back into fossil fuel, and in 10 years plastics are expected to result in more greenhouse gas emissions than original fossil fuels.

“We cannot leave our children and grandchildren with this enormous problem of plastics pollution,” Enck said. “There are solutions.”

She cited an Oceana [poll](#) finding that 82% of American voters want legislators to adopt laws that reduce plastics. She noted these results were bipartisan. “I’ve met many people who were climate change deniers. I have never met a plastic pollution denier,” she said. The point was our legislators have a clear mandate to address plastic pollution with tough laws.

In New Jersey, Beyond Plastics is working with Sierra Club and many other groups to develop a broad-based “extended producer responsibility” law ([S426, Smith](#)) that would shift the cost of managing plastic waste back onto the producers and incentivize more conservative use of these harmful compounds. Dubbed the “Packaging Product Stewardship Act,” S426 as currently drafted would do the following:

- Require producers to develop environmentally sound plans for recovering all discarded packaging products,
- Increase reuse of packaging materials,
- Include regular analyses of the success of these stewardship plans, and
- Develop producer financing to provide for collection and recycling by municipalities.

The law would apply to bottles, food packaging, home delivery packaging, and bulk product shipping packaging, whether these are made of paper, plastic, glass, or metal.

The Sierra Club and other advocates ask NJ residents to contact their elected representatives and urge passage of this legislation.

### Resources

Hearing: [bit.ly/3Kxchd5](https://bit.ly/3Kxchd5)

EPR Bill: [bit.ly/3KA6i7j](https://bit.ly/3KA6i7j)

Oceana Poll: [bit.ly/3ZgOOBd](https://bit.ly/3ZgOOBd)

## Wildlife and Endangered Species Committee Report

The Wildlife and Endangered Species Committee is working officially with the Coalition to Ban Leghold Traps in New Jersey and when it comes time to make decisions on supporting any legislation, they’ll be reaching out to the Legislative Committee.

Anyone who wants to join the Wildlife and Endangered Species Committee should email Jamie Zaccaria, at: [jamiezaccaria@gmail.com](mailto:jamiezaccaria@gmail.com).



An evening shot of the Keyport ocean view. Photo credit: Taylor McFarland