THE SIERRA CLUB is the nation’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. Our mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the planet. We have over 4 million members and supporters across the country and 150,000 right here in Michigan. See all of Sierra Club’s conservation policies here: www.sierraclub.org/policy. Here’s our public bill tracker which is updated daily: https://tinyurl.com/mibilltracker.

MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE

The Sierra Club’s top priority is mitigating climate change by moving our energy system away from polluting sources (oil, gas, coal, nuclear, and hazardous waste) to clean, renewable sources including solar and wind, plus adoption of storage, energy efficiency, and expanding access to public and mass transit as well as expediting the transition to electric vehicles. Fracked gas and the aging pipelines used to move dirty fuels are too dangerous for the Great Lakes state and entail property owner conflicts through eminent domain. Sierra Club advocates for policies that:

- Expand our use of clean energy, including but not limited to renewable energy standards, energy efficiency programs, net metering, weatherization of homes, decarbonization of buildings, and expanding access to community clean energy projects.
- Decommission unsafe existing pipelines, limit the construction of new pipelines, and increase pipeline safety.
- Minimize the transportation sector impacts on land, airspace, waterways, fuel consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and support pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and electric vehicle adoption.
- Enact a ban and/or strict safeguards on the hydraulic fracking process and waste.
- Require oil and gas companies to follow state water withdrawal laws, disclose, up-front, all chemicals used in the drilling/fracking process, making companies assume contamination liability, and ban flaring.
PROTECT & RESTORE OUR GREAT LAKES ECOSYSTEM

Our Great Lakes hold one-fifth of the world’s fresh surface water. In addition, there are underground water resources in Michigan greater than the volume of water in Lake Michigan. Our surface and groundwater are threatened today by dangerous substances (PFAS, lead, copper, mercury), factory farms and nutrient runoff pollution, industrial water withdrawals and diversions, invasive species, and plastics. Sierra Club supports policies that:

- Ensure all of our citizens have safe and affordable water.
- Measure, monitor, and eliminate PFAS use and other toxic chemicals contaminating our water.
- Eliminate agricultural pollution runoff to reduce toxic algae blooms.
- Support green, sustainable water infrastructure and stop plastics from entering our waterways.
- Prevent large corporate water withdrawals and the spread of invasive species.
- Codify the public trust doctrine in statute to the groundwater of our state, meaning that the state serves as a trustee to maintain and protect our groundwater water for the benefit of current and future generations who are the beneficiaries.
- Protect communities, our Great Lakes, and drinking water sources from the impact of soil erosion and rising water levels.
Sierra Club believes that all people have a right to a healthy environment and the right to effectively participate in their government to achieve that end. No communities should bear disproportionate amounts of pollution because of their demographics or socio-economic status. Local citizens who deal with this pollution on a daily basis must be given a voice and be empowered to defend their communities so that we don’t end up with more catastrophes like the Flint water crisis and the 48217 air pollution hotspot. **Sierra Club supports:**

- Re-establishing citizen commissions to oversee EGLE’s and DNR’s programs, rules, permits, and policies surrounding air and water quality, as well as gas/oil drilling. These balanced and transparent commissions would hold open hearings and receive public comment, providing an on-going public forum for both victims of pollution and those concerned about agency overreach.

- Implementing the policy recommendation from the State of Michigan’s Environmental Justice Work Group: [https://goo.gl/UkTXQz](https://goo.gl/UkTXQz)

- Ending the practice of water shutoffs.

- Requiring emission permits to account for the cumulative impacts on communities.

- Ensuring families have the right to a warm, safe home by making our energy more affordable and prioritizing resources for households with low incomes and/or high energy burdens.

- Fighting to secure a just transition for the workers and communities impacted by the closure of coal plants and fossil fuel facilities.
PROTECT MICHIGAN’S BIODIVERSITY AND FUND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Michigan’s public lands and natural resources are essential to the economic and ecological sustainability of our state and the recreational opportunities for our residents. Unfortunately, our state budget has failed to prioritize environmental protection and public health. EGLE and DNR budgets combined equate to less than 1% of state allocations. In addition, much of their funding comes from fees, leases, and permits, leaving these agencies to overly rely on the very industries they are supposed to be monitoring. **Sierra Club advocates for:**

- A steady increase in investment in the capacity of EGLE and DNR for the sake of safe drinking water, expanded recycling, recreation opportunities, and the multitude of benefits these environmental programs offer.
- Opposing funding cuts that undermine environmental protection and community health.
- Ensuring the protection and restoration of Michigan’s natural resources, biodiversity and wildlife habitats.
- Rejecting any effort to diminish the protection, preservation, quantity, and integrity of public lands.
- Holding polluters financially responsible for contaminating our land, air, and water through polluter pay legislation.
- A graduated income tax that will generate revenue to fund government programs and agencies such as EGLE and DNR.
GROW MICHIGAN’S DEMOCRACY

In order for us to achieve climate and conservation victories, we must have a healthy democracy. Michigan ranks dead last when it comes to transparency and accountability of state government. Michigan’s legislature has doubled campaign contribution limits, approved unlimited political spending by dark money groups, and in 2020 continuously attacked our elections, democratic processes, and pushed disinformation about our elections. Sierra Club vehemently opposes any proposals that make it harder for citizens to vote or for their voices to be heard by elected officials, proposals that increase the role of money in politics, decrease transparency in campaign finance reporting, or any action that undermines the public’s confidence in government. **Sierra Club supports:**

- Limiting and/or eliminating the influence of money in politics.
- Increasing transparency for lobbying, governments, and campaigns.
- Preventing voter suppression and other hurdles to voting.
- Expanding the Freedom Of Information Act to both the Governor’s office and the state legislature.
- Holding public officials accountable who actively work to undermine our democracy and neglect their duty to uphold Michigan’s and the United States Constitutions.
As a way to hold state lawmakers accountable for their actions, the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter publishes a legislative scorecard highlighting where legislators stand on key priority issues. We use our scorecard to make sure Sierra Club Michigan Chapter members and supporters know how their elected officials voted. This legislative session the Sierra Club will be teaming up with our partners at Clean Water Action for a joint scorecard.

- Our scorecard focuses on floor votes, and sometimes tracks committee votes, bill sponsorships, and public statements on key issues from our policy priority document.
- Sierra Club is committed to ensuring that our decisions to score are communicated to legislators and their staff ahead of time.
- If you are unsure about whether something will be included in our scorecard, we highly encourage lawmakers and staff to reach out to our organizations and ask.
- Sierra Club will not score votes when we have not taken a position or have taken a neutral position.

Check out our most recent scorecard and previous ones on our website: [https://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/legislative-scorecards](https://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/legislative-scorecards)