Chair’s Corner  
Joanne Steele

I think it’s my duty, as your MHG Chair to be our cheerleader and to encourage our participation in lessening climate change, by changing our living habits and participating in the improvement of what’s left of our democracy. These changes are desperately needed. Many millions of us must begin now to do so! Will we?

It’s also my duty not to lie to you. What if I told you that all we can do now is to decrease how long the incredibly bad consequences of our past lethargy will last? Well, that’s what I have to tell you. Yes. The party’s over. We had a great time. What’s left is a horrible climate mess and it’s going to last a very, very long time. That’s what the world’s best scientists and climatologists are saying. Nature against crimes—ours. It’s the Anthropocene (Earth’s most recent geologic time period as being human-influenced, or anthropogenic, based on overwhelming global evidence that atmospheric, geologic, hydrologic, biospheric and other earth system processes are now altered by humans).

Hurricane Harvey dropped 4 feet of water on the Houston area, the whirl-wind having picked up much more moisture from the Gulf of Mexico’s waters that WE caused to warm up over recent decades. Professor Stefan Rahmstorf, co-chair of Earth System Analysis at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) in Germany, adds: “…quite possibly also relevant, is a general slowdown of atmospheric summer circulation in the mid-latitudes. This is a consequence of the disproportionately strong warming in the Arctic. It can make weather systems move less and stay longer in a given location—which can significantly enhance the impacts of rainfall extremes, just like we’re sadly witnessing in Houston.”

We are only seeing effects now of warming from decades past. James Hansen says: “The fundamental difficulty is the delayed response—the inertia of the climate system. The ocean is deep and the ice sheets are three kilometers thick, and they don’t respond quickly to what is really a weak forcing. And so the system has only partially responded to the forcing we’ve put up already. There’s more in the pipeline. You’re talking about a system that responds on the timescale of decades to centuries — that’s a different time constant than the political constant.”

David Wallace-Wells writes in “The Uninhabitable Earth,” (New York magazine, 7/17) subtitled “Famine, economic collapse, a sun that cooks us: What climate change could wreak—sooner than you think” …”If your anxiety about global warming is dominated by fears of sea-level rise, you are barely scratching the surface of what terrors are possible, even within the lifetime of a teenager today.” The UN IPCC predicts that Earth will be warmed by 4 degrees within the next 50 years. The last time that happened, Peter Brannen points out in The Ends of the World, the oceans were hundreds of feet higher, not just 10 or 30 feet. It will take only time. Some predict that we’re going to blow past four degrees to eight if we don’t act vigorously and soon.

In an article by Richard Heinberg for the Post Carbon Institute (8/17/17), “Why Climate Change Isn’t Our Biggest Environmental Problem, and Why Technology Won’t Save Us,” writes: “Some theorists…have abandoned the moral fight altogether. Their justification for doing so is that people want a vision of the future that’s cheery and that doesn’t require sacrifice. Now, they say, only a technological fix offers any hope.” He goes on: “The reason for the failure thus far of the environmental movement wasn’t that it appealed to humanity’s moral sentiments—that was in fact the movement’s great strength. The effort fell short because it wasn’t able to alter industrial society’s central organizing principle, which is also its fatal flaw: its dogged pursuit of growth at all cost. Now we’re at the point where we must finally either succeed in overcoming growthism or face the failure not just of the environmental movement, but of civilization itself.”

Your move.

Conservation Corner  
Joanne Steele

Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) Strike for Good

The $900 million Competitive Power Ventures (CPV) power plant being built in Wawayanda has been stopped because the 7.8 mile Millennium Lateral pipeline which is needed to supply fracked gas to the plant has been denied the three necessary permits by the NYDEC. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) had put the Millennium Pipeline Company’s proposed Lateral through an environmental review, but its final approval depended on getting the three state permits from NYDEC. On 8/24/17 the DEC denied all three stating that FERC’s environmental review of the $57.3 million project was “inadequate and deficient” This conclusion was based on Sierra Club’s victorious lawsuit against a Florida pipeline. In light of the Sierra Club decision the DEC is asking FERC to “reopen the evidentiary record” for the project to hear additional information about greenhouse gas emissions associated with burning natural gas at the power plant.

 Crimes against Nature

Credo Action (8/22/17) says: “Trump has nominated long-time racist and climate-denying conservative talk radio hack Sam Clovis to serve as the Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) chief scientist…. He has no policy expertise in food and agriculture or experience in hard sciences, and he believes climate science is ‘junk.’” This, despite that the 2008 Farm Bill law requires the USDA’s chief scientist be chosen “from among distinguished scientists with specialized training or significant experience in agricultural research, education, and economics.”

On 9/2/17 info@climatehawksvote.com reported that “Trump just nominated an anti-science climate denier to run NASA. Jim Bridenstine is not a scientist. He’s a member of Congress with no experience in space. We must pressure members of the Senate to block and resist these nominations! Call Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (845-875-4585 or 202-224-4451) and Sen. Chuck Schumer (212-488-4439 or 202-224-6542).

In April 2017, President Trump signed an executive order to review 27 parks designated since the beginning of 1996, with an eye toward shrinking boundaries to support corporate and state government interests to ‘develop’ OUR lands by drilling and mining them. Shortly after, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke opened a public comment period. Of the millions of public comments submitted about Bears Ears National Monument and the other parks, 99.2 percent opposed the executive order.
**Outings News**

**Andy Moss**

In July I led a hike to North Point which is on the escarpment overlooking North Lake State Park. The views from this location encompass the park as well as points north and east, as the escarpment sits approximately 2000’ above the valley. There are a number of excellent easy hikes at North Lake as well as two beaches for swimming and many picnic tables and barbeque stands.
Congressman John Faso’s Voting Record

Have you been wondering how our Congressman, John Faso, has been voting since he was elected to represent us last November? His Congressional district (district 19) covers all of Columbia, Delaware, Greene, Otsego, Schoharie, Sullivan and Ulster counties, as well as parts of Broome, Dutchess, Montgomery and Rensselaer. This district encompasses most of our Mid-Hudson Sierra Club Group’s geographical area. For the most part, Mr. Faso votes along Republican party lines. For example, he has voted ‘yea’ on every iteration of the Republican effort to repeal and/or replace the Affordable Care Act, despite extraordinary efforts by his constituents to convince him that such a vote hurts those he is supposed to represent.

What about the environment, which we as Sierra Club members care deeply about? Here is a list of Mr. Faso’s votes on environmental issues, beginning back in January of this year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill or Resolution</th>
<th>Short Summary</th>
<th>Faso’s Vote</th>
<th>Voting Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HJ Res 38</td>
<td>Repeal the stream protection rule.</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (228-194)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 998</td>
<td>This is the “Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome Act” or “SCRUB Act”</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (240-185)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HJ Res 69</td>
<td>Repeal a Department of the Interior rule that restricts hunting practices on national wildlife refuges in Alaska</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (225-193)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 1430</td>
<td>Prohibit the EPA from proposing any action or regulation that uses science which is not publicly available.</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (228-194)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HJ Res 36</td>
<td>Repeal the rule issued by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) that requires operators to take various actions to reduce waste of gas lost during oil and gas production</td>
<td>nay</td>
<td>Passed House (221-191)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 1431</td>
<td>Prohibit members of the Environmental Protection Agency’s Science Advisory Board from holding or applying for EPA grants.</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (229-193)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HJ Res 44</td>
<td>Disapprove the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management regulations that establish procedures used to prepare, revise, or amend land use plans pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (234-186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 2910</td>
<td>Coordination of federal and state authorizations and approvals of Natural Gas Pipelines under the Natural Gas Act.</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (248-179)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 2883</td>
<td>Establish a ‘transparent and uniform line of federal communication’ for the authorization of pipeline construction.</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (254-175)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 953</td>
<td>Prohibit states or the EPA from requiring a permit to spray pesticides into navigable waters.</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (256-165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 23</td>
<td>Drought relief to the state of California, which also requires environmental studies on groundwater aquifers, water storage, and mountain runoff in California</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (230-190)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 218</td>
<td>Allow construction of a road through Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.</td>
<td>yea</td>
<td>Passed House (248-179)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR 806</td>
<td>Delay the compliance date for ground level ozone standards.</td>
<td>nay</td>
<td>Passed House (229-199)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are two bills of environmental interest that have been introduced in the House but have not yet moved to committee (as of this publication date), which we will be watching: HJ Res 46 / Drilling in National Parks. This would repeal the rule requiring oil, gas, and mining companies to cover ALL costs associated with any accident or contamination. If this rule is repealed, oil, gas, and mining companies would only be liable for the first $200,000 for any accident, and the remainder would be covered by taxpayers; and HR 622 / Local Enforcement for Local Lands Act. This would terminate the law enforcement function of the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, making regulation of public lands impossible.

It pays to keep an eye on your Congressional Representative’s voting record, and also on legislation that is coming up for a vote. The web site votesmart.org has a search function to find out how your legislator voted on bills in specific categories, and govtrack.us lets you find current bills in about 35 different subject areas. Experience with the ACA shows that if constituents communicate their opposition to a bill strongly enough to their representatives, those legislators find that they cannot be seen to support that bill. Inform yourself, and become your congressional staffers’ best friend!


This is Your Last Printed Issue of our Quarterly Newsletter, “Fresh Air”

Our last two issues have presented information about our change to a bi-monthly email format for our newsletter. Beginning in December, “Fresh Air” will arrive in your email inbox, rather than your mailbox.

When it comes to email preferences there are three categories of Mid-Hudson Group members:
1. Those that have not provided an email address to the Sierra Club.
2. Those that have provided an email address but requested no emails from us or the Sierra Club.
3. Those that have provided an email address and allow emails.

If you find yourself in category #1 or #2 and would like to begin receiving our Sierra Club email newsletters, please send an email to our database administrator David Thomas at: dave@davidalexanderthomas.com.

Don’t forget, ALL newsletters will be posted on our website: sierrachul.org/atlantic/mid-hudson. So whether you get an email, or not, you can always go to our website to read our newsletters.

Programs

Tentative dates for our next programs are October 19 and November 16. Both will be held at Boughton Place. Program details will be available on our Meetup page and our website.

Executive Committee Elections

Information regarding our annual board member elections will be made available on our website in December. We will provide more information in our upcoming newsletter.

We value your participation.
ANNUAL TAG SALE
All proceeds benefit our Mid-Hudson Group
Calling all Sierra members! Please Donate, Promote, Purchase, Volunteer
Tell Your Friends and Neighbors About Our Tag Sale.
Saturday, September 23rd, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Rain Date: Sunday, September 24th, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Drop-Off: Day of sale, as early as possible after 7:00 am
(In order to conserve volunteer time and resources, we are limiting the drop-off and sale to one day this year. See other drop-off options below.)

Paula’s Public House, 2146 New Hackensack Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
(formerly Mulligan’s Irish House) 1.6 miles southeast of the intersection of Raymond Avenue & New Hackensack Road (Rt. 376)

DONATE: We are looking for donations of books, CD’s, DVD’s, toys with all the parts, hiking/camping equipment, sporting goods with some play left in them, tools, antiques, small furniture, kitchen items, usable glassware/kitchen items, art, camera equipment, etc. Your items should be in good condition. Small electronics must be in good working order. Please, no large electronics! We’d love to have kayaks, canoes, working bicycles and other quality sporting goods. Collectibles and antiques are very desirable as well. Items should be clean and dust-free.

We do not sell clothing or shoes. Please donate elsewhere.

EARLY DROP-OFF & PICK-UP OPTIONS: (Only if absolutely necessary):
West side of Hudson, for storage: Joanne Steele, St. Remy, up to 3 days before the sale; sierraclubjoanne@gmail.com, (845) 338-0300 (H), or (845) 339-7526 (C). Pick-ups: Helga Klessen, hklessen@yahoo.com, (845) 687-6243 (H), or (845) 279-5897 (C).

East side of Hudson, for storage and pick-ups (that fit in his car): Bill Collier, Wappingers Falls, collier@acm.org (please include your phone # in your e-mail message).

PROMOTE: Let your friends and family know about the sale. We have a poster on our website that you can download, print and post.

PURCHASE: Come to the sale and find great buys for yourself and others. The benefits are many — low prices, great selection, recycling goods, and helping your local Sierra Club meet the challenges of protecting our environment.

POSSIBLE RAIN DATE ANNOUNCEMENTS: If weather is iffy, check your e-mail, our website or Facebook page, or Joanne’s cell phone, (845) 339-7526, for rain date messages.

VOLUNTEER: We can use your help! Can you spare 2 hours or more? We especially need early-birds who can help set up the sale starting at 7 am, and late-birds who can help with clean-up at 3 pm. But if you can spare any time at all that day (or prior, for pick-ups and storage), please contact Volunteer Coordinator Marie Caruso at mariehv@verizon.net, (845) 684-7058 (H) or (845) 702-4521 (C / calls or text).

Joanne Steele & Marie Caruso, Tag Sale Coordinators