A Wish List for Gov. Murphy

From New Jersey’s rejoining the Northeastern States’ Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to restoration of Family Planning services and the DEP’s Science Advisory Council, here’s how some of our Issue Coordinators (and a few other officers, including your editor) hope Gov.-Elect Phil Murphy will return environmental responsibility to the Department of Environmental Protection, other state agencies, and to the governor’s role in needling the Legislature:

- **Air Quality and Clean Air** (Paul Elwood, DEP RAPG)
  - Alaska (Amy Weeder): A letter to each uncommitted NJ Member of Congress urging protection of Alaska’s North Slope.
  - Asbestos and Toxic Dust (Francie Goldberg): Get the lead out! Test all old homes.

- **Community Solar** (Dick Colby): BPU appointees sympathetic to Community Solar.

- **Delaware River** (Gina Carola): DRBC appointees who would oppose Elcon’s toxic waste treatment plant near Trenton (see page 3).


- **Environmental Education** (Jamie Wissner): “If future generations are to remember us more with gratitude than sorrow, we must achieve more than the miracles of technology. We must show them a glimpse of the world as it was created, not just as it was when we got through with it.” - Lyndon Johnson.

- **Environmental Health** (Howard Steinberg): Real environmental justice is protecting every child.

- **GMOS (Joanne Pannone): Legislation requiring labeling!**

- **Marine Issues** (Bob Sandberg): Opposition to offshore drilling; Promotion of offshore wind; Sustainable catch-limits.

- **Natural Gas & Fracking** (Greg Gorman): Urge the Delaware River Basin Commission to permanently ban fracking and disposal of fracking waste in the Basin; urge NJ Legislature and Governor to commit to 100% renewable energy by 2035.

- **Our Hudson County Group** (Ace Case): Create Moonahlands State Park.

- **Pinelands** (Lee Snyder): Appointees to the Pinelands Commission will have the power to develop land conservation, including the proposed Pinelands State Park.

- **Recycling** (David Yennis): Support for a Bottle Bill.

- **Risk Assessment** (Bill Murphy): Restoration of the DEP’s Science Advisory Council.

- **Toxicology** (Hugh Evans): Enforce strict standards for clean air & water; Action on Superfund sites.

- **Transportation Committee** (The Gateway and #7 Subway Rail Tunnels to Manhattan)

- **Trails (David Matte):** Blue blazes all the way up and down New Jersey!

- **Urban Affairs** (Dave Harry): Fix New Jersey’s rail system.

- **Wetlands** (Lenny Fariello): Action on “safe” districts out of complacency, seem like a waste of time, but they do benefit the environment.

- **Wildlands** (John Kashwick): Pursuit of Great Acres and Blue Acres.

### Inside This Issue...

- **Urban Affairs** (Dave Harry): Fix New Jersey’s rail system.
- **Riffle Camp Park Repealed** (Passaic Co): Repeal this harmful park overhauls.
- **Sturgeon in our Rivers**
- **Elcon: Haz. Waste Battle near Trenton**
- **Chapter Chair: New Officers**
- **Editorial: Benefits of Street Trees**
- **Egan’s Full Rescue Act**
- **Rodney Frelinghuysen in the News**
- **Various Reports**: Essex-Hudson Greenway, Highlands Water, Air Particulates, PennEast Pipeline, Recovery

### Turning Old Train Lines into Recreational Rail Trails

By Gary Frederick, Chair of our Nyanza Valley Group (gfrederick@gmail.com)

New Jersey has 200 miles of recreational rail trails, according to Rails-to-Trail, a nonprofit advocacy group dedicated to turning former rail lines into bikeable and walkable recreational opportunities. With about 185 miles of abandoned rail routes in New Jersey still to be developed, that’s a good but not great record. As we look to reduce air pollution and encourage people to spend more time outside exercising and enjoying nature, converting more of these routes makes a lot of sense. (See the article on p. 4 of this issue by Emily Eles.)

Across the country, rail trails are immensely popular. New Jersey boasts...
Advocacy for Our Urban Environment

By Mary Blehl Walsh, North Jersey Group Conservation Co-Chair

Rifle Camp Park Reprieved!

in Jersey City and Kearney. The sites have Superfund sites - 300 acres of new space 1,129 spirited people who want to see tions of Protestants, Catholics, Muslims University and Jersey City Together, a group at the expense of many others, not ple of government catering to a small...
Benefits of shade trees: monetary, environmental, and savings on the cost of air conditioning.

I have written before (in April-June, 2017) about the consequence, in my municipality, of federal regulations ("MORSE") that required me to trim and to consider arborist advice for any storm sewers to catch to house rooftop runoff. Our street trees are gradually being removed or trimmed because they are too close to the downspouts -- tapped to water gardens and lawns.

New Jersey house will absorb as much storm-water annually as runs off the roof of thousands of square feet of impervious surface, with the stormwater infiltrating ground water and residential neighborhoods, appearing in streams, reservoirs and drinking water, and even in the atmosphere that we breathe. Our street trees are gradually being removed or trimmed because they are too close to the downspouts -- tapped to water gardens and lawns.

I was pleased to learn, at the October annual meeting of the NJ Shade Tree Federation, of a recently improved feature of a website for Shade Tree Commissioners and their allies. If you go to google <I-Tree> and search for "street trees," you'll discover a free tool to help you plan and care for street trees. The tool can help you determine the species of tree suitable for your community, by entering your street address, and then specify the types of shade trees available in your community. The tool can help you determine the species of tree suitable for your community, by entering your street address, and then specify the types of shade trees available in your community. The tool can help you determine the species of tree suitable for your community, by entering your street address, and then specify the types of shade trees available in your community.

There is interesting discussion about the pros and cons of various species of trees that montecasino promote catastrophic loss from insect infestations. But I'm left with the need to re-educate those regulations, have resulted some unforeseen consequences. I have written before (in April-June, 2017) about the consequence, in my municipality, of federal regulations ("MORSE") that required me to trim and to consider arborist advice for any storm sewers to catch to house rooftop runoff. Our street trees are gradually being removed or trimmed because they are too close to the downspouts -- tapped to water gardens and lawns.

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The Smaller, the Worse

By Paul Ehrlich, our Issue Coordinator for “Air” (p.w.ehrlich@gmail.com)

enter the bloodstream and are transported in the lungs. This fits with several characteristics of the PM-1 mixture. They can be toxic chemicals in varying amounts. It has been building that the smaller-diameter particles, especially those with diameters of 2.5 micrometers or less (known as PM-2.5), cause most of the harm. The study noted above, by Chen et al., provides the medical evidence for “the smaller, the worse.” They studied emergency room admissions in 26 Chinese cities: these increase in the first two days after a PM-1 or a PM-2.5 rise of 5 micrograms/cubic meter or more. Since the PM-1 effect is almost equal to the PM-2.5 effect, the smaller particles in the mixtures are doing most of the harm. More research is needed before this finding can be incorporated into air pollution regulations. There is evidence that these smaller particles in the PM-1 mixture are the most harmful. These very small particles are known to bind a variety of toxic chemicals in varying amounts. It will take more research to determine exactly which particles most affect human health as well as which contribute to specific diseases.

Hudson Greenway

By Emily Eley, Outreach Coordinator for the New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition (emily.m.eley@gmail.com)

In 2002, NJ Transit’s Midtown Direct train was extended to Montclair, a project in its wake an 11-mile stretch of unused railroad property called the Old Boonton Line. This segment of out-of-service rail provides access to Manhattan via PATH trains and ferries, as well as to areas in Northern New Jersey via Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Service.

Cyclists connect neighborhoods with local businesses, parks, nearby communities, and other destinations, offering safe off-road cycling, walking, and nature trails. They also take cars off of congested highways. Organizations like the New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition, and the Friends of the Ice and Rail Trail, are working to promote connectivity in the greenway proposal. The proposal has caught the attention of both the East Coast Greenway Alliance — a long-distance, urban, shared-use trail linking cities from Maine to Florida — as well as the Mid-Atlantic Greenway Memorial Trail Alliance — a trail built to honor the victims of that horrible day in 2001 by creating safe corridors for bicyclists and pedestrians. Both of these trail organizations wish to incorporate the Essex-Hudson Greenway into their routes.

The Old Boonton Line is currently owned by Norfolk Southern. It has not been used since 2003, and in 2005 was designated “out of service” by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The property now shows signs of neglect and decay, with garbage accumulation as well as evidence of drug use and other crime, no doubt affecting nearby property values. The Essex-Hudson Greenway would operate as a linear park, accessible to all citizens, free of motor vehicles. New Jersey ranks high in number of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities as a percentage of all road deaths: in 2015 and 2016, more than 50% of all road fatalities occurred to pedestrians and bicyclists; the national average was half that, at 14.16%.

The Essex-Hudson Greenway would profoundly benefit the seven towns from Montclair to Jersey City, several of which suffer environmental injustice in the sense that many residents cannot afford to own cars. (Please see also the article in this issue about the September 11th National Memorial.)

My title, above, could be that of a study recently published in the journal *Lancet Planetary Health*. Small particles are known to have an effect on human health, especially those with diameters of 2.5 micrometers or less (known as PM-2.5). The PM-2.5 is a combined mass of particles formed by combustion, in contrast to the larger PM-10 (particles of 10 micrometers in diameter or less) which are formed mostly by mechanical abrasion, such as the action of wind and sea water on rocks or industrial dust.

Over the last decade or so, evidence has been building that the smallest particle fraction of PM-2.5, particles with diameters less than 1 micrometer, are the most poisonous. This particle size is of greatest concern for the technologies of the PM-1 mix. They can be inhaled up into the lungs, where they enter the blood stream and are transported throughout the body, including the brain. In addition, since small particles have a large surface-to-volume ratio, a relatively small mass of them can absorb large amounts of the toxic chemicals found in polluted air; these surface toxins are thus readily supplied to the biological molecules within the lungs. Some of these effects have been elucidated in studies of rats and humans. The study noted above, by Chen et al., provides the medical evidence for “the smaller, the worse.” They studied emergency room admissions in 26 Chinese cities: these increase in the first two days after a PM-1 or a PM-2.5 rise of 5 micrograms/cubic meter or more. Since the PM-1 effect is almost equal to the PM-2.5 effect, the smaller particles in the mixtures are doing most of the harm.

DEP Goes Forward with Rolling Back Highlands Water Protections

From a press release issued on Aug 17th, edited by Joe Testa

An atrocity of the Christie Administration is a DEP revision to its Highlands Septic Rule. The rule protects the Highlands Forest Preservation Area (FFPA) from groundwater contamination by faulty septic tanks, and thus protects the drinking water used by roughly six million people in New Jersey. The FFPA includes pristine trout streams as well as water-supply reservoirs.

The revision has been challenged by legislation: ACR 192 (McKean) / SCR 148 (Smith) determined that the DEP’s rule revisions went against legislative intent. The DEP was supposed to respond within thirty days. The fact that it has not done so shows that the DEP is moving forward with the rule revision.

The Septic Rule regulates groundwater quality by specifying the permitted loading of nitrates, a major waste product of septic tanks. The DEP’s revision would allow more nitrates and 4 times more pollution. That leaves the Legislature with the need to pass its resolution again, in order to take the new rules to court, or to void them.

In allowing more pollution from septic tanks, the DEP has targeted the most environmentally sensitive areas of the Highlands. So we call upon the Assembly and the Senate to stand up for the environment against the Governor’s rollbacks.

Another feature of the rule-revision is a provision for exempted lots that weregrandfathered under the Highlands Act to be connected to sewers. The revision would also make it cost-effective to build roads and subdivisions up to the most environmentally-sensitive tops of forested mountains.

This rule-revision clearly violates legislative intent because, instead of using data from deep aquifer recharge that the Highlands Act requires, data is taken from mostly developed areas of the Highlands, near lakes that have shallow aquifers and that are in areas outside the FFPA. The DEP uses data from the U.SGS that was taken after the Highlands Act went to effect in 2004, which violates the Act. The Highlands Act requires non-degradation but the proposed rule-revisions allow more pollution. The DEP is playing games with the facts.

This change will allow at least 61 more housing units in Bethlehem and Byram Township, which doubles under COAH considerations. These changes will also double the density of preserved farms and promote growth on environmentally sensitive Hamburg and Wawayanda Mountains.

We call upon the Legislature to stand up for the Highlands and protect our drinking water all over again.

RAIL TRAILS

(Continued from page 5)

some of the most beautiful: the Columbia Trail wins for 15 miles through farmland and historic sites in Hunterdon and Morris counties, and the Henry Hudson Trail extends for 24 miles through wetlands, streams and forest along the Atlantic Highlands coast, between Monmouth and Freehold. The D&R Canal Trail follows a towpath that was built in the early 1890s for commerce between Philadelphia via Trenton and New York. The Sussex Branch Trail is a 20-mile ride along the route of the former narrow-gauge, mule-drawn Sussex Mine Railroad — that brought iron ore to the Morris Canal.

Our Sierra Club Chapter wants to see more trails developed. In Middlesex County, the popular Middlesex Greenway runs for 3.5 miles along a portion of the old Lehigh Valley Railroad corridor that transported coal from the Lehigh Valley to Perth Amboy. On October 1st, a bike path attended by Congressman Frank Pallone, other politicians and about 200 residents, was opened at the railroad in Randolph — County to drum up support for an extension of the trail along an abandoned rail right-of-way toward the Dismal Swamp in South Plainfield. Cookan owns the right-of-way, refusing to release it on the claim that it may someday want to use the railbed for some of the ugliest and abandoned train corridors into bicycle and mixed-used corridors to be enjoyed by all.

Photos by Gary Frederick

(Continued from page 1)

The Essex-Hudson Greenway, along the old Boiler Line between Montclair to Jersey City, is another potential rail trail, described in Emily Eley’s article elsewhere in this issue.

In Cape May County, the Pennsylvania-Reading-Seashore railroad between Woodbine and Cape May Yos, out of service since 1973, has been acquired by the County for a 12-mile extension of a bike path. The County starts near the southern tip of New Jersey.

From Trenton to Ramsey (Bergen Co), local municipalities are discussing ways to convert old railroad lines into recreational uses. Allocation of open space funds, tough negotiations with rail owners like Conrail and CSX, and petitions from out-of-service rail advocates for these ambitious intentions into reality. Let’s transform the remaining 183 miles of New Jersey’s unused and abandoned train corridors into bicycle and mixed-used corridors, as proposed by the Jersey Sierra.”
PennEast Applies for Army Corps Permits
From a press release issued on Sept 14, edited by Irene Gnarra

On September 14, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers gave the public thirty days to comment on PennEast’s application for permits. PennEast is a 110-mile pipeline project originating from the Marcellus Region of Pennsylvania through Hunterdon and Mercer counties in New Jersey, and ending in Delaware on Cape Henlopen to transport liquid natural gas. The required information.

Last spring, the Army Corps denounced PennEast for its lack of information, approvals and permits. Since they are still lacking, the Army Corps should continue to refuse approvals. An unfortunate new development is that the Trump Administration has rolled back the Water of the United States Rule. We will now see if the Army Corps bends to this new pressure, rather than standing with all who have denounced this dangerous and expensive pipeline project. According to the Ratepayer Advocate, PennEast’s pipeline would be an unnecessary expense for ratepayers.


Our Response to DEP’s Attack on Coastal Areas
From a press release issued on Sept 14, and edited by Irene Gnarra

The New Jersey Sierra Club has voiced its opposition to proposed changes to the Coastal Zone Management Rules that would threaten people, property, and the environment. The proposed amendments deal with shellfish aquaculture, the filled water body, the wakes, other beaches, other beach access, and support facilities. They would allow development of beach profiles, and would threaten environmentally sensitive areas, without coordination with other resource agencies, and until PennEast is in full cooperation with them.

PennEast has not yet received permission to enter multiple tracts along the right-of-way to gather the required information. PennEast has applied for approval pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 409) and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (35 U.S.C. 1344), even though it has not yet earned full state and federal approval. As the Corps knows well, the New Jersey DEP rejected PennEast’s permit application because it lacked 65% of the required information.

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The Jersey Sierran: January–March 2018

Skylands Group (Sussex and northern Warren Counties)

Web-site: http://newjersey.sierrclub.org/skylands/ Or click from the NJ Chapter’s web-site.
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC E-mail: skylandsgroup@gmail.com Phone: 973-222-0274

Executive Committee: Officers and At-Large Members are elected positions and serve 2-year terms.

Officers: Term exp:
Chair: 12/31/17 Susan Williams SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Vice Chair: 12/31/17 Mindy Geary mwilliams@yahoo.com
Secretary: 12/31/17 N/A hulberski@yahoo.com
Treasurer: 12/31/17 Jeri Doherty bdj987@gmail.com
Board Members:
Member-at-Large: 12/31/18 Greg Gorman ggorman@71419@embarqmail.com
Member-at-Large: 12/31/17 Dave Alcock dwoofis@hotmail.com
Member-at-Large: 12/31/18 Marvin Fell mfc@verizon.com
Member-at-Large: 12/31/18 Nicole Guerrieri sosaysnicole@gmail.com
Conservation Chair: N/A Greg Gorman ggorman@71419@embarqmail.com
Outings Chair: N/A Dave Alcock dwoofis@hotmail.com
Political Co-Chairs: N/A Susan Williams SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
and: Nicole Guerrieri sosaysnicole@gmail.com
Acting Publicity Chair: N/A Jeri Doherty bdj987@gmail.com
Webmaster: N/A Nicole Guerrieri sosaysnicole@gmail.com

OPEN POSITIONS AVAILABLE: Member-at-Large (for a 2 year term)
Membership Chair, Programs/Events Chair

GENERAL MEETINGS: SECOND TUESDAY of each month and is open to the public. We meet from 7-9pm at the Unitarian Fellowship, 1 West Nelson St, Newton.

The Skylands Group of the NJ Sierra Club services the environmentally sensitive region of Sussex and Northern Warren Counties in Northwestern NJ.

The Skylands Group offers a variety of opportunities for the public to learn about and connect with their natural environment. We host movies and speakers at our monthly general meetings; engage people to explore the great outdoors by leading hikes, interpretive plant tours and picnics; provide outreach services to the public during town tabling days; and travel to schools to teach students about the environment. Our hope is to foster a love of and deep respect for our great outdoors.

The Skylands Group works with other grassroots organizations to protect open spaces and water quality; promote clean energy; oppose privatization of water and land public trust resources; and other local and national level environmental issues as they arise. Annualy, we host a summer picnic in July and our holiday party in December, both in lieu of formal presentations. We don’t have our General or Executive Committees meet in August. All our events are free of charge and open to the public.

CURRENT CAMPAIGNS:
The Skylands Group is currently advocating for the protection of the Spartha Mountain Wildlife Management Area (SMWMA) from logging done under the guise of creating ‘healthy forests.’

Forests throughout NJ have been or will be logged. Many of these forests are High Conservation Priority with closed canopies. They provide water to millions of New Jerseyans. Clear cutting can adversely impact water quality, biodiversity and threaten the existing rare and endangered species’ habitat.

The SMWMA has become the poster child for the larger statewide issues of commercial- Forests in the existing rare and endangered species’ habitat.

There’s an electronic bi-weekly Chapter Alert Service. Sign up at www.scnj.convio.net.

There are no programs in July and August. (Please contact Celeste Martin onecentral@mac.com for details and sign up on MeetUp.com.)

JAN 18: Sun: Great Swamp Road Walk. 1pm. Celebrate Winter with a walk starting at the Helen C. Feinke Visitor Center at the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Inclement weather cancels. (Please contact Celeste Martin onecentral@mac.com for details and sign up on MeetUp.com.)

OTHER EVENTS:

Jan 1 (Mon): New Year’s Recovery Hike and Potluck. 1-5pm. Join us as we welcome in the New Year with an easy walk through downtown Clinton and the Landsdown Trail followed by a potluck appetizer party! Meet at Municipal Parking lot (corner of Hackett and Water Sts) in Clinton. The meeting is casual and informative. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend to learn more about the Club, hear about and discuss issues, plan future events, and become more active. (Please contact jonwall@jonwall.com or sign-up on Meetup.)

Jan 24 (Wed): Executive Committee/Planning Meeting, 7:30pm. At the offices of Dr. Jonathan D. Wall, 21 Water St, Clinton. The meeting is casual and informative. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend to learn more about the Club, hear about and discuss issues, plan future events, and become more active. (Please contact jonwall@jonwall.com or sign-up on Meetup.)

Feb 18 (Sun): Great Swamp Road Walk. 1pm. Celebrate Winter with a walk starting at the Helen C. Feinke Visitor Center at the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Inclement weather cancels. (Please contact Celeste Martin onecentral@mac.com for details and sign up on MeetUp.com.)

ISSUES: For too long developers have been using the so-called “builder’s remedy” as an excuse to bulldoze farmlands and woodlands in the name of affordable housing. While the Skylands Group supports affordable housing, there is no right way to do it- we must protect the land and strain our infrastructure and transportation systems and contribute to sprawl. The issues included in this month’s page span the range of issues from the Skylands to far more expansive open space. If interested in getting more involved in this issue, please contact John Kashwick at jkashwick@gmail.com.

North Jersey Group (Bergen and Passaic Counties)


Officers:
Chair: Buddy Jenssen * buddie.jenssen@gmail.com
Vice Chair: Buddy Jenssen * buddie.jenssen@gmail.com
Secretary:
Conservation Co-Chair:
Political Chair:
Political Associate:
Climate Issues:
Funding Chair:
Membership Chair:
Outings Co-Chair:
Outings Co-Chair:
Programs Chair:
Publicity Chair:
Social Media Chair:
Trail Maintenance:
Webmaster/Listmaster: (* Group Executive Committee Member)

MEETINGS AND EVENTS:
Unless otherwise noted, meetings and outings are open and free to general public. Please check our Meetup page, Facebook page, or web site for meeting dates, times, and topics (see above for URLs). You can also email us at northjersey.sierrachurch@gmail.com.

Trail Maintenance: To get on our trail maintenance militia email list, just send an email of interest to pel31411@gmail.com. Despite this Fall’s heat bill, Bill D’Ira R, Wanda D, and Marty C, managed to do some serious clipping and lopping, stemming the tide (somewhat) of the Mother (apples, blackberries, etc.). But Spring, of course, the Mother will reuscitate her onslaught, but our hardy group will redouble its efforts in keeping her in check. Come on out and join the fun.

P.S. See the NY Times article of 10/26/17 to learn why Volunteering is linked to health benefits.

There’s an electronic bi-weekly Chapter Alert Service. Sign up at www.scnj.convio.net.
Gateway Group
Serving Hillside, Elizabeth, and Essex County
(except for Livingston, Millburn and Roseland)

The Gateway Group was organized in January 2011. Please contact any of the leaders below if you are interested in joining our campaigns to protect the environment. There are several Gateway Group positions open.

Our website: http://sierrachr.org/new-jersey/Gateway/. (also accessible from the NJ Chapter website)

Please also join the Gateway Group on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/pages/GatewayGroupNJSierraClub/1289989368341782

OFFICERS:

Chair: Suzanne Trimel 973-509-8535 suzanne.trimel@gmail.com

Vice-Chair: David Yennior 973-844-1384 dynieron@gmail.com

Secretary: Open Position!

Treasurer: Anne Hirs 973-844-1112 annehirs@gmail.com

Program Co-Chairs: Suzanne Trimel 973-509-8535 suzanne.trimel@gmail.com and Zash Khademi 201-618-8572 zashal@aol.com

Publicity Chair: Open Position!

Conservation Co-Chairs: Zash Khademi and David Korfhage

Political Chair: Open Position!

Fundraising Chair: Open Position!

Membership Chair: Steven Yafet 908-354-2557 syafet@gmail.com

Water, Newark Issues Chair: Bill Chappell 973-625-6490 chappel.bill@gmail.com

Recollecting Chair: Lyle Landon 201-247-0288 lyle.landon@aol.com

Passaic River Chair:  

Brenda Toyloy 973-856-7056 brendato1@yahoo.com and Jeff Weiss 973-605-1050 honefish5000@gmail.com

Legal Issues Chair: Paula Borenstein 908-289-3584 brdandmkt@aol.com

Outings Chair: Open Position!

Group Executive Committee:

Chair: David Yennior, Bill Chappell, and Zash Khademi

Group Executive Committee Meeting: Sunday, Feb 18, 2-4pm. Hudson County Community College Library, 71 Sip Av, Jersey City. The public may attend; only officers may vote.

Group Executive Committee Meeting: Sunday, Mar 18, Noon-2pm. Hudson County Community College Library, 71 Sip Av, Jersey City. The public may attend; only officers may vote.

CURRENT ISSUES

Outings: Our volunteer leaders led several popular outings to unanticipated wild plac-  

es in Hudson County including wild areas of Liberty State Park, Bayonne’s waterfront, Lincoln Park, and the Jersey City Reservoir. We hope to get more people out into the natural world in 2018. If you have an idea for an outing let us know!

Conservation: We continue to fight privatization and/or diversion of our precious parks. As the Sierran goes to press Liberty State Park is once again menaced by a last-minute backroom deal by Christie to close-off the southern portion of the park and turn it into a members-only marina for the very wealthy. To take action please check our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/HudsonCountySierraClub/and Friends of Liberty State Park at https://www.facebook.com/friendslibertystatepark/ We are also supporting efforts to undo an illegal diversion of Green Acres funded parkland in North Bergen’s Braddock Park.

Department of Dreams and Wishes: In our meeting with the Phil Murphy Campaign we pushed our desire to create a “Meadowslands Park.”

Transportation: We are working with allied organizations to create safe pedestrian and bike friendly streets. We are promoting a network of dedicated bike/pedestrians corridors interconnecting Hudson and Essex County parks. The network would also connect Hudson with Essex Counties with the East Coast Greenway. Imagine a way to get out into nature without a car!

Sustainability/Climate Change: Creating a model for livable, prosperous, sustainable urban and suburban communities. We continue to lobby for sustainability and resilience in the face of climate change. We are pushing for municipalities to commit to a 100% fossil fuel free future.

Political: Our newly active political committee sent a questionnaire to candidates in several local races, introducing environmental issues into the races and giving a political voice to our Sierra Club members. For the first time in many years Sierra endorsed a candidate in Jersey City’s mayoral race as well as other local races.

Loantaka Group
(Morris and Union Counties (except for Elizabeth and Hillside), plus Livingston, Millburn and Roseland, approximately)

WeBSITE: http://www.sierrachr.org/new-jersey/loantaka/ 

Loantaka now has a Facebook page. Please check it out and like it: https://www.facebook.com/LoantakaGroupNJSC/

OFFICERS:

Group Chair (Acting): Paul Sanderson 908-253-2414 paulmsanderson@aol.com

Treasurer: Paul Sanderson 908-253-2414 paulmsanderson@aol.com

Secretary: Scott M. Austin 813-767-5593 hileres@earthlink.net

Conservation Chairs:

Morris County: Len Fatello lenwildlifepreserves.org

Union County: Open Position!

Political Chair: Clea Carchia 908-892-7229 info@cleacarchia.com

Programs Chair: Eric Hauser 732-669-0471 erichbiomass@gmail.com

Outings Chair: Open Position!

Webmaster: Wynn Johanson 908-464-0442 wmjohanson@comcast.net

Membership: Bruce Ostrow 973-625-0792 orstowb@gmail.com

If you might be interested in getting involved, come to one of our Executive Committee Meetings on the first Tuesday of the month and get to know us. Or come to one of our General Meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. There are no obligations and there will be no pressure.

To find out our activities, go to: http://sierrachr.org/new-jersey/loantaka/

To join our e-mailing list, go to: http://lists.sierrachr.org/archives/njloantaka-news.html

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS are held on the FIRST TUESDAY of the month at 7:30 pm at Library of the Chatham, 214 Main St, Chatham. All members are welcome at Executive Committee meetings. Right now, we have open positions on it! If you would like to find out more, please contact Paul Sanderson.

GENERAL MEETINGS are held on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of the month at 7:30 pm at the Library of the Chatham, 214 Main St, Chatham. Come learn something new and make some friends. We’d welcome the chance to meet you and to introduce ourselves. Please see the schedule, below, and join us! DIRECTIONS: posted on our website: http://sierrachr.org/new-jersey/loantaka/

MEETING SCHEDULE: Please see our website and/or Facebook site for upcoming programs.

ACTIVITIES:

The Loantaka Group needs volunteers to join the Executive Committee and help guide our Group in these difficult times. We have an urgent need for a Program Chair, whose function is to invite speakers and organizations to make presentations at our general meetings. The meetings are intended to be educational and entertaining, while raising environmental consciousness. If you are interested, please call Paul Sanderson at 908- 253-2414. Previous program chair Eric Hauser will be glad to provide a list of topics and speakers for past meetings.

(Continued on page 8)
To our list of donors we are delighted to add: Arminio’s Pizza (Chatham) Perrotti’s Quality Meats (Cranford) Divine Nail Salon (Chatham) Williams Augustus Nvary (Westfield) Vogue Nails (Chatham) Towne Delicatessen (Summit)

Among our many repeat donors we mention: Dreyers Farms and The Cranford Canoe Club (Cranford) Chatham Sandwich Shop & Chatham Sports Club Quartet Boutique & Athena Beauty Salon (Chatham)

If you have an opportunity to patronize any of these, do please! If you have an opportunity to patronize any of these, do please!
**West Jersey Group**

(Camden, Gloucester and Burlington Counties, approximately)

**WEBSITE:** http://sierrclubn.org/new-jersey/West-Jersey

**Facebook:** https://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC Log on and Like Us

Follow us on Twitter @WJSierrclub and Instagram @wjsierrclub

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**OFFICERS:**

**Chair:** Gina Carola
**Vice-Chair:** Frank Zinni
**Secretary:** Ellen Zinni
**Treasurer:** Whatsapp: 609-965-4453, email: dick.colby@stockton.edu

**Group Chair:** Dick Colby 609-965-4453 dick.colby@stockton.edu

**Vice-Chair:** Lee Snyder

**Publicity Chair:** Anne Caridi

**Political Chair:** Linda Rubiano

**Pinelands Rep:** Lee Snyder

**Greenways Co's:** Frank and Ellen Zinni

**Conservation Chair:** Stacey Ayala

**Delegate at Large:** Eva Kostka

**Membership Chair:** Mike Brown 656-547-9221

**Funraising Chair:** Open position Call Gina to volunteer. 856-848-8851

**Smart Growth Chair:** Open position Call Gina to volunteer. 856-848-8851

**Programs Chair:** Open position Call Gina to volunteer. 856-848-8851

**Outings Chair:** Open position Call Gina to volunteer. 856-848-8851

**Social Media:**

- Eva Kostka evan.kostka@gmail.com
- Dayna Hewron dayna.hewron@gmail.com

**GENERAL MEETINGS:**

Meetings are held at 7:30 pm on the SECOND WEDNESDAY of each month, September through May, at the Quaker Meeting Hall on Friends Ave in Haddonfield. Inclement weather may cancel. Please call 856-848-8851 if unsure.

- Directions: From I-295, take exit 34B onto Rte 70 West. Follow the signs for Rte 41 South, which is Kings Hwy (you will have to exit to the right into a jug handle and then turn left onto Rte 41 (Kings Hwy). Cross over Rte 70 and you will be briefly on Rte 15 (Millville Rd). Make the next right and then the next left onto Kings Hwy. After about 1 mile, you will cross Grove Rd (Indian King Tavern is on the right corner). After crossing Grove Rd. you will make 2 more blocks and turn right on to Friends Ave. Go one block to the Meeting House. Park in the lot next to the Meeting House and enter the auditorium through the doors on the right side of the building. Do not go into the Meeting House.

**Jan 10: Community Gardening - George Schroeder will tell us about the Collingswood Community Garden project. Learn how you can start a community garden in your town.**

**Feb 14: Planting trees in 2017 and beyond with the NJ Tree Foundation – Members of this Foundation will be updating us on their work.**

**Mar 14: Cathedral Kitchen - Join us as Alexandra ‘Alex’ Wills, Community Relations Director at Cathedral Kitchen in Camden will enlighten us on how excess food from a variety of sources gets donated to feed the poor and homeless in Camden.**

**Apr 11: Our Policies as we plan for our group to feed the BL England electric power plant in Marmora (Cape May Co), with the hope that findings will be used by planners (such as those employed by the Pinelands Commission) who permit development. On damage being done to sand trails by ORVs in Wharton State Forest, the DEP has sided with the vehicle enthusiasts by rejecting a Motorized Access Map prepared by the Park staff. The next move will be the DEP’s. Also a campaign to promote Community Solar (photovoltaic) installations (especially in each municipality in Atlantic County), support for legislation that would prevent the free distribution of plastic bags at supermarkets (as Longport in Atlantic County has done), and support for a New Jersey Bottle Bill, known as the Smart Container Act.**

**Some Possibly Relevant Activities of Allied Organizations:**

- **Jan 7 and 21:** (Atlantic County). The first South Jersey Group Watershed Association (GEHWA) that spun off from the South Jersey Group. Very few of our local members seem interested in the meetings we once scheduled (monthly, from the early 1980s until 2005). For now, we’ll continue to be listed in the Greenways Co’s. We need someone interested in the meetings we once had to host the site. Recent events include the delisting of the Maurice River from the National Wild & Scenic River, except July and August. In July, we held an annual BBQ Fund-Raiser. August is an ‘outings month.”

**Current Issues:**

- A land-use controversy in Millville - over what is known as the Durand Tract, seems to be back in controversy, with a court requiring reconsideration. Jeff Tittel is probably the most knowledgeable person in the Chapter. (2) Controversy continues over the construction of a large-diameter (24") natural gas pipeline in southern New Jersey, with the hope that findings will be used by planners (such as those employed by the Pinelands Commission) who permit development. On damage being done to sand trails by ORVs in Wharton State Forest, the DEP has sided with the vehicle enthusiasts by rejecting a Motorized Access Map prepared by the Park staff.

Please let the officers know about them. We welcome general comments from Club members in South Jersey. To be placed on a carefully guarded distribution list for local issues, please e-mail to the group address donnystockton@earthlink.net. Dick is also an Atlantic County Parks Commissioner; contact him if you might be interested in attending monthly meetings of the Commission, which are open to the public.

Tom Boghosian is an avid kayaker, both ocean-going and in fresh waters, possibly willing to lead trips.

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Some Possibly Relevant Activities of Allied Organizations:

- **Jan 7 and 21:** Atlantic County Friends of the Parks: Monthly meetings of Friends of the Parks, a group which works to improve and promote the Atlantic County Park System. All are welcome. Warren Fox Nature Center (WNCF), Atlantic County Park, Longport in Atlantic County has done), and support for a New Jersey Bottle Bill, known as the Smart Container Act.

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GROUP NEWS

Membership:
Position Open - Contact us! We need you!
NOMINATIONS:
2015 Executive Committee members:
Roseanna Fanelli, John DeVincenzo, Ron Pau, Jeff Prebich, Jeff Sorelove, Daphne Speck Bartonius, Joyce White.

Volunteer Opportunities: We need volunteers in all areas of the state to run events. Volunteers needed as hike leaders, Fundraising Chair/Co-Chairs, and members of all committees, including planning social events and conservation activities. Please attend an executive committee meeting or email any of the officers if you are interested. You may co-chair any position with a friend, if desired. We’re happy to help you learn the ropes.

GENERAL MEETINGS: Casual pizza gathering, introduction to club issues and activities, speakers, and letter-writing at the Chatham Library. Dates and topics will be announced on our listserv; see above for subscription information.

ExCom meetings take place as needed at various locations. All welcome. Contact any officer for information.

SOCIAL GATHERINGS:
SOCIAL DINNER: THIRD TUESDAY of each month at 7 pm. Join us for dinner at a variety of Monclair restaurants. Location will be announced 2 weeks before each social. RSVP is required as described in the announcement.

SOCIAL DINNERS WITH MOVIE SHOWINGS are scheduled approximately monthly in New Brunswick. Join us for thought-provoking films and conversation over casual dinners. Topics and locations will be announced on our listserv and on the Chapter’s online calendar (see above).

HIKES AND OTHER OUTINGS:
The Singles Section sponsors many outings, ranging from beginners’ level to advanced difficulty. Some of these are listed in this newsletter; others are announced only on our listserv and the Chapter’s online calendar. See the Outings section of this Newsletter for singles outings led by Jim Oleaiak and Jeff Sorelove. Please join the listserv to receive notification of all of our outings (see above for instructions on how to subscribe).

Sierra Silver Singles is a subgroup that organizes hikes and other social events to appeal to Singles over 50. Most events are scheduled following an optional meal at a location determined by the leader. See the Outings section of this Newsletter for Silver Singles outings. Check the Singles listserv for announcements of more Silver Singles outings.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Section

Our mission of this Section is to support Sierra Club goals, and to promote activism within the LGBT community through letter writing, phone calls, and other active support for environmental issues. Anyone is welcome to join our outings regardless of sexual orientation.

WEB SITE: http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/
MEETUP: http://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub/
FACEBOOK: https://www.facebook.com/njsierraclub/

OFFICERS:
Co-Chair: Robert Zitzman*  robertzitzman@att.net
Co-Chair: John Kashwick*  jkashwick@gmail.com
Secretaries: Corbett Klein*  corbettklein@outlook.com
Outings Co-Chair: Jonathan Wall*  dojwall@gmail.com
Outings Co-Chair: Robert Zitzman*  robertzitzman@att.net
Webmaster: Robert Zitzman*  robertzitzman@att.net
Ex-Com: OPEN POSITION--contact John or Robert if interested

(* Section Executive Committee Member)

MEETINGS AND EVENTS:
Check Meetup.com/njsierraclub or www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/ for outings listings. You can also receive updated information by joining our email list. Please contact John at jkashwick@gmail.com to be included in the list.

Volunteers Needed: We are continuing to recruit volunteers and outings leaders. For more information, please email John at jkashwick@gmail.com or Robert at robertzitzman@att.net.

Senior Section/Fifty-Plus Section

A chapter-wide special interest section which offers a weekly to monthly calendar of activities and events, including hikes, clean ups, social gatherings, dinner get-togethers and other functions intended for those members over fifty.

More New Jersey events are posted on a web site http://www.funtrailsv.com. In addition, a monthly Buy & Sell newsletter is sent out to members free of charge, in which they can list items they are searching for or want to buy.

The mission of this section is to support Sierra Club goals, and to promote activism through letter writing, phone calls, and other active support for environmental issues. We work through a “list-serve,” by which members learn about current environmental issues, and how they can be supported.

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

Paul Ehrlich is the Vice-Chair (p.w.ehrlich@gmail.com).

Sierra Student Coalition

(a semi-autonomous organization of college and high-school students)

National Website: http://www.ssc.org/

Introducing Children to the Outdoors Section

(another Chapter-wide special interest activity with the motto: No Child Left Inside!)

OFFICERS:
Chair: Mary Cohen  mcohen4191@gmail.com

Once again we took 38 students from Paterson’s Clemente Middle School on a hike in Harriman State Park. As we had enough leaders and assistants, we could break the group in two and do two separate hikes, a lot more enjoyable for all involved than an 8 hour hike. The weather cooperated so, despite the challenging trails and hills, there were smiles all around.

NJCC is a public service program, one of 50 Sierra Club groups nationwide which provide about 1,000 nature outings per year, oriented towards children. About five such outings take place in New Jersey each year. That’s right: only five – but they are great! We sure could use a couple of steering committee members to help expand this wonderful program.

If you would like information about volunteering or if you would just like to be placed on our email list for our sporadically issued e-newsletters, please send me an e-mail.

On the Trail

Awaken Your Senses at Rutgers Gardens

By Arline Zatz, Chair of our Senior/50+ Section. The photos are hers.

Garden buffs and nature lovers – and those who simply like to stroll in lovely surroundings – will enjoy the color and serenity to be found at Rutgers Gardens. Here, where Rutgers University students learn about plant breeding, genetics, and horticulture techniques, visitors are welcome year-round at no charge.

Founded in 1916, Rutgers Gardens include a variety of large and small plots distributed over 200 acres. At the entrance on Ryder’s Lane there’s a large board map with parking locations. If it’s a Friday, there may be a Farmers Market for fresh produce grown by Rutgers students and South Jersey farmers.

For a unique experience, park in back of Holly House (Garden Club of NJ headquarters) and walk to the impressive Bamboo Grove. The darkness beneath the tall bamboo can feel a bit scary, but delightfully cool on hot summer days. On windy days, the bamboo also produces an eerie but melodious sounds. The easy trails lead to a scenic pond with floating water.

As you drive or walk along Log Cabin Road, check out the mature hollies on your left, and the Donald B. Lacey Display Garden a bit further on the right. The flower beds are an array of brilliant colors. This is the perfect place to admire the dazzling flowers and to gather ideas for your own gardens. Children love running through this area to net butterflies. Stop to admire the small pond located in the center of the garden, a key attraction. Be entertained by the many bellowing bullfrogs among the cattails and other striking plants. The area is a delight from early summer through October, thanks to the efforts of students, volunteers and staff.

Another sensual treat is the Rain Garden, with its small waterfall, bench and many flat stones on which to sit and sigh. Since it’s difficult to find, you may be alone. (Walk along the right side of the Gift Shop, a bit uphill). On the back to the main road, the pollinator Pollinator Garden and plan on having fun at Otkens’ Garden – a gift from Marie and Richard Gons to honor Marie’s parents. They planned it as a family room with two over-sized Adirondack chairs that are irresistible, especially to children. The hope was that the chairs would make everyone feel like a child upon entering this special garden, surrounded with colorful plantings, one cannot suppress laughter. The Adirondack Chair was chosen for its association with health: in the late 1800s, doctors prescribed the fresh air of the Adirondack Mountains, along with good food and rest, as a cure for Tuberculosis. The chair was developed to sustain many hours of comfortable resting, while a person’s health was restored. There’s enough to sustain many return visits – the Rutgers Gardens are open year-round, and each season is a joy to behold.

Location: 112 Ryders Lane, New Brunswick. Open daily from 8am to dusk. Farmers Market - Every Friday: May to Thanksgiving, and once a month during winter.

Gift Shop – Open April through October on weekends: 10am – 6 pm. Dogs are allowed on leash. Wear sneakers or good walking shoes, if appropriate bring a hat, sunscreen, water and insect repellent. Definitely a camera! Enjoy!

There’s an interactive CALENDAR for outings and Group events - on our website (www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/). Click “Events and Outings”

Visitors can’t resist sitting in the two oversized Adirondack chairs, part of the Otkens Garden. Visitors and children love to climb up and sit on them.
GROUP OUTINGS COORDINATORS

Jan 1 (Sat): New Year’s Day Paddle on the Wading River (Burlington Co). Bring New Year's Day cheer to the water! Meet at one of the 3 access points along the river. Directions to the nearest access point will be on the event posting.

Jan 7 (Sun): Hike at Veterans Park (Mercer Co). 4-5 miles, easy pace. Leashed dogs are welcome. Contact leaders to confirm hike. Featurs: Hike the 100 acre Spotswood outlier of the NJ Pinelands. As you'll see as we hike through mixed hardwood and southern pinelands this hike will have a little bit of everything.


Jan 20 (Sat): Jockey Hollow (Morris Co). 6-mile hike. Leader’s choice of trails, depending on conditions at Jockey Hollow National Historic Park near Morristown. See http://www.nps.gov/joha for more information and directions. Meet at the Visitor's Center. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Proper footwear required (stabilicers, crampons or snowshoes) if appropriate for the conditions. No pets.

Jan 27 (Sat): Lewis Morris Park Hike (Morris Co). 7 miles, easy pace. Beautiful hike along the Lenape river and river valley, with views of the Millstone river. Great hike for beginner and advanced hikers alike.

Jan 28 (Sun): Hike the Franklin Parker Preserve (Burlington Co). 10 miles, easy pace on the trails. Meet at the parking area located near the Seedling Education Center. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Proper footwear required (stabilicers, crampons or snowshoes) if appropriate for the conditions. No pets.

Feb 2 (Fri): Groundhog Day Canoe/Kayak the Wading River (Burlington Co). The section we paddle will depend on weather conditions. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Contact leaders to confirm trip and details George & Leona F: 609-259-5734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com.

Feb 5 (Sat): Patriotic Path Stroll (Morris Co). 10 miles. Come take a stroll on Patriotic Path in Randolph NJ! Meet at River Ramblers parking lot. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Proper footwear required (stabilicers, crampons or snowshoes) if appropriate for the conditions. No pets.

Feb 10 (Sat): High Point State Park Cross Country Ski, Sussex Co. (http://www.nps.gov/whi/planyourvisit/directions.htm) There’s a full-service cross country ski center at the park with 26 miles of groomed trails, equipment rentals, lessons, and morning & afternoon meals. Bring your lunch and ski poles. LEADER: Paul Hughes: paulhughes7@optonline.net. To register and confirm: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com.

Feb 11 (Sun): Whitesbog Village Winter Hike (Burlington Co). 6-5 miles, easy pace. Whitesbog, NJ’s historic village and a stop built to house the local cranberry bogs. Perhaps we’ll see wintering Turdus Swans as we hike around the bogs. Click here for directions www.whitesbog.org. Bring beverage and lunch. Leashed dogs are welcome. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Contact leaders to confirm hike: George & Leona F: 609-259-5734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com.

Feb 14 (Wed): Valentine’s Day Hike at Smithville Park (Burlington Co). 4-5 miles, easy pace. Bring your Valentine’s Day treats and snacks. Enjoy the trails at Smithville Park, along the Maurice River, and many new presentations, as well as popular ones from past years. For further information and directions www.sierraclub.org/marchevents. Contact: George & Leona F: 609-259-3734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com.

Feb 17 (Sat): Hike Allaire State Park, Monmouth Co (W). 3.5 miles, easy pace. Bring water, lunch, and be prepared to hike the scenic gully trails of Allaire State Park. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Contact leaders to register, and learn meeting place: John Lord Jr. (609) 737-8820.

Feb 19 (Mon): Presidents’ Day Hike at Jakes Branch County Park (Ocean Co). 4 miles, easy pace. Jakes Branch has a nature center with interesting hands-on exhibits and an observation deck that offers panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. Check out the new information boards and take part in some guided education programs. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Contact leaders to confirm hike: George & Leona F: 609-259-5734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com.

Feb 24 (Sat): Hike at the Jamesburg Park Conservation Area (Middlesex Co). 4 miles, easy pace. In the1970s, the Jamesburg Park Conservation Area was preserved for the people of Middlesex County. Snowshoeing is also an option. Contact leaders to confirm hike: John Lord Jr. (609) 737-8820.

Feb 25 (Sat): Slovenian Heritage Park (Gloucester Co). 5 miles, easy pace. Includes Lake Somesville, the Spousewood Outlier of the New Jersey Pinelands – as you’ll see as we hike through mixed hardwood and Pineland. Leashed dog welcome. Contact leaders to confirm hike: Pat & George: 609-625-4123.

Mar 3 (Fri): Nature’s Peanut Butter Lover’s Day Hike at Perona Farms Park (Monmouth Co). 8 miles, easy pace. Beautiful woodland, natural fields and a picturesque lake here in Monmouth County. Bring lunch! Meet at Perona Farms parking lot (Mr. Peanut Blvd, Long Branch) at 9:30 am. (No pets please.)

Mar 3 (Sat): American Hiking Society’s 25th Annual Presidents’ Day Shirtless Shenanigans. The section we paddle will depend on weather conditions. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Contact leaders to confirm hike: John Luard: john.luard@gmail.com.

Mar 10 (Sat): Explore the Unique History, Ecology, and Cultural use of the Pinelands (Atlantic Co). Leaming in Okeechobee: The Okeechobee Trail. Bring hiking boots, lunch, 2 quarts of water. Atlantic conditions will alter the route. Meet in front of 501 Permeant Ave. (building with mural) at Sunrise Lake at 10am. Bring water, lunch, and be prepared to hike the scenic gully trails of Allaire State Park. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Contact leaders to confirm hike: George & Leona F: 609-259-5734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com.

Mar 14 (Wed): Ramapo Reservation Hike (Bergen Co). 10 miles. Moderately-paced 6-mile hike to iconic views of the park and Manhattan skyline. Some of the trails are rocky, and include ascension and descent of the Ramapo Reservation's 225-foot-high Bear Mountain. Contact leaders to confirm hike: John Luard: john.luard@gmail.com.

Mar 17 (Sat): Lewis Morris Park Hike (Morris Co). 7 miles, easy pace. We will start at Sunrise Lake and hike through the park’s historic buildings and gardens. The pace will be moderate to slow. Meet at the Morris County Parks Commission website (http://www.morriscountyparks.com) for further information on this hike and to confirm leaders. Meet at Sunrise Lake parking lot. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Proper footwear recommended (stabilicers, crampons or snowshoes) if appropriate for the conditions. Contact leaders to confirm hike: John Lord Jr. 609-451-4427 (no calls after 10pm) or John Lord Jr. (609) 737-8820.

Mar 17 (Sat): Lewis Morris Park Hike (Morris Co). 10 miles. Hike with us to the Lakota people’s Sacred Fire on South Mountain. The Lakota people have said the Sacred Fire is the center of the world. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Proper footwear required (stabilicers, crampons or snowshoes) if appropriate for the conditions. No pets. Meet in parking lot. Inclement weather conditions cancel. Proper footwear required (stabilicers, crampons or snowshoes) if appropriate for the conditions.

Mar 24 (Sat): Delaware State Park Hike (Delaware Co). Contact leaders to confirm hike: John Luard: john.luard@gmail.com.
OUTINGS
(Continued from page 17)

Mar 17 (Sat) St. Patrick’s Day Hike at the NJAS Plainsboro Preserve (Middlesex Co). 11am, 4 miles, easy pace. The Preserve has wildlife exhibits, a reference library and the Nature Store is a great source for field guides, optics, etc. Bring water and snacks. Meet at the Nature Center, 80 Comstock Rd, Cranbury. Option for late lunch at Boar’s Restaurant. Directions: www.njas.org/plainsboro or 609-259-3734 or jas@sierranewjersey.org. (RV)

Mar 22 (Sun) Water Day for Canoe/Kayak the Delaware and Raritan Canal (Somerset Co). Directions: Meet at the Delaware Water Gap on the north end of the Delaware Water Gap Toll Bridge. 11am, 4-mile paddling. Bring lunch, water and snacks. Parking is available at the toll plaza.

Mar 24 (Sat). Hook Mountain Hike (Rockland Co, NY). 10 am, 4 miles, with excellent views of the Hudson River and Croton Point. Meet in the Rockland South Lake Parking Lot near the entrance of the paddle area. Bring lunch and beverages. Contact leaders to confirm the trip and meeting location.

Mar 30 (Fri) Hike at Maurice River Bluffs Preserve (Cumberland Co). 11am, 5 miles, easy pace, some hills moderate elevation. The Maurice River Bluffs, a majestic preserve overlooking the river, Directions: Take Rte 55 south to Rte 49 exit. Turn right onto Rte 49 West. After you cross the Maurice River Bluff, turn left onto Cedar St. Follow for 0.5 miles. Then bear left onto Rte 472/Silver Run Rd and continue for 1.5 miles. For The National Trails Sign is on the left side of the road. Bring lunch and water. Contact leaders to confirm the ride and meeting location George & Leona F: 609-295-5734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (RV)

Aper 4 (Weds) Bicycle the Edgar Felix Bikeway (Monmouth Co). 10am-12 pm, easy pace. The Edgar Felix Bikeway is in the heart of the Pinelands. Along with us, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance and other environmental groups have raised concerns that the project will impact water and contribute to climate change and urban sprawl. Bring lunch and beverages. Contact leaders to confirm the trip and meeting location.

Upcoming ExCom Meetings:

All members are welcome to attend these monthly statewide video calls held on their first Thursday of each month. The meeting details, including travel information, are available from Rich Isaac, Chair of the ExCom. (Best confirmed)

Conservation and/or Political Committee meetings usually start at 10am; Environmental Conservation Committee at noon. Luncheons are held at noon of the meeting. Luncheons start at 10am.

January 6, February 3 and March 3

All at the Hamilton Township (Mercer Co.) Public Library, 1 Public Library, 1 Justice Samuel Alito Jr Way, 08619. 609-691-5327.

MEMBERSHIP COUPON

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City ____________________________
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Printed by Witherspoon Media (Kingston)

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The Jersey Sierran

Published quarterly by the Sierra Club’s New Jersey Chapter

145 West Hanover St, Trenton, NJ 08618

The Jersey Sierran is produced primarily by volunteers.

Members please send address changes to address.changes@sierraclub.org, or Sierra Club Membership, 2101 Webster St., Oakland, CA 94612. (800) 427-4188, or via the Internet to: changes@sierraclub.org.

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

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The Jersey Sierran is produced primarily by volunteers.

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

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Aper 4 (Weds) Bicycle the Edgar Felix Bikeway (Monmouth Co). 10am-12 pm, easy pace. The Edgar Felix Bikeway is in the heart of the Pinelands. Along with us, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance and other environmental groups have raised concerns that the project will impact water and contribute to climate change and urban sprawl. Bring lunch and beverages. Contact leaders to confirm the trip and meeting location.

Mar 24 (Sat). Hook Mountain Hike (Rockland Co, NY). 10 am, 4 miles, with excellent views of the Hudson River and Croton Point. Meet in the Rockland South Lake Parking Lot near the entrance of the paddle area. Bring lunch and beverages. Contact leaders to confirm the trip and meeting location.

Mar 30 (Fri) Hike at Maurice River Bluffs Preserve (Cumberland Co). 11am, 5 miles, easy pace, some hills moderate elevation. The Maurice River Bluffs, a majestic preserve overlooking the river. Directions: Take Rte 55 south to Rte 49 exit. Turn right onto Rte 49 West. After you cross the Maurice River Bluff, turn left onto Cedar St. Follow for 0.5 miles. Then bear left onto Rte 472/Silver Run Rd and continue for 1.5 miles. For The National Trails Sign is on the left side of the road. Bring lunch and water. Contact leaders to confirm the ride and meeting location George & Leona F: 609-295-5734 or leona@pineypaddlers.com. (RV)

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**Pipeline Update - Citizens Mobilize Against the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project**

By Barry Kutch, Central Jersey Safer Energy Coalition and Sierra Club member

The rush to build gas pipelines in New Jersey continues to accelerate. Despite the decision by Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to postpone a decision on the Northeast Supply Enhancement Project (NESE), the project will also include a new $2,000 horsepower Compressor Station 206 to be built in Franklin Township, NJ. The compressor station would include two natural gas-powered, turbine-driven compressors whose purpose is to maintain constant pressures on the gas as it travels through the pipeline.

Residents in Franklin Township and the adjacent South Brunswick Township have been shown to leak methane and other pollutants. A few have even exploded in gigantic bubbles.

Dr. Stephen Conner, an expert on natural gas distribution who also teaches at Rutgers University, says, “If you put a gas pipeline where one was not needed, it would be like putting a nuclear power plant in a residential neighborhood. It’s simply not safe. The Sierra Club will continue to fight for a permanent ban.”

Despite Christie/Trump Moving forward with EVs, than that of many conventional vehicles. More than 20 fully electric and plug-in vehicles are now on the roads across the state. In New Jersey there are now more than 10,000 electric plug-in vehicles on the road in New Jersey. In the last year sales have grown by 79%, according to a report by Charge EVC.

As we enter the next gubernatorial Administration, we need to stop the holdup with the NESE. While this is an important program to balance water supply, we still have some concerns with it. We do not believe that allowing voids in reservoirs in New York is a good idea. If there is a drought, and the reservoirs are low, there may not be enough water to keep the flow going and the saltwater from intruding. We need increased flows into the Delaware River to help maintain the ecology and quality that benefits our water, tourism industry, and fisheries. Without cooperation between states, especially New Jersey, New York would suffer dirtier water, lower reservoir levels, and increased flooding. The Delaware River Basin Commission, all of us, and this management program is an important way to make sure people from the entire Basin get clean, adequate drinking water.

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) has announced the continuation of its Flexible Flow Management Program (FFMP). The agreement had lapsed between July 1 and September 30, 2017. The agreement has been renewed through December 31, 2020. It will operate in 2019/2020. Sounds like a long way off, but intense effort is being applied now to try and stop FERC’s approval for construction. As a result of the agreement, a small group of citizens has taken on the majority of the work, and public support is always appreciated.

Find out how to help by going to www.safearnj.org.

For further information, contact: Gary B. Fisher (Chair of the Raritan Valley Chapter), or Margie Zaccaria (margie.zaccaria@sierraclub.org).

TRUMP AND CHRISTIE OPPOSE DRBC FRACKING BAN

A meeting on September 13 at the Bucks County Community College, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) passed a fracking ban resolution, by a vote of 3-1. President Trump voted no, and Governor Christie abstained. (i.e. that’s how their representatives on the Commission voted.) The next step for the resolution is rule-making, which will take at least six months. While we support a ban on fracking, we are glad that the Governor and the Legislature are also standing against the pro-fracking lobby. We applaud this move,

To see the full resolution on procedural grounds as well. We oppose the resolution on procedural grounds.

The DRBC must recognize that fracking waste has harmful effects on health and the environment. Fracking waste contains as many as 100 different fracking chemicals, including many known to be carcinogens and endocrine disrupters. Additionally, it contains naturally-occurring contaminants that are extracted from the fracked shale, including radioactive elements.

Other reasons for opposing the DRBC’s resolution include the fact that there are no treatment plants in New Jersey that can handle fracking waste and treat radioactive contamination. In addition, the Delaware River is the primary source of drinking water for Philadelphia. Salty water from the Delaware Bay, sung upstream, has been getting dangerously close to water intake points in Delaware. New Jersey’s drought is not only a result of low rainfall, but also due to an increase of pollution, poor water quality, and the DEP’s failure to clean-up our waterways.

While this is an important program to balance water supply, we still have some concerns with it. We do not believe that allowing voids in reservoirs in New York is a good idea. If there is a drought, and the reservoirs are low, there may not be enough water to keep the flow going and the saltwater from intruding. We need increased flows into the Delaware River to help maintain the ecology and quality that benefits our water, tourism industry, and fisheries. Without cooperation between states, especially New Jersey, New York would suffer dirtier water, lower reservoir levels, and increased flooding. The Delaware River basin is the greatest of all, and this management program is an important way to make sure people from the entire Basin get clean, adequate drinking water.

The DRBC is scheduled to be in operation in the winter of 2019/2020. Sounds like a long way off, but intense effort is being applied now to try and stop FERC’s approval for construction. As a result of the agreement, a small group of citizens has taken on the majority of the work, and public support is always appreciated.

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DRBC Fracking Ban in Place

The DRBC Fracking Ban is a de-facto moratorium that should not allow fracking permits to be issued. Since 2010, the scientific evidence and on-the-ground experience is against fracking. It is simply not safe. The Sierra Club will continue to fight for a permanent ban.