

# Susquehanna *Sierran* March 2022



Founded 1892

EXPLORE, ENJOY, PROTECT THE PLANET



Awaiting the 2022  
“Blooming” season of  
Susquehanna Group's  
Pollinator Garden  
(with Binghamton  
Parks and Recreation)  
at Confluence Park.

To volunteer, message  
project leader Sarah  
Hodder,  
[shaddow@stny.rr.com](mailto:shaddow@stny.rr.com)

photo:  
Sarah Hodder

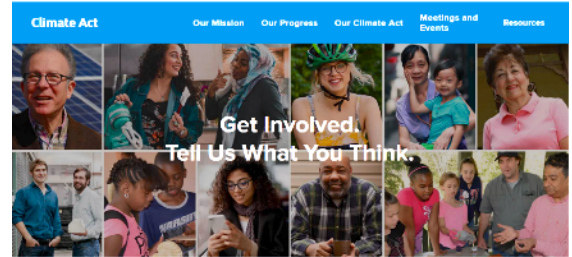
Related: Adjoining the Park is the western end of NYDOT's planned **363 Gateway Project** which will slow traffic, include trails, allow citizens to reconnect with the Susquehanna riverbank, and create additional connections to downtown streets. The plan can be found at <https://www.dot.ny.gov/>

# A Great Public Comment Opportunity

– Valdi Weiderpass

New York offers an important opportunity for citizens to comment on the Climate Action Council's Draft Scoping Plan which will guide transformation of New York's economy as it drastically lowers greenhouse gas emissions. The Plan was mandated by the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) which took effect January 1, 2020. The CLCPA was enacted to drive NY to do its part to save a habitable climate. Its ambitious climate goals include: (1) 70% Renewable Electricity by the year 2030; (2) 100% Zero-Emission Electricity by 2040; (3) By 2030 reduce statewide Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by 40% from 1990 levels; (4) Reduce NY statewide GHG emissions by 85% by 2050, with the remaining 15% to be met by increased absorption of more GHGs so that NY is 'net zero' in GHG emissions.

The Draft Scoping Plan (available at: [Draft-Scoping-Plan](#)), released December 30, 2021, was developed by the Climate Action Council (CAC, see [NY Climate-Action-Council](#)). The CAC has 22-members, is co-chaired by Doreen Harris, President and CEO of NY State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), and Basil Seggos, Commissioner of NY State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC). The CAC includes representatives of State agencies and authorities, representatives of industry and environmental organizations, and scientists from Cornell and Stony Brook Universities. The 861-page Draft Scoping Plan's main body is 330 pages containing 24 chapters small enough to be digestible by typical members of the general public. The first 93 pages explain the dire effects of Climate Change, the CLCPA's incorporation of and expansion of previous NY State climate policies, an assessment of the current situation, health and economic benefits of a transition to clean energy, environmental justice concerns, and the main strategies for achieving CLCPA goals. The next 167 pages contain 6 chapters on major economic sectors: transportation, buildings, electricity, industry, agriculture and forestry, and waste. The next 68 pages contain 5 chapters covering cross-sector strategies. The final two chapters address monitoring and evaluation. The rest are appendices, two of which are from the Climate Justice and Just Transition Working Groups.



My advice? Analyze a section (or more), and submit comments by April 30<sup>th</sup> at <https://nyserda.seamlessdocs.com/f/DraftScopingComments> Remember, you're representing yourself rather than the Sierra Club in this exercise.

This is an excellent opportunity to help New York lead the nation (and other entities) toward planetary habitability.

---

## Essential Wasps – Colleen Wolpert

One of the cutest critters in my yard is a Potter Wasp whose nest looks like something I'd make in ceramics class. This little nest was on the side of a pot in my garden. Mama wasp fills it with caterpillars, drops in her egg, then seals it. The caterpillars are food for the larva.

Heather Holm is a font of information on wasps, bees and pollinators. One can learn much from her website [www.PollinatorsNativePlants.com](http://www.PollinatorsNativePlants.com) I recommend her 2021 book "Wasps: Their Biology, Diversity, and Role as Beneficial Insects and Pollinators of Native Plants."



photo: Colleen Wolpert



photo: Heather Holm



## **Susquehanna Group**

(All of Broome, & most of Chenango,  
Delaware, Otsego, Tioga Counties)

Chair	*Valdi Weiderpass
Vice Chair	*Scott Lauffer
Secretary	*Karen Boba
Treasurer	*Joann Lettis
Political Chair	*Scott Lauffer
Chapter Delegate	*Jim Taft
Newsletter Editor	*Jim Taft
Membership Chair	*Chris Harasta
Outings Chair	*Chris Harasta
Conservation Co-Chairs	*Doug Gausman, *Mary Cronk
Alt. Chapter Delegate	*Joann Lettis
Member	*Christina Fuller

\* Member Executive Committee

To become a candidate for the  
Susquehanna Group's Executive  
Committee, mail by November 1, 2022  
a candidate statement of 150 words or  
less to:

Susquehanna Group  
PO Box 572  
Endicott NY 13760

The Nominating Committee will create  
a slate of candidates, and ballots will be  
mailed with the December *Sierran*.

## **COMING EVENTS**

***Note:*** Club general meetings during the pandemic continue online. To join a meeting use the Zoom app or website. Enter Zoom meeting number 475 123 3928.

March 15, 2022, 7:30pm, **Elizabeth Grisaru**, of the NYS Department of Public Service, discusses enhancements of the electrical grid to enable NYS to help meet ambitious greenhouse gas emission goals in its ground-breaking Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

April 19, 2022, 7:30pm, **Christina Fuller**, Susquehanna Group Executive Committee member, discusses the Group's annual Move Out project (described elsewhere in this newsletter).

May 17, 2022, 7:30pm, **Peter Rood** of GlidePath (Elmhurst IL energy storage company) discusses its Oakdale Energy Storage lithium-ion battery project on Robinson Hill Road (Broome County).

June 21, 2022, 7:30pm, A BAE Systems representative will discuss the company's Endicott NY production of hybrid and electric vehicle drive systems.

## **RECENT ACTIVITIES**

Pandemic-inspired Zoom meetings seem to be working well in Susquehanna Group's 5-county (soon to be 6) geography. Meetings generally occur at 7:30pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month (except July and August), at Zoom meeting number 475 123 3928. Most meetings are recorded and past ones can be viewed at <https://www.sierraclub.org/atlantic/susquehanna/meetings>

Recent viewable meetings:

2/16/22: **Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience** with Mark Lowery, Assistant Director of NYS Department of Conservation's Office of Climate Change.

1/18/22: **Electric Transit Buses** with Gregory Kilmer, Broome County Commissioner of Public Transportation.

12/21/21: **Southern Tier Land Conservancy** with Jason Shaw, Jeff Merrill, and Carl Lipo—organizers of the recently-established organization.

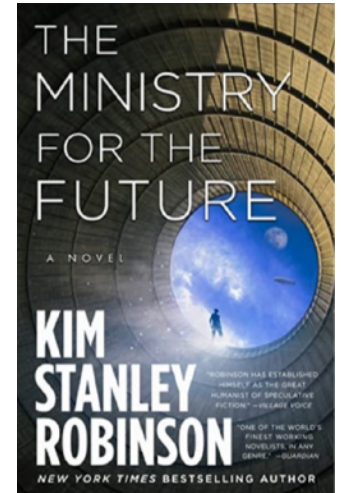
# The Ministry for the Future Kim Stanley Robinson, Orbit Books, 2020

– Review by Chris Rounds

Confession: I am not a fan of science fiction. What brought me to this sci-fi novel? It was a review by Bill McKibben in *The New York Review of Books*, December 17, 2020. McKibben satisfied me that Robinson might answer one of my fundamental questions about climate change: "What's it going to take to get people to respond effectively to the threats climate change will usher in?"

Initial chapters describe a heat wave that in 2025 strikes Uttar Pradesh, India. Millions of Indians die, beginning with the elderly and children. An American named Frank, working for an NGO, barely survives the combination of pre-monsoon heat, humidity compounded by the collapse of the electrical grid, and rising urban unrest.

This book resonates with the 2/27/2022 IPCC report, "Climate Change 2022," which predicts that the pace of warming is quickening and heat waves like the one Robinson described should be expected in the very near future.



The title 'Ministry for the Future,' it turns out, is a creation of the United Nations in response to the India catastrophe, and Robinson explores the Ministry's efforts to mobilize effective global responses to climate change threats. McKibben informs us that Robinson, a captivating writer, is also extremely well-informed about scientific, economic, and political challenges. Robinson details a range of possible responses to growing levels of atmospheric greenhouse gases. Two levels of response emerge: (1) 'The Children of Kali' initiative based in India and determined not to allow the developed world to ignore the implications of the heat wave. (2) Responses which might be called 'eco-terrorism.' Impatient with the glacial pace of efforts promoted by the Ministry for the Future, these people set about driving the pace of change through the selective application of violence. Private and commercial jets are blown out of the sky. Huge, rarely seen cargo ships essential to the global economy are sunk *en masse*. New and cleaner approaches to international travel and commerce are driven into existence.

As 'The Ministry for the Future' draws to a close, we are given a glimmer of hope. Maybe, just maybe, people will prove clever enough to work their way out of the spiral of collapse climate change seems to foretell. Whether or not you share the author's sense of tempered optimism, this book will give you a lot to think about.

---

## Local Politics

– Scott Lauffer

I'm the incoming Political Chair for Susquehanna Group. Recognition goes to Allan Hochberg who stepped back from this position. He guided the Executive Committee through many election cycles, administering questionnaires and interviews of local candidates. These allowed us to consider endorsements. He kept us informed of candidates and important political news such as redistricting. While Allan would not wish to be described as a political junkie, he had a great interest in politics and a keen awareness of back stories and how races were shaping up.

2022 is an important election year. Susquehanna Group doesn't endorse in federal races, but does so for State Assembly and Senate races in our 5-county area. Also on the ballot this year are county legislative seats, and city, town and village positions. While the national focus will be on Congressional races, local elections affect our lives more personally and it can be argued are even more important. Stay tuned as we continue with the endorsement process.

# NY Climate-Related Legislation Could Benefit From Your Advocacy

– Valdi Weiderpass

2022 is a critical year for New York to pass legislation to enable emissions reductions goals of the State's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). Your support of the bills listed below will help convince members of the Assembly and Senate to co-sponsor and vote to pass them. These bills are supported by Sierra Club's Atlantic Chapter (the NYS Chapter). These bills would help New York lead in saving a habitable climate. I note one bill which should be opposed as it is a false solution. Find your Senator at <https://www.nysenate.gov/registration/nojs/form/start/find-my-senator>, and Assemblyperson at <https://www.nyassembly.gov/mem/search/>.



photo: NY Senator Gallivan website

**1) Climate and Community Investment Act (CCIA): S.4264-A (Parker)/A.6967 (Cahill)**

Establishes a climate pollution fee and a household and small business energy rebate. It would establish a fee on carbon to fund the transition to emissions-free energy required by the CLCPA. Please advocate for the CCIA. **Alternatively, if the legislator does not want to support the CCIA he/she can sign a legislative support letter to ask for \$15 billion in the State budget for funding the CLCPA.**

**2) Fossil Fuel Subsidies Expiration: A.225 (Cahill)/S.2721 (Krueger)**

**3) Repeal of Fossil Fuel Sales Tax Exemptions: A.6882 (Cahill)/S.4816 (Krueger)**

**4) Renewable Energy Resources at Dormant Electric Generating Sites: A.340 (Zebrowski)/S.1829 (Skoufis)**

**5) Clean Futures Act: S.5939-A (Ramos)/A.6761-A (Mamdani)**

**6) Pollution Justice Act of 2021: S.4378-A (Brisport)/A.6251 (Carroll)**

**7) Energy Efficiency Equity and Jobs Act: S.3126-B (Parker)/A.3996-B (Hunter)**

**8) Cryptocurrency Mining Center Moratorium: S.6486-C (Parker)/A.7389-B (Kelles)**

**9) Cannabis Grower Energy Efficiency: S.6243 (Hinchey)/A.6543 (Fahy)**

**10) Green Transit (S.3535-B/A.3090), Green Jobs bills (S.3405/A.2083) (Kennedy/Dinowitz)**

**11) EV Fleet Procurement: S.2838-C (Parker)/A.2412-B (Fahy)**

**12) EV Direct Sales: S.1763 (Kaminsky)/A.4614 (Fahy)**

**13) EV Charging Station Construction: S.23-A (Kaplan)/A.4386-A (O'Donnell)**

**14) Charging Stations in Parking Facilities: S.370-A (Hoylman)/A.346-A (Cahill)**

**15) Electric Planes, Trains, & Ferries: S.6906 (Kavanagh)**

**16) Energy Efficient Building Codes: S.7176 (Parker)/A.8143 (Fahy)/Governor Program Bill #3**

**17) All-Electric Building Act: S.6843-A (Kavanagh)/A.8431 (Gallagher)**

**18) Fossil-Free Heating Tax Credit (Geothermal heat): S.3864 (Kennedy)/A.7493 (Rivera)**

**19) Sales Tax Exemption (Geothermal heat): S.642-A (Kennedy)/A.8147 (Rivera)**

**20) Teachers' Pension Fund Fossil Fuel Divestment: S.4783-A (Brisport)/A.6331-A (Kelles)**

**21) Zero Emission Lawn Equipment: S.7453-A (Krueger)/A.8327-A (Englebright) & S.7462-A (Harckham)**

**NOTE: Please OPPOSE the bill: Zero Emissions Generating Facilities: S.6497-A (Parker)/A.8094 (Cusick).** See the Club's opposition memo: <https://atlantic2.sierraclub.org/sites/newyork.sierraclub.org/files/documents/2022/01/S.6497-A%20ZEEGF%20opposition.docx-3.pdf>



# Off-Campus Move-Out Project

– Christina Fuller

The Susquehanna Group Executive Committee voted to manage the Binghamton Off-Campus Move-Out Project. It reduces waste in landfills and gives back to the community by collecting and donating items from Binghamton University students moving out in the Spring. Many in the community benefit from the many useful household goods.

This year's project will run from May 12 through May 22. We need volunteers to pick up donations, sort and prepare them, and deliver them to receiving organizations.

To volunteer, fill out the volunteer form by visiting [tinyurl.com/VolunteerBingMoveOut2022](https://tinyurl.com/VolunteerBingMoveOut2022), or scan the QR code with your phone. For more information email [binghamtonmoveout@gmail.com](mailto:binghamtonmoveout@gmail.com) or check us out on Facebook at [facebook.com/binghamtonmoveout](https://facebook.com/binghamtonmoveout)



photos Christina Fuller

## Gerri Wiley Receives Lynda Spickard Award

– Valdi Weiderpass

At the February 15, 2022 Zoom meeting, Gerri Wiley was presented with the Lynda Spickard award, recognizing her long-term environmental and education work. I met Gerri when she was an early 'fracktivist' with New York Residents Against Drilling (NYRAD).

She opposed fossil fuel infrastructure expansion, for example by demonstrating support for a family's maple sugar grove threatened by the Constitution gas pipeline. She participated in the 2014 People's Climate March in Washington, D.C. She once helped block the entrance to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), resulting in two days in jail. She has provided written and verbal comments into official records related to the electric grid, fossil fuel infrastructure proposals and other environmental matters.

An Energy Navigator, she educates people about solar energy, heat pumps, weatherization, and applying for related financial incentives. In conjunction with the Community Science Institute she has been sampling and testing surface waters for conductivity, total hardness, pH, temperature, and dissolved oxygen.

Gerri reduced her own carbon footprint with a vegan diet and an electric vehicle. She recently wrote a book on vegetarian/vegan recipes (to be published). Gerri, your smile beams sunshine to people's hearts, as you show them how to live lightly on the earth, while you "follow your heart and love what you do."

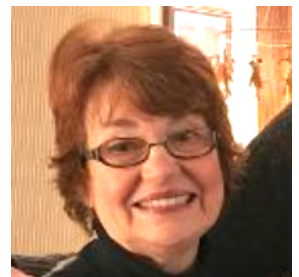


photo V. Weiderpass



Susquehanna Group

PO Box 572

Endicott NY 13760

<https://www.sierraclub.org/atlantic/susquehanna>