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Approximately 21,000 Members in New Jersey

April-June 2021

REPORT FROM TRENTON

New Jersey's Environmental Issues Moving Into 2021

Edited from an Op-Ed Column by Chapter Director Jeff Tittel, published in the Jersey Journal on Dec 29.

2020's Covid pandemic brought about a new kind of activism as public meetings were replaced by Zoom and conference calls. Hundreds of people, including our members, spoke out at virtual board meetings of NJ Transit and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. Some of our campaigns were successful.

We saw heavy environmental impacts last year: of air pollution, Covid-19, sea-level rise and other aspects of climate change. Last Winter was the warmest on record, and July was the hottest in New Jersey's history. Water pollution and rising temperatures have led to algal blooms closing our biggest lakes.

As progress we've seen some fossil fuel projects canceled, the beginnings of renewable offshore wind energy, and slow but steady acceptance of the need to replace gas-guzzlers with plug-ins.

Gov. Murphy signed landmark Environmental Justice legislation that will protect overburdened communities from new polluting facilities. He also signed the strongest plastic bag ban in the nation. NJ Transit stopped plans for a fossil-fueled power plant in the Meadowslands, in order to review renewable energy alternatives, but their review process favors natural gas over renewable energy. Elcon, a hazardous waste processor that wanted to operate across the Delaware River from Trenton, finally gave up thanks to public pressure. NJ-DEP finally denied the Northeast Supply Enhancement project, a gas pipeline, after New York turned the project down for lack of need.

Issues for 2021 start with Gov. Murphy's ambivalence toward an LNG ex-

port facility in Gibbstown (see lower right articles on pp. 4 and 5): he voted to approve it at the December meeting of the Delaware River Basin Commission. His approval means that he doesn't care about Environmental Justice, reducing greenhouse gases or protecting our communities from explosive bomb trains.

The New Jersey Turnpike Authority is moving forward with unnecessary and damaging highway widening projects on the Turnpike and Garden State Parkway –that will cost \$16 billion and increase pollution, flooding and traffic.

On climate change, Murphy's RGGI Strategic Funding Plan takes money away from energy efficiency and renewable energy. His raids on the Clean Energy Fund continue. The DEP has just released a Climate Report that doesn't address the climate emergency at all. The DEP also adopted a green-cover stormwater rule that will cause more flooding and pollution.

2021 is an election year for both the Governor and the entire Legislature. This is the year we have to make progress in reducing climate impacts and protecting overburdened communities. Murphy's Administration has failed to repeal a single Christie-era rule or update our rules and regulations to deal with climate impacts. The State Senate has failed to move on Murphy's nominations for the Highlands Council and

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ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CHAIR'S REPORT

An Inside Perspective on Environmental and Social Justice

By Renée Pollard, Committee Chair (rpollard16@comcast.net)



Since my inception as Chair of the Environmental and Social Justice Committee, I see change taking place in the New Jersey Chapter. There has also been new leadership at the Club's national level with the election of Ramón Cruz as President. This new leadership has given the Sierra Club a facelift that is desperately needed: members now have the ability to openly engage in conversations on Housing, Structural Racism, Social Justice, Economic Justice, Racial Justice, Racial Disparities, Criminal Justice, Health Disparities, Environmental Racism and all the other inequities that exist in society.

This unveiling will allow the Chapter to fully demonstrate and effectively pursue the principles of the Sierra Club. With these guiding principles and shared vision of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, the Environmental and Social Justice Committee will carry out its mission.

The Committee intends to build partnerships with grassroots organizations and other community leaders to help foster the goals of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The value of partnerships is essential: as the African Proverb states, "many hands make work light."

The Committee will advocate for policy change to remove barriers that prevent all people from thriving in life regardless of race, gender, sexuality, or the circumstances they are born into. We need to hold our elected officials accountable if they are not addressing all these concerns. Inability to access resources prevents some people from living full productive lives. All commu-

nities have the right to breathe clean air, live free of dangerous levels of toxic pollution, have access to healthy food, and share the benefits of a prosperous, vibrant and clean economy. We all deserve the freedom to live in a fair and just society.

We have learned from the Covid-19 pandemic that black and brown communities have been disproportionately affected, people are dying at much higher rates than people in other communities because of a lack of resources. Even with the vaccine they are still being affected by its discriminate distribution.

We support a culture of change: a culture of inclusivity where all are welcomed and supported to have their voices heard. Your beliefs don't have to be mine; it's about equity for all people, and making sure that underserved communities have their basic needs met.

Systemic Racism results in gaps across virtually all walks of American life. We need to address those gaps and work on solutions. We should all be on the path forward to advance racial equality for all people. We should all be working together for fair, equal opportunities, and removal of barriers. We all have a choice in this life and that is to be either a part of the solution or just complacent as if these issues don't exist.

It's not just advocacy, it's a movement and we all need to do our part. We must all work together to create a better world where all creatures can live in an environment that is safe, healthy, prosperous, and free – be the catalyst for change.

CONSERVATION CHAIR'S REPORT

Earth Day 2021 – "Restore Our Earth"

By Greg Gorman • ggorman07419@embarqmail.com

The theme of Earth Day 2021 is "Restore Our Earth". The emerging concept "rejects the idea that our only options to save the planet are to mitigate or adapt to the impacts of climate change and other environmental damage".¹ Instead, we need to take steps to enhance natural systems and emerging green technologies to restore the world's ecosystems and forests, conserve and rebuild soils, improve farming practices, restore wildlife populations, and rid the world's oceans of plastics. While continuing efforts to decarbonize our economy is still important, restoring our Earth is also necessary.

The Sierra Club envisions a world where human beings live in harmony with nature. As the world's human population approaches 9.5 billion in the

next 30 years, global demand for food, fiber and energy must be met with minimal increases in the consumption of land, water and other natural resources. Consumers and, businesses must recognize the importance of sustainability as an important principle. Investment counsellors are beginning to recognize that their fiduciary duty includes a responsibility to favorably evaluate this commitment in managing their clients' assets. This principle is the foundation for the Sierra Club's Divestment Campaign. This principle must be applied to our daily lives.

Sustainable agriculture programs developed by land grant colleges and universities, including our Rutgers, focus on the practices and policies of producing and marketing food. Sustainable eat-

ing means that the food choices we make to maintain healthy bodies must also maintain a healthy environment. Dr. Charles Feldman, Prof. of Nutrition and Food Studies at Montclair State University, has proposed a Sustainable Food Practices Certificate Program. The curriculum explores the realm of food science to discover the impacts of food choices. Our meal choices influence what crops get planted, how they are packaged and distributed, and what gets thrown away – a cradle-to-grave perspective necessary to preserve our harmony with nature.



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Thanks for Your Support!

Supplied by our Fundraising Committee Chair, Ken Johanson

The New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club wishes to thank all those who provided the Chapter with financial support during 2020. This was a difficult year for all of us but, as in prior years, our members and supporters were there when we needed them the most. Listed below are the names of those who contributed \$100 or more during the calendar year. But please be assured that all contributions are very much appreciated, regardless of the amount.

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ISSUE COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Restoring Trust in Science Must be Highest Priority

From Mark Fukayama, our Toxicology Advisor (markexams@aol.com)

“Restore trust with the American people” is rightfully the first priority in President Biden’s National Strategy for the Covid-19 response announced the first full day of his presidency,¹ as public trust is essential for vaccine acceptance and reaching herd immunity. To ensure and maintain trust, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) stressed in its 2018 evidence-based framework for risk communication during a crisis that “Honesty and truthfulness should not be compromised”,² otherwise that trust will evaporate. Unfortunately, restoring trust in science will be a high hurdle as the past Trump administration did not abide by the CDC manual.

During the pandemic, fact-checking news organizations tracked some of former President Trump’s egregiously false and misleading claims about Covid-19, including statements to downplay the threat (99% of Covid-19 cases

“are totally harmless”,³ “If we stopped testing right now, we’d have very few cases, if any”,⁴) tout his leadership (“And we’ve done a fantastic job on this China virus, the invisible enemy”⁵), pitch ineffective and dangerous treatments (Hydroxychloroquine is “having some very good results”⁶) and blame others for the nation’s struggles (past administration at fault as “we inherited a broken test”, which is impossible as Covid-19 didn’t exist then?).

Early in the pandemic, the World Health Organization’s Director-General said that “We’re not just fighting an epidemic; we’re fighting an infodemic”, in recognizing the serious threat of misinformation to public health. In a report from Cornell University made public in October, albeit not peer reviewed, researchers identified and analyzed Covid-related media consisting of over 38 million articles and found former President Trump being men-

tioned in the largest share of the ‘infodemic’.⁸ The researchers concluded that former President Trump was likely the largest driver of the misinformation ‘infodemic’.

In addition to contributing to the ‘infodemic’, a report issued in October from the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis documents the Trump administration’s pattern of political interference in the Nation’s coronavirus response.⁹ Their actions included pressuring health experts to adopt the Administration’s talking points that conflicted with the science; criticizing, sidelining and firing experts who shared with the public accurate scientific information; altering, delaying, and suppressing guidance on testing, protecting children, reopening schools, voting safely, and other topics; authorizing questionable virus treatments over the objections of scientists; resisting efforts to ensure the safe

development of a vaccine; and diverting \$265 million from the CDC and Food and Drug Administration for an ad campaign weeks before Election Day.

To restore trust, President Biden’s national Covid-response strategy¹⁰ identifies key actions including establishing a national Covid-19 response structure where decision-making is driven by science and equity; conducting regular expert-led, science-based public briefings, public sharing of data around key response indicators, engaging the American people, and leading science-first public health campaigns, actions missing in the previous administration.

As we approach 500 thousand deaths and 30 million cases in the U.S., a silver lining from the crisis may be that, with President Biden’s key actions, the public will have a renewed appreciation of science. Hopefully, this renewed appre-

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“...public trust is essential for vaccine acceptance and reaching herd immunity.”

Remembering Len Frank

By Chapter Director Jeff Tittel, based mostly on an obituary supplied by the family

Len Frank was the founding member of the Club’s Northwest Jersey Group, later renamed the Skylands Group. He died Jan 17, aged 96, in Newton. Len’s passions included environmental preservation, hiking, stamp collecting, and local history. We remember especially his campaign to build and protect the Paulinskill Valley Trail, a rail-trail conversion in Sussex Co. It is the sixth longest trail in the state at 27 miles. Hikers will see plentiful wildlife, including bear, bobcat, mink and deer, and sightings of more than 100 species of birds have been documented.

I knew and worked with Len, protecting the Paulinskill Trail from widening, ATVs, and incursion by neighboring property owners. He was a founder and

first president of the Paulinskill Valley Trail Committee. He was also one of the leaders of the Chapter’s early effort to stop construction of Tocks Island Dam, which resulted in creation of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

With his wife Erica he backpacked all over America, climbed some of its highest mountains, and led many Sierra Club hikes in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York and California. Len will be missed but his legacy remains: whenever you experience the beautiful mountain wildernesses of northwestern New Jersey.



Remembering David Yennior

Since 2006, David has been our Recycling Issues Coordinator, later adding the roles of Passaic River Issues Coordinator and Chair of our Essex County Group, which he helped revive as our Gateway Group in 2011. He lived in Belleville, near the River, just upstream from Newark.

Steve Yafet’s article on p.4 will give you some idea of his tenacity in arguing for environmentally responsible rehabilitation of the badly-polluted Passaic River. Those of us who attended ExCom meetings for the last 15 years will remember his quiet calm and gentle smile, and his springing to action when topics of his interest came under discussion.

His family’s obituary reports that he was 73 years old, and is survived by his wife, Anne Hirs, four sons and seven grandchildren. Born in Almont MI, he attended Oakland University and later earned an MA in Sociology from Montclair State University, and a Cer-

tificate in Public Administration from Kean University. He taught history in West Orange before transitioning to a 36-year career as a Principal Probation Officer in Essex County, also serving as a Family Mediator for the NJ Judiciary. He loved music, supporting live jazz and blues, and enjoyed spending time outdoors and swing/ballroom dancing.

A fitting tribute might be this bit of a film review that he addressed to members of our Conservation Committee, dated Apr 26, 2020: “‘Planet of the Humans’ is staggering in its implications for the future. Realities must be faced, and director and narrator Jeff Gibbs sugarcoats nothing in compiling this look into where we are as a consumer-driven species, and just how ‘green’ are the Green Industries we all hoped would be our ticket to sustainability: <https://youtube/Zk11vI-7czE>.”



The Allure and the Danger of Solar Geoengineering

By Tony Hagen, member of our Editorial Board
hagenajohn@verizon.net



Summer 2020 in New Jersey was the [second hottest on record](#) (75.3°F), according to the state climatologist, and, if predictions on climate warming hold true, we're in for much worse in the years to come. Concerns are mounting that we may not achieve emissions reductions in time to avert cataclysmic weather events on a vaster scale than we already experience. This makes some scientists nervous that politicians, harried by public demands for quick solutions, may reach for short-term solutions such as solar geoengineering that may not have been fully investigated or demonstrated to be safe. Solar geoengineering has the potential to cool the planet and buy precious time to achieve carbon neutrality, but it's a temporary solution at best.

One form of solar geoengineering that is getting attention is the injection of aerosols into the stratosphere to bounce radiation back into space. In multiple publications, Alan Robock, co-director of the Rutgers Impact Studies of Climate Intervention Lab, has warned of the risks of this approach to mitigating climate change. Solar geoengineering could cause wild climate fluctuations, diminish the ozone layer, and add to ocean acidification, he warns. Nevertheless, funds are being invested to evaluate solar geoengineering as a tool for reducing climate warming.

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates is one proponent of this type of investigation and is financially supporting the Stratospheric Controlled Perturbation Experiment (SCoPEX) at Harvard. SCoPEX, led by Frank Keutsch, Ph.D., would involve a small-scale dispersal of particulate matter, or aerosol, to observe how it would behave in the stratosphere. The experiment would not involve actual solar geoengineering or climate manipulation but would help test the validity of solar geoengineering models, Keutsch explained. One of the principal goals of SCoPEX is to understand whether the particulate matter, in this case calcium carbonate, will disperse evenly. Uneven distribution would mean a likelihood of extreme hot and cold events if solar geoengineering were carried out on a global scale.

Keutsch approaches his work with a mixture of fascination and dread. His hope is that solar geoengineering never has to be used, and if world leaders start to give it serious consideration, he hopes that scientists will be allowed enough time to do a proper analysis. His confidence in either of those outcomes is low. He likens solar geoengineering to opioids. Solar geoengineering may ease the pain of rapid climate change, but it won't solve the underlying problem of CO₂ buildup in the atmosphere, and humans may become "addicted" to solar geoengineering and fail to aggressively pursue emissions reduction, he says. "We all know the risks of opioids, right? What happens if you go down that road is that things just get worse and worse."

Sulfates are considered one possible

candidate for solar geoengineering because they have been observed to have cooling effects after being spewed into the air by volcanic eruptions. Keutsch and his Harvard team chose to experiment with calcium carbonate instead. Sulfates are known to [contribute](#) to ocean acidification, diminish the protective ozone layer, and corrode and damage aircraft. Calcium carbonate may cause fewer of these problems, and its natural abundance on the planet may mean fewer surprises when injected into the stratosphere. For example, when chlorofluorocarbons were first used in manufacturing, scientists had no idea they would damage the ozone layer, Keutsch noted. "They were looked at as being entirely chemically inert. You have to be very wary if you put something new into our system.

The SCoPEX experiment would use a high-altitude balloon to lift a platform driven by a propeller that would disperse the particulate matter along a 100-meter-wide path a kilometer long. The platform would then travel back through the aerosol cloud to record dispersal patterns (aerosol microphysics), chemical reactions, and small-scale stratospheric turbulence. There would be no release of particulate matter during a preliminary test of the equipment this June in Sweden.

Actual solar geoengineering would require activity on a much larger scale. Robock has suggested that military refueling planes with payload capacities of up to 160 tons could disperse aerosols in the atmosphere. Other ideas for doing this are wilder: building high-strength aluminum or carbon/epoxy towers, more than five miles high, to pump particulate matter into the stratosphere.

In advance of actual tests, a lot can be modeled on Earth to predict what will happen, but it's still just modeling. Keutsch's lab has done its best to simulate outcomes, "but do I have faith that I can really model the complexity of the stratosphere? Absolutely not, and in addition, there's a bunch of other actions that we didn't even look at," Keutsch said.

Just as environmental justice in New Jersey is intended to protect inner city residents from a disproportionate share of the harms of pollution and development, Keutsch hopes for participation from the "Global South," developing nations that have contributed far less to global warming and should not have to suffer ill effects of solar geoengineering without a say in how it is done. "I think the last thing they want is people in the West telling them, again, "Oh, don't worry. We know how to do this," Keutsch said.

To learn more about SCoPEX, click [here](#). To read Robock's paper on options for implementing solar geoengineering, click [here](#).

SCoPEX: <https://www.keutschgroup.com/scopex>

Robock's paper: <http://climate.envsci.rutgers.edu/pdf/practicality8NoFig3.pdf>

The Chapter Warmly Welcomes Our New Volunteers!

By Richard Isaac • Richard.Isaac@Sierraclub.org



I'm glad to say that our Chapter continues to gain more activists holding an array of positions, so let me introduce some of our newest ones!

• Yamika Ketu, Divestment Issues Coordinator

Yamika has worked in the public sector to promote clean growth campaigns in the tri-state area. She has just completed a Master's degree in economic policy with a focus on sustainable development, and is interested in the economic aspect of climate change. So she anticipates getting involved in the Club's divestment initiatives — already signing up to the Divest NJ website — as well as advocating for the use of renewables and the building of green infrastructure.

• Michael Competielle, Sound Pollution Issues Coordinator

Michael is an independent documentary filmmaker and writer, interested in environmental and ecological activism. Besides helping us with sound pollution issues, he offers his services of filming events, creating informational videos, editing, and digital uploads. He requests our guidance, and we look forward to providing it!

• Devharsh Trivedi, Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO) Committee Member

New to the Club, Devharsh is a second year PhD student living in Jersey City. As a child, he developed a strong sense

of environmentalism, and is passionate about protecting the planet and our ecosystem. He loves hiking and kayaking.

• Zachary Rose, ICO Committee Youth Partnership Coordinator

Also new to the Club, Zachary is a high school history teacher in Point Pleasant, spending a lot of his free time in the outdoors. He has hiked, biked, kayaked, and canoed most of his life and looks forward to starting some new adventures with the rest of the ICO Committee.

• Julia Marchese, ICO Committee Member

Currently a student at the Fashion Institute of Technology, Julia discovered a love of the outdoors when she started hiking, a few years ago. This passion led her to minor in ethics and sustainability, along with a certificate in wildlife and forestry conservation. Fun fact: She will try to hike the Pacific Northwest Trail in the summer of 2021!

• Oscar Nazar, ICO Committee Social Media/Communications Chair

An ICO Committee member for a few months, Oscar has taken on this additional role. His passion for the outdoors began in college after jumping headfirst into backpacking and mountaineering, seeing not only the beauty of nature but also witnessing how fragile it is. Having grown up in an urban area, he is specially motivated to offer city kids the early opportunity to experience nature.

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YOU HAVE MORE TO GIVE THAN YOU KNOW

Maybe you can't make a gift to protect the environment during your lifetime, but you can become a financial hero by remembering the Sierra Club in your will. You can even direct your gift to a special Club program or to the New Jersey Chapter.

For information about making a bequest to the New Jersey Chapter call Paul Sanderson at 908-233-2414

Resolutions – Approved by the Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) in January and February, 2021; also some main topics of discussion:

January: Elections and Appointments: Rich Isaac was elected to a 6th year as Chapter Chair, and all the other officers listed on p.12 were appointed or re-appointed with the approval of the ExCom. Nominations for Issue Coordinators are made by the Conservation Chair, Greg Gorman. A newcomer is **Yamika Ketu, Divestment Issues Advisor**. Renée Pollard, Joe Testa and Ken Johanson began new three-year terms as **Chapter-wide (at large) elected members of ExCom**. We reauthorized the **option of electronic voting for Chapter officers** in the coming Fall. We authorized initiation of possible **legal action to oppose a Safavieh megawarehouse** proposed for farmland in Franklin Twp (Sussex Co). Dari Buva-nova, Chair of the Committee for Inspiring Connections Outdoors, is organizing an **online film festival as a fundraiser**, and Stan Greberis is putting together a virtual event to provide our **annual awards**, which are normally made at a social gathering in November – that was cancelled in 2020.

February: We approved the additional **new officers** mentioned in Rich Isaac's Chapter Chair message on this page, plus **Wael Kanj as Chapter Membership Co-Chair**. We also discussed (and strongly approved) collaborating with the Iron-bound Community Corporation in fighting the Aries Waste Facility – which threatens an Economic and Social Justice Community (Newark) with the venting of a wide variety of pollutants, including heavy metals and volatile organic chemicals.

A variety of Club books, notecards, badges and clothing is available from www.sierraclub.org/store

My Winter Project: Testing the Assunpink for Road Salt

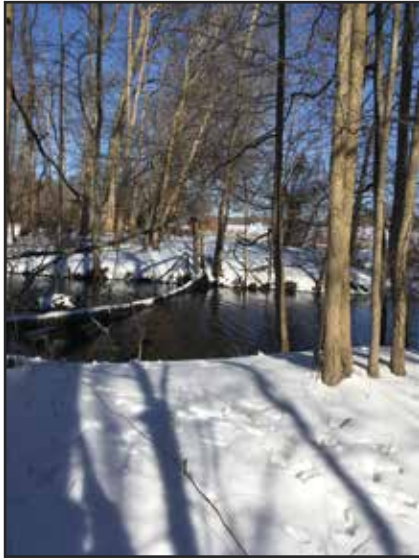
By Joanne Pannone, Chair of our Central Jersey Group (jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com)

I live on a narrow road adjacent to the Assunpink Creek (Mercer Co). I don't know how much salt is spread on my road to keep it ice-free during snow events but I know that whatever isn't absorbed in to the shoulder must drain into the Creek.

I've read the press release "Sierra Club: Road Salt-It's Snow Joke" (January 16, 2020) which is quite educational. It says that the "snow that is dumped into our waterways after snow events contains toxic chemicals such as benzene - and other volatile organic compounds - , hydrocarbons and many more." And 2021 is bringing snow and tens of thousands of tons of salt and brine. I asked a local landscaper how much salt he has used with his two trucks for 2021. Almost thirty tons and it is only Feb 8th.

The article goes on to say that Gov. Murphy made a decision to brine our roads even on sunny days, "hurting the environment and resulting in lead leeching out of old water pipes. Murphy says that he wants to get the lead out of our drinking water and out of our schools, but over-salting only makes our lead problems worse."

We trust that the water that comes out of our spigot is safe. I remember being at 4H Camp and asking the kids what we would do if all the water got polluted. A ten-year-old boy responded, enthusiastically, "we'll drink juice." People fail to see how fragile and threatened by pollution and climate change our water is. Too much flooding and ero-



sion is caused when rain gets trapped on hard surfaces, flows into our sewers, and sends pollution into our waterways. New stormwater regulations will be released this March but it's going to take a lot of funding to get them implemented.

Trees are valued for the amount of polluted stormwater they soak up. The Sierra Club and the Delaware Riverkeeper are currently working with the Hamilton Zoning Board to control the flooding that is expected from the removal of woodlands along Sweetbriar Rd (adjacent to the Assunpink) for a solar farm project.

I am participating in a water sampling project by The Watershed, testing for road salt contamination. Once salt is in the water there is no way to remove it. It takes only one teaspoon to permanently pollute five gallons of water. Salt causes corrosion of infrastructure and vehicles, and poisoning of plants and fish. When swallowed it can be irritating and cause stomach distress. When walked in it can burn your skin or paws.

Salt is cheap. Alternatives are not. It will take decades for salt levels in freshwater systems to be diluted from rain and snow events. There are alternatives that are much safer to use and not as corrosive.

I hope my test data input will help tighten legislation to improve the way we treat our roads and save our drinking water, not to mention our planet.

I look forward to the bluebirds' return in March.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

PSEG Wants More Subsidies, So Open Your Wallets – Again

From a press release issued on Jan 21, and edited by George Moffatt

Public Service Electric and Gas (PSEG) is back again, cup in hand, for another \$300 million in taxpayer subsidies — on top of the \$300 million they received last year.

According to a tax report by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, in 2018 PSEG received \$9.7 billion in revenues and made \$1.8 billion in profits, yet the company paid no federal taxes. That calculates as an 18% profit.

According to [reports completed](#) by Levitan & Associates, PSEG may not need the full \$300 million annual subsidy. Last year, for example, the BPU staff found that, to make them look less profitable, PSEG charged certain expenses against revenue that it shouldn't have.

Critics claim that while use of electricity has dropped temporarily dropped because of the pandemic, power usage will go up again, especially as electric cars replace gasoline-powered cars.

The BPU should deny this request because it will just become excess profit: dividends to PSEG's stockholders. The subsidy would be better spent on developing solar and offshore wind facilities to create clean, renewable energy and create new green jobs.

The subsidies are part of an application by PSEG Nuclear LLC and the Exelon Generation Co, which are seeking a Zero Emission Certificate for their three nuclear power plants in Salem County.

Passaic River Protection after David Yennior

By Steven Yafet, of our Gateway Group (syafet@gmail.com)

Dave Yennior has been the Club's Passaic River Issues Coordinator for the last ten years. His passing was commemorated in a somber meeting of the Passaic River Citizens' Advisory Group (CAG) on January 14. CAG facilitator Doug Sarno noted that working together for years on end creates friendships, and working with a shared passion creates closer friendships. He praised Dave as a CAG leader who had the courage to say the things that needed to be said.

Years ago, at an early CAG meeting when several remediation strategies were being considered, the EPA presented a plan for minimal dredging, and capping the river-bottom with a thick rubber blanket. Dave challenged the idea, saying that the technique had never been tried on a tidal river at the scale of the Passaic. For example, the danger of puncture from boats and boat anchors is not known, nor the danger of corrosion from the River's many pollutants. The EPA spokesperson then quietly withdrew the rubber cap proposal, and Dave's insistence on dredging was returned to consideration.

In 2016 the EPA announced its "Record of Decision", based on a cost-benefit analysis. Jeff Tittel criticized it in a Club press release (<https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/press-releases/0627>). Following further negotiations with polluters on the remediation plan, dredging is now scheduled to begin in 2022.

For most of the 8.3 miles below the

Diamond Alkali Superfund site, dredging will be to a depth of just 2.5 feet, followed by sand capping. But sampling shows that contamination extends to much greater depths, and monitoring will be needed for years. Only near the River's outlet into Newark Bay will dredging be deeper. Dredging will take years. For example, it took five years to dredge 2.8 million cubic yards from the Hudson River in the cleanup of General Electric's PCBs. The Passaic River contains 3.5 million cubic yards of similarly contaminated substrate.

In December the EPA released a Five-Year Review of the Diamond Alkali factory site – which had been sealed in the 1980s. The site seal and its protection is holding, according to the report.

Also mentioned at the CAG meeting: the Riverside Industrial Park Superfund site, also adjacent to the River, had a deadline for public comments extended several times. The comment period is now closed, signaling that the EPA is moving to the next phase.

The main topic of the Jan 4 CAG meeting was a presentation by NJ Fish and Wildlife of drawings for a very attractive six acre "riparian park" along the river in East Newark. F&W is in final negotiations with responsible parties to restore the river bank: replacing some of an 8-mile concrete channel with a natural edge. It will be wonderful for birds. Dave would be pleased.

Passaic River CAG: <http://www.our-passaic.org>

MEMBER'S CONTRIBUTION – REGARDING THE LNG TERMINAL PROPOSED FOR GIBBSTOWN

Light in the Night

By Richard Puglisi, of our Hunterdon-Warren Group (richp@cmpmail.com)

At 10pm on a quiet Saturday night in December, 1970, my cousin Don and I had just seen the latest action movie at the Lane Theater in New Dorp on Staten Island NY. My dad came in his old leaded gas-guzzling car to drive us home, first to Don's home in the then-secluded Annadale section.

I remember that the night was especially dark. But suddenly, as we approached his house, the sky lit up for a few seconds as if someone had turned on the sun.

When we got home and switched on our television, we learned that a powerful explosion had ripped through a portion of the Humble Oil & Refining Co. facility in Linden NJ. The blast originated in a catalyst reactor at the plant. While no one was killed, there were many injuries.

The power of that industrial explosion remains in my mind. Years later I heard of how J. Robert Oppenheimer, developer of the atomic bomb, responded to its first test detonation in the New Mexico desert: he thought of a line from the Bhagavad-Gita, "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds."

Three years after the Humble Oil explosion, another industrial disaster rocked Staten Island: a 600,000-bar-

rel LNG tank was being repaired and a fire broke out. Trapped natural gas fueled the fire and led to an explosion that killed forty workers.

Fast forward to today, Dec 9, 2020: the Delaware River Basin Commission has approved siting an LNG export terminal in Gibbstown NJ (Gloucester Co). LNG processed at a facility in Wyalusing PA will be transported in trucks or rail cars, over 200 miles of a densely populated route to a terminal in Gibbstown, for shipment overseas.

I have listened as many environment groups and concerned individuals voiced their opposition to this project. One Gibbstown woman in particular expressed concern for the safety of her two young sons. It was at that moment that I was reminded of the light in the night. I look to the Sierra Club for guidance!

Footnotes

<https://www.nytimes.com/1970/12/06/archives/ma-ny-hurt-in-jersey-blast-metropolitan-area-jolted-many-injured-in.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/1973/02/11/archives/43-workers-buried-in-huge-gas-tank-in-explosion-and-fire-on-staten.html>

2021 is an Election Year for the entire NJ State Legislature as well as the Governor. Our Political Committee is already at work producing a questionnaire for the candidates, evaluating their responses, interviewing them, and deciding on endorsements. Club members are more than welcome to contribute: please contact your Group's Political Chair and/or John Kashwick, Chapter Political Chair (political.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org).

Remedy for NJ's Rising Ocean and Subsiding Land?

By George Moffatt, Communications Chair of our Jersey Shore Group

It was a novel idea: After Hurricane Sandy, one battered coastal municipality proposed that when riverfront homeowners replaced deteriorating bulkheads, they must be higher to keep the flooding river literally "at bay." Some property owners, however, would rather "make do" than build expensive bulkheads. Also, the town would still flood until all bulk heads were replaced, or if adjacent towns did not raise their bulkheads. And higher bayside bulkheads would prevent hurricane-driven ocean waves that breach the town's sea walls from draining into the river. The town quietly tabled the ordinance.

It was an expensive idea. The Army Corps of Engineers developed five flood plans after Hurricane Sandy. The most ambitious, costing \$119 billion, was a six-mile seawall from Monmouth Beach to Sandy Hook, across the Hudson and Raritan Rivers, and ending at the Rockaways. Three other Corps plans, costing between \$43 billion to \$47 billion, involved smaller barriers across New York City waterways, but no barriers were included for New Jersey. The fifth plan called for the old standby, earthen dikes. The Corps' plans were costly; they would block the normal outflows and storm runoff from the Raritan and Hudson Rivers; only storm surge was considered, not climate change's expected higher ocean levels; and the harbor barriers would deflect northeasters' floodwaters to other unprotected NY and NJ coastal communities. The Corps quietly withdrew its plans.

It's a groundbreaking idea. New Jersey's \$300 million Blue Acres Program, which started after Hurricane Sandy, involves buying 1,300 damaged and threatened homes in low-lying coastal and riverfront areas and converting the properties into open spaces. At least 1,000 properties have been bought so far. However, it takes several years from application to closing, often leaving homeowners stuck in damaged housing. Delays also encourage homeowners to accept FEMA's quicker insurance payouts which, after repairs, often drive up a house's future buyout costs. As for delays, one wag mischievously suggested the paperwork alone makes an excellent seawall. Blue Acres is working, but will it be enough?

It seemed a good idea. As gentle summer waves built up beaches at Sandy Hook, the National Park Service bulldozed the summer beach sand to bolster the dunes. Unfortunately, Hurricane Sandy's waves flowed unimpeded across the lowered beaches, breached the dunes,

and flowed into Sandy Hook Bay. Only a few Fort structures avoided flooding.

It's a persistent idea. Stabilize the beaches and dunes with dredged sand. But because many homes and other structures are too close to the ocean, both the too-narrow beaches and sand dunes eventually wash away. New Jersey has spent billions of dollars over the years for beach and dune repairs, which never provide permanent protection. Yet coastal towns continue clamoring for millions more in taxpayers' bailouts, including a current \$52 million replenishment project in Monmouth County. Only dredging companies relish the problem.

It's a dirty little secret. A recent study (1) shows that most Americans favor restricting buildings in flood-prone areas. But home builders and developers oppose tougher restrictions, so local officials allow development, reap the property taxes, then pick the taxpayers' pockets for repairs after a disaster. In gratitude, they restrict summer parking and beach access.

It was a facetious idea. When reporters asked Dery Bennett, an outspoken environmentalist, how barrier island towns fared after a hurricane, his answer always was "Who cares? They shouldn't be there in the first place." He once suggested that all oceanfront development be at least a half-mile from high tide lines. But since the width of most NJ barrier islands were measured in blocks, not miles, his suggestion would eliminate future development. Which was probably his intent.

It's a definite fact. About five million years ago, "south" Jersey's coastline was about 125 miles east of today's shoreline, but "just" 20,000 years ago it was 75 miles west of where it is now. Also, about 11,000 years ago, when mile-high glaciers that compressed "north" Jersey began retreating, that area slowly rose up while "south" Jersey started sinking -- and still is. Think "glacial isostatic adjustment" or a child's seesaw. Bad news: South Jersey will be underwater again. (2) Good news: Not yet, but eventually..

What is the solution to the arm wrestling contest between land and sea? One home builder predicted, "No one has ever stormed city hall demanding stronger building codes. But the day they do, they'll get 'em." (1) Perhaps Dery was right, after all.

1. "Americans Back Tough Limits on Building in Fire and Flood Zones," New York Times, Sept. 4, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/climate/>

>continued on page 6

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES continued from page 1

Pinelands Commission. This means that Christie's appointees are still blocking environmental progress in those parts of the State.

We continue to ask Murphy to get rid of Christie's rollbacks like the DEP's Flood Hazard Rules, Waiver Rules, Wetland Rules, and CAFRA. The DEP should regulate CO2 and methane, and strengthen the Energy Master Plan and PACT Rules. NJ should be electrifying its transportation system, expanding the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line and building the South Jersey Line. The State needs to phase out natural gas in-

frastructure and move toward 100% solar and wind electrification of homes and businesses. Given the 12 fossil fuel projects still moving forward in the state, we still need a moratorium.

Some of the Governor's plans are good, but not good enough. We need to move faster and get to 100% renewable energy by 2035. Offshore wind could easily be retargeted to 12,000 MW by that year. Get rid of the cost cap for solar so that our solar program can see the sun again. Aiming for 100% electric vehicles by 2035 is a good first step, but now we need the regulations to get us there.

NJ Transit Still No. 1: Worst in the Nation!

From a press release issued on Jan 19, and edited by George Moffatt

With 351 mechanical breakdowns in 2019, NJ Transit (NJT) for the second year in a row had the most train failures of any transit system in the nation, according to the Federal Transit Administration. Meanwhile, the agency's buses ranked 8th worst -- with 8,514 mechanical failures. In 2018 there were 375 train breakdowns and 9,850 bus failures.

In 2020 NJT released a \$5.7 billion five-year capital plan and a 10-year strategic plan. The capital plan includes 16 areas of investment, but does not include electric buses until 2024.

Despite all of the commitments made by Gov. Murphy and NJT, the Sierra Club maintains that NJT's problems are a direct result of capital funding being slashed by 90 percent in the last 11 years to pay for current (operating) expenses. New Jersey's 2021 budget steals \$113 million from the Clean Energy Fund, including \$80 million earmarked for mass transit and \$30 million intended for electric vehicles. As a result, NJT continues each year to raid its capital improvement budget to fund operations and maintenance.

This is nothing new. Last year, the same budget juggling occurred, with \$460 million in capital funds taken for operations and maintenance, and an additional \$113 million taken from the Clean Energy Fund.

As NJ's mass transit budget is being strangled, the NJ Turnpike Authority's capital plan includes \$16 billion to widen the Parkway and Turnpike, two projects opposed by the Sierra Club. These two unnecessary projects will continue to support fossil-fueled cars, trucks, and busses, while reducing the quality of life for the lower income neighborhoods they traverse in Essex and Union Counties.

NJT has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic. In April 2020 it lost 98 percent of its ridership and \$29 million in fares, which usually accounts for 43 percent of operating income. Other states solve this problem with parking fees, value-added taxes on properties benefiting from transportation improvements, and even parking cash-out programs.

New Jersey's continued use of fossil-fueled busses, and expanded express highways, will especially increase the noise, dirt and air pollution in Environmental Justice communities. These residents, who must rely on mass transit, have already suffered enough from gas-guzzling and air-polluting traffic that have caused the worst air pollution in the nation.

The Sierra Club supports rapid conversion of all of NJ Transit's services to electric power. Other options to reduce automobile traffic are the proposed Middlesex-Ocean-Monmouth Light Rail Line and South Jersey Light Rail.

We also support the NJ Transit Reform Bill S2600 (Weinberg), which calls for increased transparency and accountability for NJT, the independence of NJT board members, establishes an Office of Customer Advocate, and requires greater detail for capital programs.

NJ Wind Port: Hot Air if LNG Proceeds

Edited from a Letter to the Editor of the South Jersey Times, by Chapter Director Jeff Tittel, and published on Dec 28

In another win for wind power, Gov. Phil Murphy has announced that a large manufacturing facility for offshore wind turbines will be built at the Port of Paulsboro, in Gloucester Co.

It would be the largest such plant in the country, and a step closer to making NJ offshore wind installations a reality. Operated by Ørsted/EEW manufacturing, it will create 500 good-paying "green jobs."

But the wind-port announcement is undermined by Gov. Murphy's representative to the Delaware River Basin Commission voting "yes" on a key permit for another port project that would bring a liquefied natural gas (LNG) export terminal to nearby Gibbstown.

More than ten years ago, then-Gov. Chris Christie signed the Offshore Wind Economic Development Act in Paulsboro. Then followed eight years of Christie-inaction. Now we are finally converting the Paulsboro site from a contaminated oil refinery and tank farm to a respectable offshore wind manufacturing facility.

If the Governor really wants New Jersey's clean-energy transformation to begin, he should stop the Gibbstown LNG terminal. LNG development takes the wind out of the sails of the Paulsboro announcement, especially since the exported gas is likely to come from fracking, a process fraught with climate impacts and public safety issues.

EARTH DAY continued from page 1

This systemic approach is necessary for the discovery of all aspects of global environmental degradation and its connection to our health. What the Covid-19 pandemic has taught us is that deforestation, wildlife trade, air and water pollution, human diets, climate change and other issues break down our natural systems, lead to fatal diseases, and disrupt our economy.

President Biden will host a Leaders' Climate Summit on Earth Day, April 22 -- to mark the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Paris Climate Accord. The purpose of the summit, and the mis-

sion of John Kerry, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, is to urge emitters to strengthen their national commitments to reduce the world's current carbon emissions. By curbing emissions as we "Restore the Earth", we successfully achieve our (Sierra Club) mission to "Protect the Planet."

1. <https://www.earthday.org/press-release/building-on-the-growth-and-resilience-of-the-environmental-movement-worldwide-earth-day-network-launches-re-store-our-earth-as-2021-theme/>

ciation may help us to confront another existential threat - climate change. With the growing understanding of Covid-19 as a threat to our health and of the need to vaccinate, public understanding of the threat of climate change must also grow. Restoring trust in science must be the primary goal moving forward for not only the pandemic, but also for climate change and all other health and environmental actions.¹¹

Footnotes:

- 1 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/National-Strategy-for-the-COVID-19-Response-and-Pandemic-Preparedness.pdf>
- 2 https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/ppt/CERC_Introduction.pdf
- 3 [https://www.politifact.com/article/2020/sep/27/10-donald-trumps-](https://www.politifact.com/article/2020/sep/27/10-donald-trumps-big-falsehoods-about-covid-19/)

- [big-falsehoods-about-covid-19/](https://www.politifact.com/article/2020/sep/27/10-donald-trumps-big-falsehoods-about-covid-19/)
- 4 Ibid N1
- 5 <https://www.factcheck.org/2020/10/timeline-of-trumps-covid-19-comments/>
- 6 <https://www.politifact.com/article/2020/sep/27/10-donald-trumps-big-falsehoods-about-covid-19/>
- 7 Ibid N6
- 8 <https://allianceforscience.cornell.edu/blog/2020/10/what-drove-the-covid-misinformation-infodemic/>
- 9 <https://coronavirus.house.gov/news/reports/select-subcommittee-analysis-shows-pattern-political-interference-trump-administration>
- 10 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/National-Strategy-for-the-COVID-19-Response-and-Pandemic-Preparedness.pdf>

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Bayonne's Fish Die-off Suggests Larger Problem

From a press release issued on Nov 24, and edited by Tony Hagen

People were mystified in the summer of 2020 when large numbers of dead Atlantic menhaden began washing up on the banks of the Hudson River. Observers reported menhaden were swimming around in circles and gasping for air. While many dead fish turned up in Bayonne in New Jersey, many thousands more lined the banks of the Hudson almost as far north as West Point and out on Long Island.

Environmental experts believe the cause is hypoxia, or suffocation brought on by low levels of dissolved oxygen in the water, usually the result of summer heat (which reduces the capacity for water to dissolve oxygen), combined sewage overflows (CSOs): leakage of stormwater into sewage pipes, exceeding the capacity of sewage plants to treat sewage - resulting in raw sewage entering waterways, and flushing of lawn fertilizer into storm drains. (The latter two processes result in eutrophication: bacterial blooms that consume dissolved oxygen.)

At certain times of the year, the menhaden, also known as "bunker," enter the Hudson in the millions to spawn and find food. They are themselves food for bald eagles, osprey, humpback whales and other animals. Die-offs do occur, and other, less-sensitive species of fish, such as perch, striped bass, and sturgeon, apparently were not affected this time.

The high recent mortality of menhaden is concerning, and officials from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection need to work with other environmental experts to establish the cause and put remediations into place. More development and higher rainfall are likely to make things worse.

New Jersey needs to establish total maximum loads for waterway pollutants, better improve stormwater management, and reversing the potential for CSOs. Wetland restoration and stream corridor improvement, rooftop gardens, and rooftop water storage can all be part of an integrated solution.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Federal \$ Will Rebuild Portal Bridge

Edited from a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Jan 14

Governor Murphy today touted the \$766.5 million Capital Investment Grant, an agreement between NJ Transit and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration. The total project cost is estimated to be \$1.88 billion. The rest of the funding is being provided by the Federal Highway Administration (\$57.1 million), the State of New Jersey (\$811 million) and Amtrak (\$261.5 million).

The money will pay for replacing the Portal Bridge, an ancient weak spot in the railroad tracks that carry Amtrak and NJ Transit trains over the Hackensack River, between Newark and NY Penn Station, just west of the Hudson River tunnels.

According to a report by the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, New Jersey had 2,357 bridges in need of repair in 2019, with an estimated cost of \$9.9 billion. But instead of fixing our dilapidated bridges, the Turnpike Authority wants to spend \$16 billion on widening projects that will increase greenhouse gases and traffic. That money could also go toward improving NJ Transit: extending the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Line, restoring the Monmouth Ocean Middlesex rail route, or building a South Jersey Light Rail Line between Camden and Glassboro/Bridgeton. Other preferable transportation solutions that would decrease traffic are Bus Rapid Transit and dedicated carpool lanes to encourage carpooling and thus fewer cars on the road.

Members in commuting distance of Trenton would be welcome to help run our state office: Call Taylor McFarland 609-656-7618

REPORT FROM TRENTON

\$14.5 Billion Corporate Giveaway Bill Passes Senate and Assembly

From press releases issued on Dec. 18 and 21, and edited by Irene Gnarra and Sylvia Kay

The Senate and Assembly have both passed economic recovery legislation: A4 (Pintor Marin) / S3295 (Ruiz, Sarlo), which establishes new policies concerning jobs, property development, community partnerships, small and early-stage businesses, State procurement and film production. The Senate voted 38-1-1 and the Assembly 68-11. Sadly, this bill offers one of the biggest corporate giveaways in state history. The Legislature rushed it through behind closed doors.

The bill is a successor to a billion-dollar tax incentive program that expired about 18 months ago. Governor Murphy, Senate President Sweeney, and Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin announced their intention to restart that program, offering tax breaks that might attract businesses and keep corporations in the state. Thus \$11.5 billion will be administered by Murphy's new Economic Development Administration for business incentives over the next seven years, plus tax breaks and incentives for the film industry that might bring the total to \$14.5 billion. The Office of Legislative Services did not complete its study of the fiscal impact because of "imperfect information on the number and the attributes of projects that would receive incentives."

What our lawmakers did is shameful. What we need is money for infrastructure upgrades (think NJ Transit and vital environmental programs) and for coronavirus relief. Indeed, the effects of the coronavirus should impact the distribution of funds! The world has changed since the Covid pandemic, such that subsidies to projects like shopping malls and office parks might be like shoveling money down the sewer. Instead of corporate subsidies, the state should consider effective ways to create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

We should be investing in our communities rather than corporate stockholders. How about the Clean Energy Fund, development of our transportation systems, maintaining water and sewer systems, or alleviating problems caused by climate change?

Here's how previous tax incentive programs have neither created jobs nor enhanced the economy: Since 2010, the Economic Development Authority wasted \$650 million on the jinxed American Dream/Xanadu Mall, which after 20 years has opened about 7% of its space; \$81 million went to Goya Foods to move 5 miles and create 9 additional jobs; \$250 million to Prudential to move a few blocks in Newark; a \$42 million tax break to Campbell's soup, which no longer operates a plant in NJ; \$261 million for the construction of the Revel Casino, which tanked twice, along with the economy in Atlantic City; \$14 million to Bayer Healthcare; \$12 million to Intrasphere Technologies, as well as to Holtec, Honeywell, and Lockheed Martin.

The Legislature failed to allow sufficient oversight and public scrutiny before passing the new bill. It does offer better worker protections than in the past. Some money will pay for the development of an offshore wind port, and there will be some help in dealing with brownfields and food deserts. But of all the billions, there's only \$50 million for small businesses.

Governor Murphy should not sign this bill. [As of Feb 7 he has not!] Rather, the Legislature should propose real solutions to create jobs and jumpstart our economy. Governor Murphy and his Administration must prioritize the interests of New Jersey residents over corporations.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Asm. Jim Kennedy: New Chair of Environment Committee

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Jan 12, and edited by Joe Testa

Assemblyman James Kennedy (D-22: Rahway and surrounds) is the new chair of the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee. He is an excellent choice to lead this committee.

We endorsed Kennedy in 2019 because of his activism in fighting climate change, cleaning up toxic sites, tackling our plastic pollution, and moving forward on renewable energy. He has sponsored bills to fund storm resiliency projects, protect our coastal areas, restrict toxic pesticides, and dedicate money for our parks and open space. We believe he will be the champion that New Jersey needs for our environment.

During his time in the Legislature (since 2016), Kennedy has spearheaded efforts to address open space preservation, renewable energy, natural resource restoration, eliminating combined sewer overflows, clean air and more. He is currently working to increase access to electric vehicle charging stations and to improve recycling efforts throughout the State.

New Jersey has fallen behind when it comes to reducing greenhouse gases, promoting electric vehicles, and adapting to climate change impacts. We are confident that Assemblyman Kennedy will be able to move important environmental bills through the Legislature and onto the Governor's desk.

REMEDY FOR NJ *continued from page 5*

flood-fire-building-restrictions.html, by Christopher Flavelle

2. "Geology and the Environment," Bernard W. Pipkin and D. D. Trent, Brook/Cole, United States, p. 323.

For more information, see: "8 Years

after Sandy, NJ Is More Vulnerable for the Next Superstorm," at <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2020/10/8-years-after-sandy-nj-more-vulnerable-for-next-superstorm>

GROUP News

FROM AROUND THE STATE

HOW TO IDENTIFY YOUR GROUP (BY COUNTY)

Skylands Group: Sussex & northern Warren
Hunterdon Warren Group: Hunterdon & southern Warren
North Jersey Group: Bergen & Passaic
Gateway Group: Essex
Hudson County Group: Hudson
Loantaka Group: Morris & Union
Central Jersey Group: Mercer
Raritan Valley Group: Somerset & Middlesex
Jersey Shore Group: Monmouth
Ocean County Group: Ocean
West Jersey Group: Burlington, Camden & Gloucester
South Jersey Group: Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland & Salem

These designations are approximate: members are welcome to participate in whichever Group(s) they find convenient

(Groups are arranged in rough geographical sequence: North to South)

SKYLANDS GROUP

(Sussex and northern Warren Counties)

Website: <http://SkylandsGroup.org> Or click from the NJ Chapter's web-site.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SkylandsNJSC>

E-mail: ggorman07419@embarqmail.com; Phone: 973-886-7950

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

Chair: (12/31/20)	Greg Gorman	ggorman07419@embarqmail.com
Vice Chair: (12/31/21)	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Secretary: (12/31/20)	Norene Haberski	norenehaberski2@gmail.com
Treasurer: (12/31/21)	Jeri Doherty	bjd8974@gmail.com
ExCom at large: (12/31/21)	Dave Alcock	dwhoob@hotmail.com
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	(12/31/21) Scott Dieman	
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Outreach Chair:	Joanne Morgan	jojommorgan@yahoo.com
Environmental Justice:	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Political Co-Chairs:	Nicole Guerrieri	SierraClubNicole@gmail.com
and:	Susan Williams	SkylandsGroup@gmail.com
Co-Publicity Chairs:	Jeri Doherty	bjd8974@gmail.com
and:	Joanne Morgan	jojommorgan@yahoo.com
Webmaster:	Nicole Guerrieri	SierraClubNicole@gmail.com

Open position available: Membership Chair – please contact Greg!

GENERAL MEETINGS: SECOND TUESDAY of each month and 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 serves the environmentally sensitive region of Sussex and Northern Warren Counties in Northwestern NJ.

We offer a variety of opportunities for the public to learn about and connect with their natural environment, including informative films and speakers at our monthly general meetings; exploration of the great outdoors on hikes, edible plant tours and picnics; public outreach via town tabling; and visits to schools to teach students about the environment. Our hope is to foster a love of and deep respect for our great outdoors.

As advocates, The Skylands Group works with other grassroots organizations to protect open spaces and water quality; promote clean energy; oppose privatization of our water and land public trust resources; and other local, national and global environmental issues as they arise.

We table annually at Luscroft Farm's Medicine Wheel Festival in May, host a summer picnic in July, conduct a Drive Electric Event in September at the GreenLife Market in Andover Township, and celebrate winter holidays in December. All our events are free of charge and open to the public.

CURRENT CAMPAIGNS: The Skylands Group advocates the protection of the Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area from logging done under the guise of creating "healthy forests."

The Skylands Group supports Green New Deal, Sunrise Movement, Sierra Club's Ready for 100 Campaign, and projects to move toward a Clean Energy Economy.

The Skylands Group supports the residents opposing ill-conceived dump sites such as those found in Wantage and Vernon.

The Skylands Group also opposes the Munsonhurst Planned Residential Development, which will adversely affect the ecology of a Natural Heritage Priority Site in Franklin Twp (Sussex Co).

HUNTERDON WARREN GROUP

(Hunterdon and southern Warren Counties)

Website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren>

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sierraclub.hunterdonwarren/>

OFFICERS:

Chair:	Jonathan Wall *	jonwall@jonwall.com
Vice Chair:	Celeste Martin *	onecentral@mac.com
Conservation Co-Chairs:	Nancy Carringer *	ncarringer@yahoo.com
and:	Chris Runion*	runionc3@gmail.com
Political Co-Chairs:	Karen Becker *	karbecker@gmail.com
and:	Amy Weeder *	aweeder@comcast.net
Children's Programs:	<i>Open Position! Please contact Jonathan if interested</i>	
Environmental & Social Justice:	Angela De Sapio *	angela.desapio@gmail.com
Highlands Issues Coordinator:	Cinny MacGonagle *	cmacgonagle@yahoo.com
Outings:	Jonathan Wall *	jonwall@jonwall.com
Treasurer, Secretary:	John Kashwick	jkashwick@gmail.com
Webmaster/Listmaster:	John Kashwick	jkashwick@gmail.com
Fundraising Chair:	<i>Open Position! Please contact Jonathan if interested</i>	
Social Media Coordinator:	<i>Open Position! Please contact Jonathan if interested</i>	

(* Group Executive Committee Member)

GENERAL MEETINGS: Meetings are virtual for the time being. Please check <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hunterdonwarren> for updates or to register for events. Zoom meeting info will be sent to registered participants a few days before the meeting.

April 6 (Wed): 7:30pm. Wolves: The Hearts of Many: Elke Duerr, interspecies communicator, award winning filmmaker, author, visual and oral story teller, photographer, fiber artist, workshop presenter and the founder of the non-profit organization Web of Life Foundation, W.O.L.F. will share stories about her life work documenting wolves and their place in the ecosystem. Enjoy an evening of fun, stories and information. Participants are encouraged to watch the wolf film here before the presentation-- <http://www.weboflifefoundation.net/documentary>

May 5 (Wed): 7:30pm. See You Later, Pollinator--Protecting the Monarch Butterfly and Other Pollinators Facing Extinction: The Monarch Butterfly population moves closer to extinction. Scientists estimate the Monarch population in the eastern U.S. has fallen about 80% since the mid-1990s, but the drop-off in the western U.S. has been even steeper. This is largely due to the destruction to the milkweed habitat along their migratory route. Abby Scher, Chair of the National Sierra Club Pollinator Protectors, will guide us through the steps we can take to plant gardens that attract the Monarch and how we can oppose the toxins that harm butterflies and other pollinators that are vital to our own health and food chain. Ms. Scher also serves as a Co-Chair on the Farm and Food Committee for the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter.

June 2 (Wed): 7:30pm. The Story of Stonewall: Sergio Moncada, Northeast Program Manager for National Parks Conservation Association, will speak on the process to get Stonewall National Monument in Manhattan designated by President Obama in 2016. Moncada will speak about nurturing public support to help fulfill the Park Service mission to include under-represented populations among our national park units. This program is co-sponsored by the NJ Sierra Club LGBTQ+ section.

OTHER EVENTS:

April 14 (Wed): Virtual Online Executive Committee/Planning Meeting. 7:30pm 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.

CURRENT ISSUES:

Oppose Mega-Warehouses: There are several massive warehouse projects that are proposed for Hunterdon and Warren Counties. We had some good news in January when the state rejected a plan for Franklin Township in Warren County to declare active farmland in need of "redevelopment" in order to give tax incentives for Safavieh to build a furniture warehouse. We are working with other groups to oppose these projects that threaten to spread industrial sprawl to our farms and natural areas. For more information, please contact Cinny MacGonagle at cmacgonagle@yahoo.com.

Dark Skies: Voorhees State Park in Hunterdon County is home to the NJAA Observatory which relies on dark skies. The Hunterdon Warren Group is initiating a campaign to have our county and local municipalities adopt stricter ordinances to reduce excessive light pollution which not only conflicts our view of the night sky but also wastes energy and harms wildlife and human health. Please contact John at jkashwick@gmail.com if you are interested in this issue.

Logging in Roaring Rock Park: The Brass Castle Creek runs through Roaring Rock Park in Washington Township in Warren County. The park is heavily wooded with steep slopes. We recently found out that the township has approved an ill-conceived Forest Management Plan for the park that will destroy many of the mature trees. We are looking for residents of the township and other hikers and anglers who may wish to join us in opposing this plan. Please contact please contact Cinny MacGonagle at cmacgonagle@yahoo.com if you would be willing to work with us on this issue.

NORTH JERSEY GROUP

(Bergen and Passaic Counties)

Website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/north-jersey>

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/NJSierraClub/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/northjerseysierraclub>

Twitter: @sierraclub_nj

Instagram: sierraclubnorth_nj

The duly elected nine-member Executive Committee benefits from the assistance of volunteers. If you are interested in participating at a planning level and/or as a member or leader of one of our committees (see the Committee Descriptions below), please contact the Group Co-Chairs or the Committee Chair.

North Jersey Group Officers

Co-Chair:	Diane Scarangella*	diascat@hotmail.com
Co-Chair:	Buddy Jenssen*	buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Buddy Jenssen*	buddy.jenssen@gmail.com
Secretary:	Laura Troy*	ltroy1019@gmail.com
Political Chair:	Sandi Liberti*	libertisandi@gmail.com

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GROUP NEWS continued from page 7

Outings Chair:	Mary Walsh*	north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Conservation Chair:	Mary Walsh*	north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Member:	Judy Greene*	jugreen547@gmail.com
Climate Change Chair:	Jeff Rapaport*	jefrap@optonline.net
Marketing/ Social Media Co-Chair:	Marie Mannino	mmannino@yahoo.com
Co-Chair:	Jan Barry*	janbarry61@hotmail.com
Youth Outreach Co-Chair:	SophiaNeuendorff	sophianeue@gmail.com
Co-Chair:	Vacant	
Diversity/Environmental Justice Chair/Co-Chair:	Vacant	
Contact:	Diane Scarangella*	diascat@hotmail.com
ExCom Member:	Bob Weiss*	bobweiss1967@gmail.com
Liaison, Raritan Valley Group:	Faris Jebara	faris.jebara@gmail.com
Liaison, Hudson Group:	Ninad Kashyap	ninadmkashyap@gmail.com
Liaison, NYC Group:	Hanna Atlas	h.atlas.425@gmail.com

*Elected North Jersey Group Executive Committee Members.

INITIATIVES: The North Jersey Group is committed to coalition building through outreach and planning with other Sierran Groups and with local and state non-profit organizations. Our collaborative initiatives focus upon (1) encouraging municipal resolutions that support town-level adoption of renewable energy strategies and the environmentally friendly development of affordable housing; (2) opposing gas-fueled plants and the construction of pipelines, transport terminals and the use of tankers and trains to transport Bakken oil, liquid natural gas and other dirty fuels; (3) advocating for renewable energy sources; (4) opposing commercialization and development of county, state and local parkland and open spaces; (5) advocating for removal not capping of contaminated soil on undeveloped public land and the restoration of that land to its natural state; (6) advocating for the clean-up of polluted waterways and for the transition to non-polluting sources of transport on the Hudson and other NJ/NYC waterways; (7) supporting access to affordable health care to address the harm done to the health of residents in environmental justice communities; (8) increasing group diversity, and (9) supporting the efforts of organizations who are “on the ground” in environmental justice communities.

We continue to focus our existing efforts upon fighting climate change; creating more opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy and appreciate nature; and collaborating with coalitions, such as Empower NJ and Don't Gas the Meadowlands, and with other New Jersey Groups to advocate for renewable energy and a moratorium on fossil fuel usage, preserve our waterways and protect our parklands.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Unless otherwise noted, meetings and outings are free, open to the general public. Events are announced via email and on our social media. Due to the virus, we have been forced to cancel our in-person events. We are in process of planning virtual events so, please check our Meetup page, Facebook page, or website for newly posted meetings and events. Please email our Co-Chairs or contact one of the committee chairs listed above, if you have suggestions for events or if you would like to be added to our email list.

The North Jersey Group seeks members for the following volunteer committees and welcomes collaboration with other Groups. Please contact the Committee Contacts listed below if you are interested in joining dedicated people taking meaningful action in Bergen and Passaic Counties and throughout the state.

COMMITTEE OPENINGS

Conservation Committee: We assist people in the community with grassroots efforts to prevent destruction of natural habitat in Bergen and Passaic Counties and surrounding areas. Help us by finding and reviewing public records, circulating petitions, going door-to-door with lawn signs, speaking in public meetings, and attending and organizing press conferences. The choice of activity is up to you. No activity or time commitment is too small. Make your voice heard. If interested contact Mary at north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org or Judy at jugreen547@gmail.com.

Climate Change Committee: The objectives of the Climate Change Committee are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, discourage new fossil fuel facilities (like the Meadowlands and NJ Transit gas-powered plants) and encourage the use of renewable energy. Slowing down climate change may give scientists time to find permanent solutions to this crisis. Our committee works in conjunction with other environmental groups to support a transition to renewable energy. Your help could bring us a little closer to a cleaner, safer, and healthier world for our children and grandchildren – be a part of it! For more information or to sign up, contact Jeff at jefrap@optonline.net.

Political Action Committee: We recommend candidates for political office in Bergen, Passaic and Hudson Counties (where there is overlap). Learn where our elected officials and candidates for office stand on environmental issues by examining their voting records and interviewing them. You can phone bank or otherwise work from your home, or visit candidates and their representatives in their offices. Canvass door-to-door for endorsed candidates. The way you contribute is up to you. But know there is work to do. If interested, contact Sandi at libertisandi@gmail.com.

Event Planning and Membership Committee: We are in need of a Committee Chair and additional members, especially those with experience and interest in setting up virtual events! Interested in conducting an event on a particular topic? Like speaking with other people about environmental issues and concerns? This committee is for you! We seek someone who is dedicated to the environment, believes in the Sierra Club, is enthused about the actions our North Jersey Group is taking and wants to help us move forward through program planning and the recruitment of new members. If interested contact Diane at diascat@hotmail.com or Buddy at Buddy.Jenssen@gmail.com

Marketing/Social Media Committee: Are you creative? Do you love graphic design, writing press releases and short stories, contacting newspapers and radio. and using social media? We need you! If interested, contact Marie at mmannino@yahoo.com and Jan at janbarry61@hotmail.com.

Outings Committee: Organize and lead hikes, snowshoeing, kayaking and other of your favorite outdoor activities on trails and locations of your choice. Trips can vary

in length, level of difficulty and location. If interested, contact Mary at north.outings.chair@newjersey.sierraclub.org or Buddy at buddy.jenssen@gmail.com.

Youth Outreach: This Committee plans nature walks in local parks for elementary and middle school youth. It outreaches to high schools and youth organizations to encourage local teenagers to become organizers of these events, so that all can appreciate the value of the outdoors. The committee creates liaisons with local schools, parents, other youth groups, and Sierra Club certified hike leaders to help young people learn to appreciate and protect the planet as they explore the natural world. The Committee uses social media to expand participation, as the group conforms to the goals of the national Sierra Club. If you are interested, please contact Sophia at sophianeue@gmail.com.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Environmental Justice Committee: Do you want to act to support social, racial, economic and environmental justice? Do you believe that the Sierra Club must become more diverse and that our effectiveness is tied to increased inclusivity? If yes, then our new Diversity, Inclusion and Environmental Justice Committee is the place for you! The North Jersey Chapter promotes awareness of state, national, and international-level efforts addressing environmental justice and inequality at large. If you are interested in participating in the activities of this committee contact Diane at diascat@hotmail.com

GATEWAY GROUP

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

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, the founder and co-chair of our group, Dave Yennior passed away in December. The members of the Executive Committee remember him for his dedication to the Sierra Club and especially to the Gateway Group, which he founded ten years ago. We send our condolences to his wife, Anne Hirs, and his children.

Please contact any of the leaders below if you are interested in joining our campaigns to protect the environment. There are several Group officer positions open.

Website: <http://sierraclub.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/Gateway-Group-NJ-Sierra-Club/128998363842782>.

OFFICERS:

Chair:	Bill Beren*	862-283-8754	Beren1@verizon.net
Vice-Chair:	Open Position!		
Conserv'n Chr:	Caroline Kane*	646-961-9003	ckane678@verizon.net
Secretary & Treasurer:	Open Position!		
Program Co-Chairs:	Suzanne Trimel*	973-509-8335	suzanne.trimel@gmail.com
and:	Steven Yafet	908-354-2537	syafet@gmail.com
Publicity Chair:	Open Position!		
Political Chair:	Bill Beren		Beren1@verizon.net
Fundraising Chair:	Rachel Tarzia	908-531-2168	Rtarzia6@outlook.com
Membership Chair:	Steven Yafet*	908-354-2537	syafet@gmail.com
Newark Issues Chair:	Jamie Bruno	973-393-2154	jjjjebruno@gmail.com
Elizabeth Issues:	Open Position!		
Recycling:	Open Position!		
Passaic River Issues:	Steven Yafet (see above)		
Outings Chair:	Dionne Howe	206-430-0288	dionnelhowe@gmail.com
Webmaster:	Christy Morganstein	732-718-4343	christy@medartsweb.com

*Group Executive Committee

Please contact our Program Co-Chairs if you have ideas or suggestions for a meeting-topic or program, or conservation project.

We are very grateful for the many contributions of Suzanne Trimel, Anna Whitley, John Beadle, Barbara Conover, ZaSah Khademi, Bill Chappel, Steven Yafet, Anne Hirs, Paula Borenstein, and Brenda Toyloy. We invite YOU to join in our activism and ask your support as we strive to address the many issues facing our urban and suburban communities. Note the several vacant positions listed above.

CONSERVATION NEWS: The Gateway Group has been supporting the Coalition to Save South Mountain Reservation in their fight to defeat an Essex County plan to build a 500 seat, \$8.8M amphitheater on South Mountain Reservation property adjacent to the Turtle Back Zoo. Termed a “Conservation Pavilion”, the project is being sold as necessary to provide “interactive” conservation programs, but the County also plans for it to be rented out to outside groups. The Amphitheater project appears to be on hold as the result of the Covid Pandemic, as no funds have been allocated by the state or the county for this purpose.

The Group is also working with local activists in West Orange to preserve a wooded hillside property at the corner of Mt Pleasant Ave & Ridge Road.

HUDSON COUNTY GROUP

Website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/hudson-county>

E-mail: hudsonsierraclub@gmail.com

Facebook: @HCSierraClub

Instagram: @HCSierraClub

Twitter: @HCSierraClub

OFFICERS: (*=ExCom)

Chair:	Pramod Raju*	modisone@gmail.com
Secretary:	Patricia Hilliard*	hilliard_patricia@hotmail.com
Treasurer:	Patricia Hilliard*	hilliard_patricia@hotmail.com
Conservation Chair:	Patricia Hilliard*	hilliard_patricia@hotmail.com
Political Chair:	Pramod Raju*	modisone@gmail.com
Delegate to Chapter:	Open Position!	
Membership:	Open Position!	
Publicity:	Steve Krinsky*	stevekrinsky@comcast.net
Outings / Events:	Steve Krinsky*	stevekrinsky@comcast.net
At-Large:	Nancy Booth*	boothnancy2011@hotmail.com

At-Large: Vanessa Smith* vanes777@live.com
Instagram: Open Position!
Web-Master: Open Position!

Meeting Schedule: Hudson group will be meeting remotely for the duration of the shutdown. Members are still welcome and encouraged to join the meetings. Contact any of the officers for details about how to join the meeting.

Outings: Sadly, we are forced to cancel are upcoming walks and hikes. Please stay tuned online! We can't wait to get back outside with everybody.

Hudson County Group Goals/Projects for 2021

Sustainability/Youth/Education. Sustainability is a catch-all which includes recycling, CSOs, green infrastructure, transportation and more. Two areas where we can make an immediate impact locally are composting and renewable energy. We need to create a task force to educate/promote composting and switching to renewable energy; individually, in our schools, and in our municipalities. Schools-- including area colleges-- are a great place to start. Environmental clubs can push their schools to adopt sustainable practices. This should also include an education campaign on the circular economy and related things like eco-bricking, etc. These issues tend to appeal to young people, who are a major target of these efforts!

Protect our parks from privatization and illegal diversion: Jeff Tittel has elegantly referred to Liberty State Park as "our Yosemite." For three decades advocates for "The People's Park" have fought one privatization scheme after another. To protect the park once and for all, must pass an un-amended Liberty State Park Protection Act. In our densely populated cities where land is scarce, greedy developers and bought-off politicians continue to attempt to divert our precious parkland for their various schemes.

Environmental Justice. Because pollution and environmental degradation tend to harm low-income communities, often people of color, we must include social justice issues in all of our work. Towards that end, we propose that an EJ committee plan an online public forum-- hopefully in the next month or so-- which taps into chapter resources as well connecting with social justice groups in Hudson County. One goal of this forum is to give participants an action plan: What can people do?

Political Action. In addition to preparing for upcoming election in NJ, we should target 2 or 3 issues/bills to support-- and do outreach to public officials in support of these. First, the Liberty State Park Protection Act. Second, the Clean Energy Equity Act. Third, continue to push Governor Murphy-- and the state legislature-- to oppose fossil fuel infrastructure. In particular, we support the efforts of the DGTM coalition in support of renewable energy for NJ Transit's new power plant in Kearny.

Communications/Social Media. We need to create a team of social media activists who can utilize a number of formats to promote environmental issues and campaigns. The main focus would be using Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and TicToc as well as email and the SC website. More traditional press-- online & print-- should be used as well.

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

Liberty State Park - The Liberty State Park Protection Act would end efforts to privatize the park once and for all! Keep "The People's Park" free and green! Billionaire Paul Fireman wants to steal the magnificent Caven Point Natural Area for his ultra-exclusive golf course in the latest attempt to privatize the park. The state can use funds from an Exxon toxic settlement to develop the final 234 acres, but only as passive recreation or open space. This still leaves plenty of room for development of active recreation like ballfields in this vast space. The DEP is gathering public input on their proposal for the interior of the park. They are making every effort to include all communities and are willing to consider various suggestions, including recreation.

No Gas Plant in the Meadowlands: The environmental movement in NJ has scored a huge victory! NJ Transit is now working toward renewable energy instead of building a gas-fired power plant on a toxic site on a floodplain in Kearny. Trains can be powered with solar and wind power combined with battery backup storage. This is being done successfully all around the world. Sierra Club is an integral part of the Don't Gas the Meadowlands coalition, which led the campaign.

Climate Change: You thought Hurricane Sandy was fun? New studies show that Hudson County will be harder hit by sea-level rise and catastrophic flooding than any other NJ county. Sierra has joined with other leading environmental groups to form the Hudson Climate Coalition. Together, we will demand change from politicians at each level of government. We will keep the pressure on state and federal legislators to demand support for the Green New Deal and related policies. We are working to build awareness and grass roots support as we transition to 100% renewable energy locally by the year 2050, or sooner. Get involved and be part of the solution.

Environmental Justice: Low-income communities and black and brown communities suffer the most from environmental destruction: elevated levels of cancer, respiratory disease, lead poisoning, and a host of other problems. Hudson County has had more than its share of environmental poisoning for generations. We must stand up for social justice in these communities!

Parks and Greenways: Sierra Club is working to support and expand green spaces in Hudson County. In Jersey City, we want to connect existing parks and trails, as part of the Crossroads Campaign. This includes Skyway Park on the Hackensack River, the newly proposed-- and very exciting-- Essex-Hudson Greenway, the Bergen Arches, the 6th Street Embankment and more. Skyway Park is especially important: It is a former toxic landfill successfully converted into open space and will be a key link to Hackensack River Walkway, which someday will run from one end of the county to the other. We want to see the shoreline along the Hackensack River become Hudson County's "Green Coast."

Braddock Park: Stopping illegal diversion of open space in this beautiful county park. Twenty years ago the town of North Bergen re-placed a ballfield and the adjacent parking lot with 17 "temporary" school trailers. Sierra Club has joined a legal challenge to this illegal diversion of parkland in Braddock Park. The lawsuit would require Green Acres to enforce its own regulations. The town of North Bergen and Hudson County would be required to finally remove the trailers and create safe, permanent classrooms for the pre-school. Learn how you can help.

LOANTAKA GROUP

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

Website: <http://sierraclub.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:	Paul Sanderson	908-233-2414	loantakachair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Treasurer:	Paul Sanderson	908-233-2414	paulmsanderson@aol.com
Secretary:	Jonathan Connor	201-463-7636	Jon78921@outlook.com
Conser. Chair:	Allen Swanson	201-715-7780	afswanson@hotmail.com
Political Chair:	Priti Thakker	973-752-1100	thakkerp@icloud.com
Programs:	Bob Zega	973-349-8001	rjzega@yahoo.com
Fundraising Chair:	Eric Hausker	732-669-0719	ericbiomass@gmail.com
Outings Chair:	Kevin O'Brien	908-403-0900	kbkob@aol.com
Publicity Chair:	Wynn Johanson	908-464-0442	johansons@comcast.net
Membership:	Open Position!		
Webmaster:	Wynn Johanson	908-464-0442	johansons@comcast.net
Upper Passaic River Coordinator:	Kathy O'Leary	908-647-2870	kolearypcnj@gmail.com

If you might be interested in getting involved, please attend one of our Executive Committee Meetings: the first Tuesday of each month -- and get to know us. Or participate in one of our General Meetings on the second Wednesday of the month. There are no obligations and there will be no pressure. Currently all meetings are being held by Zoom technology.

More of our activities are at: <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>

To join our e-mailing list, go to:

<http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/nj-loantaka-news.html>

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS: are held on the FIRST TUESDAY of the month: 7pm, by Zoom technology. All members are welcome. There are currently some 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 -- 7:30 pm by Zoom. Learn something new and make some new friends. We'd welcome the chance to meet you and to introduce ourselves, even by Zoom. Please see the schedule, below, and join us! Instructions for access are posted on our website: <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

Currently, all Executive Committee and General Meetings are being held safely by Zoom technology; this is expected to continue until further notice.

Apr 14: Please check the Loantaka website.

May 12: Please check the Loantaka website.

June 9: Please check the Loantaka website.

ACTIVITIES: The Loantaka Group is working with concerned citizens and local environmental organizations to protect open space and wildlife habitat in Morris and Union Counties, and to safeguard the water resources on which we all depend. In addition, the Group is actively involved in State-wide initiatives involving air quality, transportation, and environmental legislation. Volunteers are always welcome. Call Paul at 908-233-2414.

Consult our website (<http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/loantaka/>) for more information.

CENTRAL JERSEY GROUP

(Mercer County and neighboring towns in adjoining counties)

Website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/central-jersey>. Or click from the NJ Chapter's website. In normal times we would offer a variety of outings! Not now -- until the pandemic is over!

OFFICERS:

Group Chair:	Joanne Pannone	jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
Group Vice Chair:	Xiaoping Duxiaping	du@yahoo.com
Secretary:	Leona Fluck	leona@pineypaddlers.com
Outings Coordinators:	George and Leona Fluck	leona@pineypaddlers.com
Treasurer:	Arlene Ceterskiva	2c2015@gmail.com
Programs:	Joanne Pannone	jpatmeadowbrook@gmail.com
Conservation Chair:	Kip Cherry	KipAtTheSierraClub@gmail.com
Recycling:	Sylvia Kay	Sylviakay222@gmail.com
Trails:	Dave Mattek	MattekDC@aol.com

We look forward to in-person get-togethers but until then our monthly lecture series will remain virtual. The Central Jersey Group will post any future activities on the New Jersey Sierra Club website, Central Group Facebook page, and Pineypaddlers.com. Stay home, be patient, stay safe! And don't stop lobbying for our environment!

This quarter we are working on the Gibbstown port, the Hughes development on Rte 1 and Quakerbridge Rd, Synergy Solar in Hamilton: Sweetbriar Ave, new Quickcheck on the Miry Run Watershed - for flooding potential, and the Tennessee Gas Compressor Station proposed for the Highlands Preservation Area. We are always ready to lobby at the State House for laws to fight polluters and climate change. We need a moratorium on pipelines and fossil fuel projects. To save the planet, support Empower New Jersey!

Get our news by joining the Sierra Club and signing up to receive our our email.

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RARITAN VALLEY GROUP

(Middlesex and Somerset Counties and surrounding areas)

Officers:

Group Chair:	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
Conservation Chair:	Gary Frederick	609-203-3382 garyfrederick@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Membership:	John Miraglia	johnworks3@aol.com
Political Chair:	Teresa Callahan	terry.callahan15@gmail.com
Publicity Chair:	<i>Open Position!</i>	
Treasurer:	S. Pasricha	spjersey@gmail.com
Webmaster:	Paul Ehrlich	p.w.ehrlich-nj@outlook.com
Outings/Events Co-Chairs:	S. Pasricha, Brianna Cerione and Bernadette Maher	
College Liaison:	<i>Open position!</i>	
Bee affairs:	Brenda Bradley	
Group Executive Committee Members:	Gary Frederick, S. Pasricha, Teresa Callahan, Kevin Corcoran, and Paul Ehrlich	

Our monthly membership meetings are typically held on the FOURTH WEDNESDAY of each month in New Brunswick. We discuss environmental news impacting Middlesex & Somerset Counties, plus discuss upcoming events, speakers, volunteer efforts, etc. To confirm please contact the RVG Chair.

The issues of interest to our communities include but are not limited to:

1. Opposition to gas and oil pipelines and new fossil fuel infrastructure that threaten the air, water and our health.
2. Conservation and protection of the Raritan River basin area.
3. Passage of and responsible enforcement of environmentally friendly ordinances.
4. Land conservation, preservation of open space and protection of Green Acres.

News from the Raritan Valley area:

- NESE pipeline permits were rejected by the NJDEP.
- Williams Transco threatens to truck fracked liquid natural gas (LNG).
- NJ Transit's Kearny fracked gas power plant plans were withdrawn.
- Alfieri began removing trees at the Hidden Oak Woods development in the northern-most Pine Barrens outlier of East Brunswick, an area once known as Hickory Swamp. Thank you to our friends from the Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership in New Brunswick & the Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership in Milltown for filing an amicus brief in the township's lawsuit.
- Spotted lantern flies have been spotted in Somerset County and don't need to be reported. Middlesex County invasions can be reported to the NJ DOA.
- The Bedminster Trump National Golf Course situated in the Highlands Preservation Area needs new water permits from the NJ Water Supply Authority. www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/blog/2020/10/trump-s-bedminster-golf-course-water-hearing-delayed-again
- Branchburg passed an ordinance to prohibit standalone warehouses.
- The NJDEP upgraded regulations for Category 1 waterways to protect water supplies for NJ residents.
- Flemington and Raritan Township MUA sued the NJDEP to downgrade C1 protections for the South Branch Raritan River. Towns downstream in Somerset & Middlesex Counties may face degraded water quality if these areas are developed.

We encourage you to get involved by attending your town's planning and zoning board meetings. If you are aware of development proposals in your town that may have a negative environmental impact, please contact us and join our meetings. We are also interested in any environmental news or events affecting Middlesex and Somerset counties and invite you to submit those items as well.

Like us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/RaritanGroupNJSC

JERSEY SHORE GROUP

(Monmouth County, approximately)

Website: <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/Jersey-Shore/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JerseyShoreNJSC/>

OFFICERS:

Group Chair:	Dennis Anderson	732-970-4327	dennisaza@aol.com
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Conservation Co-Chairs:	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com
and:	Bob Sandberg	732-241-7757	Sandberg00@gmail.com
and:	Stan Greberis	732-431-0882	grapefruit@msn.com
Treasurer:	Jim Baye		jimbaye@optonline.net
Political Co-Chairs:	Robin & Harold Zullo		drzullo@optonline.net
Outings Chair:	John Luard	732-708-9221	John.Luard@gmail.com
Outings Leaders:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Membership Chair:	Wael Kanj		
Program Chair:	Mary Reilly	908-731-2466	Mary@reillygreen.com
Climate Chair:	Steve Miller	732-671-5917	SteveMiller@Comcast.net
Fund-raising Co-Chairs:	Mark Fukayama	908-902-1555	markexams@aol.com
and:	Faith Teitelbaum	732-513-5445	faithtei@aol.com
Communications Chair:	Wael Kanj		
Education Chair:	George Moffatt	732-544-1726	gmoffattgt@aol.com
High School Coordin:	<i>Open Position!</i>		
Letter-writing Committee:	Mark Fukayama, Steve Miller and Stan Greberis		

JERSEY SHORE GROUP HAPPENINGS:

Stormwater Management Campaign Update: Long Branch, Ocean Township and Eatontown have activists that are working to put some of The Watershed Institute's enhancements into their town's new stormwater ordinance. The Watershed Institute is collecting all the good news so we should be able to have a recap soon. By the time this newsletter comes out each town will have submitted their new rules.

The Stormwater Campaign has evolved into the NJ Chapter Green Infrastructure Campaign so please look it up on the chapter website. Our goal is to educate towns and have some Green Infrastructure, such as rain gardens, built on public property as demonstration projects. If you're interested in getting your town involved, contact the campaign on our website.

Thank you all for your support of this important matter.

MEMBER MEETINGS: We are presenting Zoom webinars, usually on the fourth Monday of every month at 7pm. We will bring to you -- in the comfort and safety of your living room -- knowledgeable guest speakers and interesting videos on important environmental issues. In addition, we will keep you advised of local environmental problems.

Presently scheduled Webinars:

March 22: Wilderness Experiences and Values: Using memories and photos of wild areas (local and throughout North America) John Luard will lead a forum about how wilderness influences our lives. Is visiting wilderness rewarding? If wild areas are especially valuable to you, why? How do experiences in the wild inform our Sierra Club work? Details and registration will be on our website.

April 19: David vs Goliath on Forever Chemicals. PFAS, "Forever Chemicals," used in manufacturing, currently contaminate natural resources and 500 New Jersey water systems. Al Telsey, Environmental Attorney, and Mark Fukayama, Ph.D. Toxicologist will educate about PFAS and how the Township of Carneys Point is using the legal system to fight for environmental justice. Registration will be on our website.

May 22: Save Money While Cutting Your Carbon Footprint: Details TBA, see our website.

June 28: Yes, You Can; Celebrating Volunteers: We will celebrate our members and friends for their environmental work during the year. Details and registration will be on our website.

Stay well. An environmentalist is a terrible thing to waste.

Speakers' Contact: Mary Reilly, 908-731-2466 or Mary@reillygreen.com

If you are not getting Emails announcing our webinars, please send one to Wael at waelkanj@gmail.com, or sign up at our website.

OCEAN COUNTY GROUP

Website: MEETUP.COM/SIERRA-CLUB-OCEAN-GROUP

OFFICERS:

Acting Chair & Conservation Chair:	Margit Meissner-Jackson	sylviaj1910@yahoo.com
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Outings & Envl Ed'n:	Terrance Brown	terrybrown@comcast.net
Recording Secretary:	Nancy Brown	nancybrown624@comcast.net
Political Chair:	Margaret Mary Piccolo	gogreenp1@yahoo.com
Membership Chairs:	Ray & Cathy Kozakerich	raykozak@comcast.net
Group ExCom Members:	William Rodgers	
and:	Peter Leighton	JPLeighton1@verizon.net
and:	Joyce Isaza	realtymstr@aol.com
Hospitality, Fundraising, Publicity, Webmaster:	all open positions!	

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS: Normally held bi-monthly at the Skywalk Cafe in Toms River, except July and August.

ACTIVITIES & ISSUES: Our group is focused on a number of critical issues. Locally and state-wide we are fighting a myriad of over-development issues. Along with our allies we are working hard to save Barnegat Bay and The Pinelands, two natural gems in Ocean County.

WEST JERSEY GROUP

(Camden, Gloucester and Burlington Counties, approximately)

Website: <http://sierraclub.org/new-jersey/West-Jersey/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC> Log on and Like Us!
Follow us on Twitter @WJsierraclub and Instagram @wjsierraclub

OFFICERS:

Group Chair:	Gina Carola	856-848-8831	ginaceee@verizon.net
Vice-Chair:	Frank Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Secretary:	Ellen Zinni		efzin4@aol.com
Treasurer:	Trish Clements		patri3210@gmail.com
Publicity Chair:	Anne Caridi		annecaridi@yahoo.com
Political Chair:	Linda Rubiano		Linda_Maritza@yahoo.com
Pinelands Rep:	Lee Snyder		pinelands1@hotmail.com
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Delegate at Large:	Aida Ayala		thunderwolfgalaxy@yahoo.com
Membership Chair:	Mike Brown	856-547-9221	eyebrown@verizon.net
Fundraising Chair:	<i>Open position! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831</i>		
Smart Growth Chair:	<i>Open position! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831</i>		
Programs Chair:	<i>Open position! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831</i>		
Outings Chair:	<i>Open position! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831</i>		
Media & Communications:	Tony Hagen		hagenajohn@verizon.net
Social Media Coord's:	Open position! Call Gina to volunteer: 856-848-8831		

Special Notice: in accordance with Sierra Club's policy in effect due to the spread of the coronavirus, all NJ Chapter and Group in-person meetings and outings are canceled until further notice. We hope to resume soon.

If you would like to receive an email with a virtual presentation, please send an email to ginaceee@verizon.net and I will add you to our email list.

Please check the West Group's Facebook page for updates.

<https://www.facebook.com/WestJerseyGroupNJSC>

In the meantime, please wear your mask, continue to physically distance and stay safe and well.

Contact Gina at 856-848-8831, ginaceee@verizon.net to get involved in any of our many initiatives on climate change.

SOUTH JERSEY GROUP

(Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem Counties, approximately)

OFFICERS:

Group, Outings Chair: Tom Boghosian 267-930-8583 boghosian1@verizon.net
Vice-Chair: Open Position!
Conservation Chair: Open Position!
Political Chair, Calendars: Dick Colby 609-965-4453 dick.colby@stockton.edu
Membership Chair: Open Position!
Secretary/Treasurer: Julie Akers 609-432-3280 julieakers56@gmail.com

The officers listed above are wearing out (at least with respect to the Club), and would more than welcome new blood, with ideas and energy for local projects. One alternative is to fold back into the West Jersey Group (from which we originated in the mid-1970s). Please contact Dick Colby for a discussion. Otherwise, our consuming conservation issue, adopted just after the Group was founded, continues to be protection of the Great Egg Harbor Wild & Scenic River, and continues to demand the energies of those few officers who remain active both within the Sierra Club and in the 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 this Newsletter, and offer a point of contact for Club members in South Jersey who want help with local issues. We strongly recommend GEHWA's website for keeping up with local issues, and for links to many other local, regional, state and national environmental organizations: www.gehwa.org. If you have topics (and places) for meetings, 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 and meetings, please e-mail dick.colby@stockton.edu. 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, but currently held on-line.

Tom Boghosian is an avid kayaker (- certified as a Maine Guide!), both ocean-going and in fresh waters, possibly willing to lead trips. Julie Akers also works with Atlantic County Friends of the Parks, and is President of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association.

Current Issues: (1) We've been blue-blazing the southern portion of what will be a continuous footpath between the southern and northern tips of New Jersey. Many others (and other groups) are contributing. Detailed maps and route descriptions are now available on the Chapter's website. Dick has also produced a brochure describing 15 historic walks in Egg Harbor City. Every municipality ought to have its own such brochure: this is a hint for you to try your hand at it! (2) There is "movement" on the prospect for a Community Solar experiment in South Jersey, to be operated by the Atlantic County Utilities Authority, fueled by new legislation that prods the BPU, and a new president of Atlantic City Electric Co. (3) With the passage of Statewide plastic- and paper-bag-restricting legislation, there's educational work to be done! (4 etc.) Many other South Jersey issues are described in previous issues of this Newsletter, available on the Chapter website.

Some Allied Organizations, likely meeting by Zoom:

Mar 23 and May 25: (alternating fourth Tuesdays), 6:30pm: Great Egg Harbor Watershed Assn. Activities centered on protecting the Wild & Scenic Recreational River. All are welcome. If a physical meeting takes place, it would be at the Warren Fox Nature Center (WFNC*), Atlantic County Park in Estell Manor, Milepost 15 on NJ Rte 50, 3 1/2 miles south of Mays Landing. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280.

Mar 3, Apr 7, May 5 and June 2: (first Wednesdays), 6:30pm: Atlantic County Friends of the Parks: Monthly meetings of a group which works to improve and promote the Atlantic County Park System. All are welcome. WFNC* if the meeting would be physical. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280. Website: <https://www.facebook.com/Atlantic-County-Friends-of-the-Parks>.

Apr 14 and June 9: (alternate second Wednesdays), 7pm: Bi-monthly meeting of Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries (another "Partnership River" under federal protection): Meeting place (if physical): George Luciano Center, Cumberland County College. Cumberland County development issues are commonly discussed, including art, historical and recreational attributes of the area. Contact Karla Rossini (CU) at 609-774-5853 or karla.rossini@cumauriceriver.org. Website: www.cumauriceriver.org.

Apr 21 and June 16: (alternate third Wednesdays), 6:30pm: Great Egg Harbor Scenic and Recreational River Council: Representatives of the 12 municipalities discuss and implement river management strategies. Open to the public. By Zoom or at the WFNC*. Contact Julie Akers, 609-432-3280.

Mar 24, Apr 28, May 26 and June 23: (fourth Wednesdays), 7pm: Atlantic Audubon Society is a lively member-organization with strong environmental programs and an excellent monthly on-line newsletter. Membership is free. Meetings (if physical) are in the Galloway Twp Library, 306 E Jimmie Leeds Rd. www.AtlanticAudubon.org.

SINGLES SECTION

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

Website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/sierra-singles>

OFFICERS:

Interim Co-Chairs: Ron Pate and Jimi Oleksiak
Outings Chair: Joyce Haddad
Conservation Chair: Position Open!
Treasurer: Position Open!

Social Chair: Position Open!

Vice Social Chair: Jeff Sovelove

Programs: Position Open!

Publicity: Position Open!

Membership: Position Open!

Nominations: Position Open!

Executive committee members: Rozanna Fanelli, Joyce Haddad, Ron Pate, and Jeff Sovelove.

We're a friendly, active group of individuals who enjoy hiking, biking, canoeing/kayaking, as well as a variety of social and cultural activities throughout the year. This section was created to offer a variety of singles-oriented activities to NJ Sierra Club members.

PURPOSE: Our purpose is to acquaint single adults with the natural history and beauty of the surrounding area, to promote environmental conservation, and to provide recreational and social activities for members. All activities shall be consistent with Sierra Club purposes. We are not a local group; we're a statewide additional "layer" of club involvement. Everyone is welcome to join us.

COMMUNICATIONS: The best way to be notified of upcoming events is to join our free listserv. Anyone may subscribe by going to: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/NJ-SINGLES-NEWS.html> and clicking on "Join or leave the list." You may subscribe and unsubscribe at will; directions on how to unsubscribe are at the bottom of each announcement. We recommend joining the listserv to receive announcements for all of our events a few weeks before each event. Events are also listed on the online calendar on the Chapter's web site: sierraclub.org/new-jersey. You can also "like" us on Facebook: "Singles Group New Jersey Sierra Club." Activities will also be posted on Meetup.

SOCIAL GATHERINGS:

Social dinners: Join us for dinner the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm, at a variety of restaurants in different locations. Jimi Oleksiak, the leader, will announce the details one week in advance through a listserv message. An RSVP will be required as described in the announcement.

HIKES AND OTHER OUTINGS: The Singles Section sponsors many outings, ranging from beginners' level of hikes to advanced difficulty. Some of these are listed in the Outings section of this newsletter; others will be announced on our listserv, the Chapter's online calendar, Facebook and Meetup. Hikes are for anybody who is capable of hiking the distance described. It is up to the person who wants to hike to determine their own ability and limits. All hikers are required to sign a liability waiver.

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER (LGBTQ) SECTION

Our mission of this Section is to support Sierra Club goals, and to promote environmental activism and social equity. We are an inclusive group and all are welcome to join our events.

Website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/LGBT/>

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/njsierraclub>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/njsierralgbt>

OFFICERS:

Chair:	William Parish *	whparishiv@gmail.com
Secretary:	John Kashwick *	jkashwick@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Jonathan Wall *	docjdwall@gmail.com
Outings Chair:	Robert Zitzman *	robertmzi@yahoo.com
Fundraising:	Matthew Lang *	matthewjlang58@gmail.com
Webmaster/Listmaster:	John Kashwick *	jkashwick@gmail.com

(* Section Executive Committee Member)

June 2 (Wed): — The Story of Stonewall: In recognition of Pride Month, Sergio Moncada, Northeast Program Manager for National Parks Conservation Association, will speak on the process to get Stonewall National Monument in Manhattan designated by President Obama in 2016. Moncada will speak about nurturing public support for creation of the monument and fulfilling the mission of the Park Service to include under-represented populations among our national park units. This program is co-sponsored by the Hunterdon Warren Group. This meeting will be held on Zoom. Please visit <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/> to register for the event.

Please check web site for further meetings and events.

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).

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. Please find more news at Website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/senior-section>.

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

Paul Ehrlich is the Vice-Chair (phehrlich-NJ@outlook.com). He vice-edits the Essays Section of the Senior Section web site. These essays are written by members of the NJ Sierra Club, and focus on environmental issues, including reports of environment-related news that may not be easily accessed by many members, opinions on how to deal with environmental problems, and support/criticism of environmental actions taken

>continued on page 12

by organizations and individuals. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT YOU'D LIKE TO TELL A LARGE AUDIENCE? Send an essay to Arline and Paul for editing and approval and it will be posted on our web site.

SIERRA STUDENT COALITION

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

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

ICO: INSPIRING CONNECTIONS OUTDOORS

(previously: Introducing Children to the Outdoors; before that: Inner-City Outings) (another Chapter-wide special interest activity with the motto: No Child Left Inside!)

Chair: Daria Buvanova ICOchair@newjersey.sierraclub.org
Other Officers: Amanda Gaglio, Oscar Nazar (Social Media/Communications Chair), Mike Depardieu, Zachary Rose (Youth Partnership Coordinator), Leila Marcovici, Tara Deaver, Julia Marchese, Devharsh Trivedi

New Jersey Inspiring Connections Outdoors - (NJ ICO) is dedicated to providing safe and fun wilderness trips for children and teenagers with limited access to the outdoors. Volunteer leaders collaborate with community partners to facilitate, lead, and

promote events that will educate and foster a love of nature and the outdoors for youth in New Jersey who may not otherwise have the opportunity or the means. The program works to reduce barriers by providing gear, transportation, trip fees, and leaders to create opportunities to explore, enjoy, and advocate for nature. The Chair welcomes inquiries from leaders of schools and other community organizations.



Organized outings continue to be proscribed until danger from Covid disease is relieved. Group Outings chairs may continue to be available to advise on local adventures that you can attempt individually and in family or other small groups.

Upcoming ExCom Meetings

All members are welcome to attend these monthly policy deliberations, held on **SECOND SATURDAYS**, almost certainly by Zoom, which accepts access from a computer, smartphone or telephone. 10am for the Conservation Committee; 1pm for ExCom. Details on access from our secretary: secretary@newjersey.sierraclub.org.

Dates: March 13, April 10, May 8 & June 12

SIERRA CLUB

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 Tim Sevener, Rail, Public Transit
 Paul Ehrlich, Transportation Air Quality Advisor
 Angela DeSapio, Bicycle Advisor
 Gary Frederick, Jordan Rosenbloom, Matthew Bewley

Fundraising Committee
 Ken Johanson, Chair
 Joan & George Denzer, Paul Sanderson, Joe Testa

Personnel Committee
 Rich Isaac Chair, John Kashwick, Paul Sanderson, Ken Johanson, Joan Denzer, Judy Minot, Faith Teitelbaum

Information Technology Committee
 Joe Testa Chair, Loraine Terrell, Abdel Alfahham, Sunil Somalwar

Finance Committee
 Paul Sanderson Chair, Sunil Somalwar, George Denzer, Ken Johanson, Jim Andreano

Nominating Committee
 Renée Pollard Chair, Joanne Pannone, John Kashwick, Renée Pollard, Maria Santiago, Allen Swanson

Elections Committee
 S. Pasricha Chair, Laura Bagwell, Mark Fukayama, John Kashwick

Facilities Committee (office, meeting sites)
 Paul Sanderson Chair, Laura Lynch, George & Joan Denzer, Sunil Somalwar

Green Infrastructure Team
 Allen Swanson, Chair, Allie Horn, Judy Minot, Faith Teitelbaum

Social Media Team
 Allie Horn, Thomas Chen, Pranet Commar, Mary Prachthausar

Volunteer Communications Committee
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* Indicates Chapter-wide elected ExCom members.

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Chapter Coordinator: Taylor McFarland
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Communications Coordinator: Megan Steele
Megan.Steele@SierraClub.org

If no one is in the office to take your call, please leave a message on the answering machine. Please SPELL YOUR LAST NAME, and state whether the phone number you leave is for daytime or evening.

Please share this newsletter with a non-member friend, inviting use of the form on this page

THE JERSEY Sierran

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Tree-sonist New Logging Legislation

Edited from an Op-Ed column by Chapter Director Jeff Tittel, and published Feb 3rd in the Bergen Record

Our public lands and forests are at risk for commercial logging and prescribed burn operations under legislation that is currently making its way through the Statehouse in Trenton. Three bills are in consideration -- that could clear-cut as much as 2 million acres of land held in the public trust, and burn an additional 60,000 acres a year. Destroying our forests undermines efforts to reduce climate-change impacts, and would add millions of tons of air pollutants, with serious health impacts.

New Jersey has prohibited logging on state forest lands since the early 1960s. Green Acres-funded land purchases are managed for wildlife conservation and recreation, not forestry and logging. In 2010, former Gov. Chris Christie opened land for forestry and logging. Now, under the Forest Stewardship bill (A4843), logging could take place in almost 2 million acres of open space, including State Forests, State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas, and county and municipal parks.

Our open spaces are held in the public trust and treasured by people across the state. A4843 would break that trust. Intact forests are needed to protect our water quality, especially in the Highlands and Pinelands regions. Both are protected by legislation passed specifically to preserve canopy forests and their streams and biodiversity — not to enable logging.

Logging invites invasive species and deer overpopulation. It changes the ecology, displacing important species like cerulean warblers. 75 species of neotropical songbirds would be impacted by this legislation, along with threatened and endangered species of bats.

Legislators must oppose this legislation lest we turn the Highlands and Pinelands into the Stumplands. A4843 would require towns and nonprofits that own open space to pay for management plans, and to hire loggers, so this legislation is an unfunded mandate. Money doesn't grow on trees!

The second of these logging bills, A4844, waives municipal approval of their Forest Stewardship Plans. Hundreds of towns have tree ordinances to prevent unnecessary logging, especially in the Highlands and Pinelands. The bill would bypass those ordinances. By eliminating oversight, it would sanction, for example, a plan for taking out 4% of the trees in an area to apply to every big canopy tree. There would be no penalties for incompetent forest stewardship, such as damage to threatened or endangered species or stream corridors.

The Prescribed Burn Bill, A4845, is the third of these monsters, causing air pollution and impacting public health and safety. It will have a major impact on climate because it mandates burns of 60,000 acres a year, including 50,000 acres in the Pinelands. This equates to hundreds of millions of tons of CO₂ released into the atmosphere.

Logging and prescribed burns will limit public access, and destroy natural resources that are held in the public trust. Thousands of people visit New Jersey's state parks, county parks and forests each weekend to hike, hunt, fish and experience wilderness. We urge our state legislators to spruce up and stop these disastrous bills.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

New Jersey Should Use Highway Widening Funds for Resiliency

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Nov 15, and edited by Tony Hagen

In May 2020 the NJ Turnpike Authority approved a [\\$24 billion construction plan](#) for highway widening projects along the Turnpike and Garden State Parkway, implementing cashless toll payment, and replacing a bridge over the Delaware River. What that plan doesn't do is address climate-change issues which include highway flooding.

The NJ Chapter of the Sierra Club would like to see this plan revamped to bring it into accord with the climate-change emergency. Instead of spending \$16 billion of the \$24 billion on highway widening, it would cost as little as \$4.5 billion to raise some of the state's most flood-prone roads: US Rte 40, NJ Rte 18, and I-287. New Jersey needs a comprehensive and holistic approach. The Department of Environmental Protection should update its rules and regulations to accommodate climate change. Our state is under siege, and this latest spending decision by the Turnpike Authority doesn't direct the money where it is most needed.

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

REPORT FROM TRENTON

SC Environmental Hero Sen. Weinberg to Retire

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Jan 13, and edited by Joe Testa

Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg (D-37) has announced her retirement from the state Senate at the end of her current term, in January, 2022. She has been a state Senator since 2005, and Majority Leader since 2012. During her time in the Legislature, she has championed critical legislation to protect Environmental Justice communities, reform NJ Transit, and hold polluters accountable. She was also prominent in the campaign to expand public access to public records.

Senator Weinberg has defended the environment against special interests, promoting clean air and water, and appropriate land uses, for decades. She has stood with us and has been willing to stand up to both political parties to do what's right.

She opposed the Xanadu Mall, fought the Meadowlands power plant, opposed "bomb" trains carrying Bakken crude oil, and supported legislation to protect Environmental Justice communities and hold polluters accountable. She worked to protect the Highlands, to promote renewable energy and clean transportation, and even stood up to her own party leadership and Governor in opposing the Fast Track Law.

NJ Transit has been a disaster for commuters; Senator Weinberg worked tirelessly to reform the agency. She opposed NJ Transit's attempt to site a natural gas power plant in the Meadowlands, successfully. She has a bill currently in the Legislature that would increase transparency and accountability for NJ Transit, allowing for a more open process.

She has stopped many bad bills over the decades while pushing through some of the most important environmental legislation. Her leadership on environmental and public health and safety issues has improved our everyday lives. Not least, she has also championed rights for women and the LGBTQ community. We can only hope that her successor is half as good on all these issues.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Senate and Assembly Pass Blue Acres Bill

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Jan. 11, and edited by Irène Gnarra

On January 11, the Senate and Assembly passed S3230 (Greenstein)/A5115 (Moriarty). The bill appropriates \$30,387,000 from constitutionally dedicated corporate business tax revenues to DEP for State acquisition of lands for recreation and conservation purposes, including Blue Acres projects. It was passed unanimously in both houses: Senate, 34-0 and Assembly, 75-0.

Governor Murphy should sign this legislation because it will help expand the Blue Acres Program, which is one of the most successful state programs for preserving our environment. It supports acquiring flood-prone properties and removing storm-damaged structures rather than repairing them. This would increase the amount of floodwater that can be absorbed. Then, wetlands and flood plains can be restored to their natural state, thereby mitigating flooding. This is important, given sea-level rise, said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.

According to a recent report, New Jersey is among the top ten fastest warming states in the country, with warming trends strongest along the coast. A DEP report shows that sea level in New Jersey could rise from the levels in 2000 to 2.6 feet by 2050, and between 5 and 8.8 feet by 2100. The report also delineates the extent to which New Jersey has already been affected disproportionately by climate change: Sea level rise projections in New Jersey are more than two times the global average. This is alarming because our barrier islands are only 3 feet above sea levels. While all reports point to extreme climate impacts, we continue to build in flood-prone areas. A recent Zillow report states that we are among the top three states for developing homes in risk zones.

This new legislation is an important step toward expanding and improving our Blue Acres Program, for state funding will be matched by federal money. In the past, federal money was used for buy-outs in only a few communities that were impacted by Hurricane Sandy, such as South River and Sayreville. The state program will allow New Jersey to help other towns along the coast, as well as communities inland, such as Wayne, Rockaway, Manville, and Oakland.

Funding our Blue Acres Program will help New Jersey become more resilient.

There's an electronic Chapter Alert Service for Environmental Action. Sign up at: <https://tinyurl.com/NJSC-alerts>. Also an e-mail updates signup: <https://tinyurl.com/NJSC-emailsub>.

Have you tried a portion (or more) of New Jersey's new Long Trail? High Point to Cape May Point! Its description (with maps) is now the most visited "post" on the Chapter website: <https://www.sierraclub.org/new-jersey/long-trail>.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Action Please: to Stop ATV Destruction of State Parks

Edited from a Letter to the Editor of CentralJersey.com, by Chapter Director Jeff Tittel, posted on Nov 27

Illegal off-road vehicle use continues to be a major problem in New Jersey, especially in environmentally sensitive areas like the Pinelands.

Cedar Lake State Park (Gloucester Co) and Wharton State Forest (Atlantic, Burlington & Camden Cos) are covered in tire marks and deep ruts from jeeps, dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). This is a statewide problem, but it is most acute and most seen in the Pinelands, where rare plants and sensitive animal habitats continue to be destroyed.

Responsibility falls on the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which for years has failed to adopt workable protections. State Law prohibits powered vehicles from off-road excursions on public land.

In 2016, DEP officials promised to deal with off-road vehicles in Wharton State Forest, but nothing has been done since. Their plan included increased enforcement, better signage and repairing the forest's sand roads. Motorized use would be prohibited in areas that have sustained too much damage.

But the devastation continues! Perhaps it would take increased penalties, better enforcement, and required education of ATV riders on what they can and can't do.

Sierra Club studies in other states have shown that legal ATV parks increase illegal ridership in the surrounding areas.

The damage continues, with the loss of endangered pine snakes, pitcher plants, swamp pink, rare orchids and many other species. The siltation and runoff alone hurts water quality and makes it harder for trout to lay eggs. Additionally, these vehicles contribute to air pollution.

In 2020, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a law that revised certain penalties for illegally operating snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes on public streets, highways and rights of way in violation of existing laws.

Not good enough! The DEP needs to impound vehicles used illegally, and to erect vehicle-barriers at footpath entryways.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Will New Jersey End the Black Bear Hunt?

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Dec. 7, and edited by Irene Gnarra

When he was running for Governor in 2017, Phil Murphy pledged to end the black bear hunt. But, until now, he has only succeeded in banning the hunt on state-owned properties. Last August he disregarded a petition by a coalition of state and national organizations, including the NJ Sierra Club, the Humane Society of the United States and The Animal Legal Defense Fund, to suspend the bear hunt so as to protect public health. Our argument was that of out-of-state bounty hunters would not quarantine and would not follow CDC guidelines for reducing spread of the coronavirus. The only concession to the pandemic was the elimination of check stations where hunters would present their bear for registration by state personnel.

The good news is that, at an October 5 press conference on Covid-19, Gov. Murphy announced that the State's current Comprehensive Black Bear Management Policy would expire in June 2021, and that the Fish and Game Council would develop a non-lethal management plan.

As in hunts from 2013 to 2019, the 2020 goal was the elimination of 30% of the bear population. Once again, hunters could kill two black bears in the season, one in the October segment and one in December (unlike states such as Pennsylvania, with a far larger black bear population that is spread over a relatively vast territory, where hunters may bag just one adult bear). In 2020, hunters in Sussex, Warren, Morris, Passaic, Hunterdon and Somerset counties harvested 410 bears. The total for 2013-2020 is 3028 bears eliminated.

How many black bears are there in NJ? How does the government determine the number of bears to cull? Statistics are limited. Three lawmakers in Sussex County estimate that there are now 3500 bears in Northern New Jersey. The DEP's website claims a population of approximately 3278 in 2005, and fewer than 4000 in 2015.

The NJ Sierra Club regrets the shift in power that removes DEP from oversight and deprives the Commissioner of the power to stop the bear hunt. Now in charge, will the Fish and Game Council stop the hunt?

We submitted comments on the proposed 2020-2021 Administrative Game Code 7:25-5, which question when, under what circumstances, in what locations, by what means, and in what numbers, gamebirds, game animals and other fur-bearing animals may be pursued, killed or kept in possession. Once again we ask the state to transition from hunting to science-based non-lethal management strategies that emphasize education, prioritize public safety and welfare, and foster the coexistence of people and bears in the most densely populated state in the nation.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

DEP's Land Use PACT Doesn't Protect Us from Climate Threats

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Jan 4, and edited by Joe Testa

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection has just released a Framework of Potential Amendments to Land Resource Protection Rules as part of NJ Protecting against Climate Threats (NJ PACT). The rules are expected to be formally proposed this Spring, and would extend DEP authority to areas that are projected to be partially or completely flooded in coming decades due to sea-level rise.

The plan fails to actually protect against climate threats; it has enough loopholes for developers to drive bulldozers through. New Jersey is one of the most flood-prone and climate-impacted states. The DEP is strengthening rules and identifying problems and risk zones, but isn't coming up with the comprehensive rules we need to address our problems. It needs to look at the coast holistically to determine where we need buyouts or elevations, and where people should be allowed to build. It needs the guts to say 'no' to developments, but instead it is proposing a voluntary program. Its mantra is still 'build at your own risk', so people will still be building in the wrong places, putting themselves and their property at risk.

In February of last year, the DEP announced a comprehensive effort to modernize New Jersey's environmental regulations to protect our communities and economy against the threat of climate change. The announcement included developing new greenhouse gas reduction and environmental land use regulations aimed at reducing the impact of climate change and adapting to the climate impacts like sea-level rise.

It also considered climate impacts in land use regulations, but that is missing from this year's proposal. It isn't considering how developments increase greenhouse gases by cutting down forests or paving over farmland, or stopping developments that aren't flood-prone but are still environmentally sensitive. It should be promoting developments near train stations and bus stops to reduce commuter miles traveled, and expand mass transit.

The proposed amendments include increased mitigation requirements for the Wetlands Rules, Flood Hazard Control Act Rules, and Coastal Zone Management Rules. Unfortunately, this will not work - mitigation projects in one community will not make up for new development in a different community.

The DEP still isn't dealing with local zoning, or even fixing CAFRA. The hardship exemption to allow new construction in risk zones isn't defined, so the DEP could approve almost any new development. It may be pushing mitigation projects, but you can't mitigate for a direct impact. It doesn't work if you build in Toms River but try to mitigate the risk in Tuckerton or, even worse, Bay Head. CAFRA still includes mitigation projects like seawalls and beach replenishments. Wasting time on these projects will only give people a false sense of security, waste money, and likely create more flooding.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has raised concerns in the past about New Jersey's Flood Hazard Rules, which are not consistent with the National Flood Insurance Act. For example, New Jersey measures base level flood elevation on the first floor instead of on the foundation of that floor, often a difference of 2 ft. This puts more homes at risk of flooding.

When developers 'build at their own risk', it is their clients, the public, who will pay for the infrastructure, the water, gas and flood insurance subsidies. Instead, we should be buying out flood-prone properties. The DEP also needs to reverse many rule rollbacks remaining from Governor Christie's Administration. This includes the Flood Hazard Rules that were rewritten, removing important protections for headwaters, increasing permit-by-rules, and letting a permit-by-certification process increase development in flood-prone areas.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Lackawanna Cutoff: Rail-trail is Best Use

From a Letter to the Editor of the Express Times, by Chapter Director Jeff Tittel, and published on Dec 3

For years people have been hiking and biking on parts of the abandoned Lackawanna Rail Cutoff, in Sussex Co. It's an important part of New Jersey's railroad history, especially the scenic viaduct over the Paulins Kill.

New Jersey is considering reviving the rail service over the viaduct to Scranton PA, which doesn't make sense. NJ Transit is broke and doesn't have the money to operate its existing lines. The limited number of commuters along the route would be served much more quickly and efficiently by express bus service operating on interstate highways.

The viaduct should be incorporated into our trails network. It would make a great rails-to-trails project, connecting existing trails like the Appalachian and Columbia. Hikers, bikers, and climbers are already using the Paulinskill Viaduct. Its improvement would promote recreational tourism and support the local economy.

If NJ Transit has money for improvements that will get more cars off the road, the Sierra Club recommends expanding the Bergen Light Rail, electrifying the Raritan Valley Line, and building the Monmouth Ocean Middlesex Line.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Big Oil Should Be Held Accountable for Climate Damages

From an Op-Ed column by Chapter Director Jeff Tittel, published in the Newark Star-Ledger on Jan. 4, and edited by Irene Gnarra

Climate change is here, and it poses an urgent crisis. In 2019 and 2020, New Jersey experienced its hottest summers, hurricane activity in the Atlantic set new records, and western states suffered a devastating fire season.

In the absence of federal leadership, Gov. Phil Murphy and his Administration pledged to make New Jersey more resilient against future storms, floods and sea-level rise. But who will pay for it?

The answer should not be the people of New Jersey, who are facing the financial burden of multiple calamities. I suggest that the costs of rectifying the destruction caused by climate change, and adapting to its realities, should be the responsibility of those who caused the problem: the multibillion-dollar fossil fuel industry.

Exxon, Chevron, Shell and their significant others have known for decades that the source of their wealth—the burning of fossil fuels—would warm the planet and ultimately cause disaster. As early as 1977, a senior scientist at Exxon told its executives that there was “general scientific agreement” on this expectation.

As journalists, whistleblowers, and a growing number of lawsuits across the country have revealed, the fossil fuel industry refused to change. Instead, it waged deceptive propaganda campaigns to confuse the public about climate science, and continued to supply products that caused climate change.

Actions to hold the fossil fuel industry accountable for its “greenwashing” has gained momentum nationwide. On Sept. 2, Hoboken became the first municipality in New Jersey to sue major players in the oil and gas industry for what Mayor Ravi Bhalla has called a “decades-long campaign of misinformation related to climate change and its devastating impact on Hoboken.” One week later, Charleston, South Carolina, became the first city in the South to file suit against the industry. Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg proclaimed: “Instead of warning us, they covered up the truth and turned our flooding problems into their profits.” The next day, Delaware Attorney General Kathy Jennings announced a lawsuit seeking damages from 31 oil and gas companies. On Sept. 14, Connecticut Attorney General William Tong sued ExxonMobil for violating the state’s consumer protection law.

To date, 23 states and localities have introduced cases holding fossil fuel companies accountable for deceiving the public about climate change. Governor Murphy and Attorney General Gurbir Grewal should add New Jersey to the list, for we are one of the most vulnerable states in the nation. A Public Trust Doctrine state, New Jersey has always supported the Polluter Pay Principle. Fuel companies should accept responsibility for their destruction of our roads, beaches, environment and our economy. They should be obligated to repair our infrastructure and pay damages for the loss of our natural resources. The Murphy Administration claims to support comprehensive environmental justice legislation. A successful lawsuit could provide much-needed funds for New Jersey to invest in low-income communities—dumping grounds for Big Oil—that have been hit hard by climate change.

We know that lawsuits are not the solution to climate change. Nevertheless, courts can play an important role. They can ensure justice, hold bad actors accountable, and decide ultimately who should pay for the damages that were clearly foreseen by scientists at Big Oil companies.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Replace Diesel Trucks with Electrics: Better Use of EPA \$

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Jan 19, and edited by George Moffatt

On the Trump Administration’s last day, its EPA was allowed to do something “environmental” -- it granted \$2.5 million to help New Jersey reduce tailpipe pollution from diesel buses, trucks, and other vehicles. Also in January, New Jersey’s Legislature approved \$16 million to investigate the conversion to zero-emission trucks.

Studies have shown that fine particles in diesel exhaust may cause more premature deaths than homicides and car accidents combined. An EPA study links fine particle pollution with a variety of lung and heart ailments. And a recent Harvard study links coronavirus risk with exposure to air pollution.

Diesel-powered engines move most of the nation’s freight tonnage: in highway tractor-trailers, behind railroad locomotives, and in commercial ships.

New Jersey’s dense population, and its importance as a freight terminal, means that it has a lot of diesels. We’re not just a “Turnpike corridor state,” but a spaghetti bowl of intersecting highways that carry diesels, often through highly polluted urban communities.

Nor is suburbia exempt. Choking exhaust fumes from idling diesel trucks that once concentrated in industrial areas, shipping ports and airports now rise from enormous warehouse distribution centers in suburban and even rural areas.

The EPA grant, although well intentioned, is really only a stop-gap measure, because all diesels are dirty diesels. Since nearly half of NJ’s air pollution comes from the transportation sector, the state must push for the next technology – electrification of trucks and buses.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

Sewage Dumping into Hudson River: EPA, DEP See No Evil!

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Dec 4, and edited by Tony Hagen

New York Waterway operates the largest ferry and excursion fleet in New York Harbor, so accusations that the company [pumps waste](#) from boat toilets directly into the Harbor are deeply concerning. More upsetting is that, despite video evidence, testimony from employees of the company, and a lengthy investigation by the Environmental Protection Agency, federal prosecutors have declined to intervene, and also that the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection refuses to involve itself in the case.

NY Waterway presumably dumps its untreated sewage in order to avoid the more costly and time-consuming process of having the waste tanks properly pumped out and treated. The allegations came to light recently when a whistle-blower lawsuit was filed against NY Waterway by two employees. The lawsuit claims that for years NY Waterway also dumped oil, fuel, coolant, and other pollutants into the Harbor, the Hudson River, the East River, and Raritan Bay. The company’s vessels carried up to 30,000 passengers a day prior to the pandemic. The EPA investigated the claims in 2016 but closed the investigation in 2018 without any formal charges. New York Waterway has denied any wrongdoing.

Parts of the Hudson River were formerly listed as a federal Superfund Site because of PCB contamination. General Electric dumped PCBs into the Hudson River for more than 70 years. After extensive cleanup, the river is now approved for use by kayakers and paddle boarders. If the new allegations against NY Waterway are true, these recreationalists have been under risk of exposure to waterborne disease. The EPA’s refusal to take action may have reflected its leniency during Donald Trump’s presidency. We urge the DEP to take up consideration of forcing NJ Waterway to abide by dumping regulations.

REPORT FROM TRENTON

West Windsor Getting Paved Over with Warehouses

From a press release issued by our Trenton staff on Dec 14, and edited by Tony Hagen

For years, West Windsor (Mercer Co) fought against the specter of housing and “big box” retail development on the 653-acre former site of American Cyanamid Co. at Quakerbridge Road and US Rte 1. Now, based on a court settlement, it looks like the site will receive as much as 5.5 million square feet of warehouses. Although they will be tucked into the interior of the tract, with hotels, offices, and retail on the perimeter, the diesel fumes and truck traffic will be devastating for Central New Jersey.

To put it into perspective, the proposed warehouse complex would occupy the equivalent of more than five Quaker Bridge Malls. West Windsor residents already pay some of the highest real estate taxes in the state, which largely go to schools, so municipal officials sought to avoid housing construction to keep down fresh school enrollment. The warehouse tradeoff is air pollution, highway congestion, and truck noise.

Members of the Club’s Central Jersey Group are working to persuade township planners and developers to consider greening the warehouse development as much as possible. This could include EV charging stations (for the day when electric trucks replace diesel), rooftop solar, and requiring nonpolluting equipment inside the buildings.

Massive warehouse developments in New Jersey have gained momentum from on-line commerce during the pandemic. We are also seeing warehouse sprawl in Burlington, Warren and Somerset Counties. A recent Warren County Planning Department study found that the long-term effects of these warehouses could include deterioration of highways. Not the least of concerns is that precious open space is being paved over forever. It is critical that New Jersey implement protections against warehouse sprawl. Read the NJ Sierra Club’s guidelines on warehouse development [here](#).