

Tennes - Sierran

The Monthly state newsletter for the Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club

Volume 49, Number 1 - January/February 2016

Citizens Call for Climate Action

By Sandy Kurtz

CHATTANOOGA - On the evening of Wednesday, October 14, 2016 concerned citizens gathered at the Holmberg Glass Bridge near Hunter Art Museum for a Candlelight Climate Vigil as part of the National Climate Day of Action. During the event, the group sang songs, delivered joint calls for climate action, made pledges for personal action, and heard words related to the vital need to care for our earthly home from Dr. Mary Headrick.

"Many people in Chattanooga don't think climate change is important even though it is already bringing catastrophic storms, excessive flooding, rising seas, droughts, changes in farming, crops, forests, wildlife habitat and soil makeup, plus extreme temperatures, both very hot and very cold," said Barbara Kelly, Chair of Sierra Cherokee Group. "In fact, climate action is critical for us here," she added.

"We must keep pressure on our government, businesses, and even ourselves to do all we can to lessen our carbon impacts and use our resources wisely," said Cindy Robbins of Citizens Climate Lobby.

The National Climate Day of Action along with numerous other environmental organizations is speaking out about the need for global solutions to slow climate change that is already affecting many especially those less able to protect themselves. COP21, the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, took place in December when delegations from 196 countries gathered in Paris to negotiate steps and outline plans to slow the rate of global carbon emissions in order to guard against negative impacts.

Reverend Dr. Olin Ivey, who gave opening and closing words during the ceremony, emphasized, "Erratic global climate change is the greatest threat to the continuing exis-



Photo by Kelly Grant

tence of humanity on Planet Earth. With all urgency we must move from dependence on carbon based fuels and to the generation of energy from renewable sources. This will take the concerted effort of all of us, each of us - toward the development of transformative solutions. The time is now! We cannot wait."

Sierra Club (Cherokee Group), Climate Chattanooga Healthy Energy for everyone, Citizens Climate Lobby, Chattanooga Organizing for Action, TN Interfaith Power and Light, and Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Com-

mittee sponsored the Candlelight Climate Vigil here in Chattanooga.

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How does it work? Monthly you will receive an email notification and download link for your new Tennes-Sierran in a special email alert. All you will have to do is click on the link and presto, your Tennes-Sierran will appear in an Adobe Acrobat PDF format. View it, download it, save it but whatever the case you will be saving trees, and freeing Tennessee Chapter club funding to work for other conservation efforts. A double whammy win situation!

**So Join the Crowd
and Go Paperless Today!**

San Diego Goes All-in on Clean Energy -- Will Your City Be Next?

By Jodie Van Horn

The international climate agreement that came out of Paris in December gave us a lot to celebrate -- but now the good news is hitting even closer to home.

On the heels of the Paris negotiations, San Diego announced that it is going all-in on clean energy, becoming the largest U.S. city to commit to 100 percent clean energy.

Not 80 percent. Not 90 percent. **But 100 percent clean energy.**

San Diego is the eighth-largest city in the U.S. and joins cities like Paris, Sydney, and Vancouver in saying that 100 percent clean energy is not only possible, but necessary. If we want to modernize our cities, boost local economies, and create jobs, 100 percent clean energy is the bar we have to aim for.

Clean energy has hit its stride, with solar prices falling 80 percent in recent years. The solar industry now employs nearly twice as many

people as the coal-mining industry. Stanford scientists say the transition to 100 percent renewable energy will save the average American family \$260 dollars per year in energy costs and another \$1,500 per year in health care costs.

What's more, with a Republican mayor and a Democratic-majority city council, San Diego is showing that clean energy is not a partisan issue -- it's the right thing to do, for our families, for our climate, and for our economy.

As Arnold Schwarzenegger (another notable Republican) recently said in an impassioned post on his Facebook page, "I don't want to be like the last horse and buggy salesman who was holding out as cars took over the roads. I don't want to be the last investor in Blockbuster as Netflix emerged. That's exactly what is going to happen to fossil fuels. A clean energy future is a wise investment, and anyone who tells you otherwise is either wrong, or lying."

So as San Diego goes for 100 percent clean

energy, join us in calling on other mayors around the country to follow suit. There are thousands of cities where clean energy can protect clean air, water, and our climate -- if we act now to make it happen.

It's time to go all-in on clean energy.



Tennes-Sierran

The bi-monthly newsletter of the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club.

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SEND ARTICLES TO:

E-mail: c.demetreon@mchsi.com

USPS: Chris Demetreon, Editor
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ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Submission Target Date is February 19 for the March-April issue.

1. E-mail and e-mail attached files are preferred. Send to gvanhorn26@gmail.com either with embedded text messages, or attached files. Attached files are preferred. Word is preferred but Apple users may send articles in Pages.

2. Photographs should be scanned in a .jpg or a .tif file format then either attached to e-mail or mailed via U.S. Postal Service on a 3 1/2" diskette or CD RM. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your diskette or photo prints returned.

3. Hard-copy handwritten or typewritten articles may be accepted: however, pre-approval from the Editor is required.

4. Any materials submitted via USPS mail will not be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided.

5. Concerns or complaints should be addressed to: Barbara Kelly, Communications Committee, bk1rivers@comcast.net. The opinions expressed in the Tennes-Sierran are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Tennessee Chapter, or the Sierra Club.

**Target Date for
March - April is
February 19, 2016.**

**All meetings and outings
notices, articles, and
photographs
should be in by then.**

**Send material to
Chris Demetreon at
c.demetreon@mchsi.com**



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Mike Brune's recent letter to the Editor of the Tennessean

Where does Alexander stand?

In late October, Sen. Lamar Alexander announced he had co-founded a new environmental working group dedicated to finding “ways (to) protect (the) environment and climate while also bolstering clean energy innovation that helps drive job creation.”

But just last month, he voted against one of the most important efforts to protect our environment and our climate in decades: the Clean Power Plan.

Sen. Alexander voted for two polluter-backed congressional resolutions to block

the Clean Power Plan, which includes historic public health protections from carbon pollution and support for job-creating clean energy technologies.

Those votes should leave us all wondering whether Sen. Alexander is serious about protecting the environment or just serious about talking about it.

The EPA estimates that the Clean Power Plan will not only cut the dangerous carbon pollution being pumped into the air we breathe but also prevent up to 3,600 premature deaths annually.

Children will suffer 90,000 fewer asthma attacks every

year. Economists estimate that it will create hundreds of thousands of jobs in the energy-efficiency, solar and wind industries — dramatically ramping up the clean energy economy.

Carbon pollution and the climate crisis are the greatest environmental threats our country has ever faced, and the Clean Power Plan is one of our best solutions.

Although Sen. Alexander seems to acknowledge this in his comments, his actions continue to tell a different story.

Michael Brune, executive director, the Sierra Club, Washington, DC 20016

Soon to be updated,
due to Jan. 2016 ExCom Elections.

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**Please notify the Editor
when changes are needed**

Ready for 100%

By Jodie Van Horn

Something incredible is happening right now across the globe. Achieving 100 percent clean energy is becoming “the new normal” in the fight to solve climate change. What’s driving this trend is a flowering of ambition.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines “ambition” as a “strong desire to do or to achieve something, typically requiring determination and hard work.” Determination and hard work are exactly what we need from global leaders as they meet in Paris this week to hammer out an international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the climate crisis. People’s lives depend on it.

The negotiators in Paris need only to look around them for inspiration. Cities across the globe are demonstrating what it means to lead with ambition. Today, 1,000 mayors issued a declaration in Paris at the Climate

Summit for Local Leaders, the largest-ever global gathering of local leaders focused on climate change. The declaration states:

“We—the undersigned mayors, governors, premiers, and other local government leaders—commit collectively to support ambitious long-term climate goals such as a transition to 100% renewable energy in our communities.”

And, as shown above, even Leonardo DiCaprio has urged local leaders to act.

Meanwhile, on December 15, one of the largest cities in the U.S., San Diego, is voting on a proposed plan to get 100 percent of its energy from renewable sources by 2035. Republican mayor Kevin Faulconer and San Diego city council members have publicly supported the goal as a smart strategy for the city to protect its environment and grow its economy.

Businesses are also ready for 100 percent. This week, U.S. software company Adobe

Systems committed to source 100 percent of its electricity from renewable energy by 2035, and Google set a target to triple its purchase of renewable energy by 2025 and to ultimately power all of its operations with 100 percent renewable energy.

This transformational awakening of ambition would not be happening were it not for the people who said it could be done long before CEOs and mayors believed it was possible. From the People’s Climate March last year to a 25,000-person gathering last week in Ottawa, Canada, it has been the hard work of committed climate activists marching across the globe and shouting from streets that woke leaders up to the fact that 100 percent is possible. Those voices have been heard in Paris and around the world, and will go on calling for 100 percent clean energy until the ambition of our response to climate change fully matches the challenges and opportunities before us.

Momentum for Paris Agreement Builds Climate Action

By Andy Katz

Nearly 200 countries met in Paris over the course of two weeks in December to work on a new global agreement addressing climate change. The unprecedented global momentum for government action on climate has been building. Going into the meeting, known as the Conference of the Parties (COP 21), nearly 180 countries, representing 95 percent of global emissions, had already submitted their intended emission reduction targets (INDCs).

On the eve of the negotiations, over 570,000 people marched and rallied at 2,300 events around the world for an ambitious legal agreement to decarbonize our economies and transition to renewable energy, and almost 1.8 million people of faith have signed a petition that was delivered to the United Nations. The Sierra Club’s Local to Global campaign added to the momentum by urging mayors to join a national compact of Mayors highlighting bold actions. The more than 50 subnational governments that have joined the Under 2 MOU now represent the largest economy in the world.

The agreement in Paris is expected to determine a process for scaling up national climate mitigation actions and financial means of support. But although the pledges and long-term goal options on the negotiating table represent a meaningful signal to investors that the world is decarbonizing our economies, they are not yet enough to stop dangerous climate change.

The United States contribution to the Paris agreement is a good start, with a long way to go. The U.S. INDC calls for a reduction of 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. President Obama’s Clean Power Plan is the cornerstone of national policies that back up this important pledge, in addition to the new incentives and regulations for cleaner cars and fuels. Indeed, President Obama boldly called on heads of state to “secure an agreement that builds in ambition, where progress paves the way for regularly updated targets,” and for a “commitment that resources will be there for

countries willing to do their part to skip the dirty phase of development.”

Without these important contributions to global action, global temperatures would jump an average of 8° F. The Paris agreement will lower the likely increase to just over 6° F. To limit the temperature increase to the 2.7-3.6° F (which global scientists say is necessary in order to avoid catastrophic climate change), countries will need to agree on a process for increasing actions through five-year review cycles.

For a review process to succeed in increasing the ambition of international climate action, countries will need to work together to overcome past obstacle. In particular, countries must make progress on how to differentiate and equitably share responsibilities for addressing greenhouse gas emissions, both through national emission reductions and through financing support for developing countries. A key challenge for negotiators has been how to structure a meaningful assessment well in advance of the next review cycle, in light of the deep decarbonization needed to

meet science-based, ecologically sound emission-reduction goals.

The Paris agreement is essential to ensure that every country is doing its part to address climate change. As the U.S. government has stepped up to take greater leadership through major initiatives like the Clean Power Plan, so have other developed and developing nations. Together, these efforts begin a shift to a cleaner economy that protects the climate and the health of future generations.

Image Source: Screenshot of the live feed of the UNFCCC heads of state speeches.

Andy Katz is a member of the Sierra Club Federal and International Climate Campaign leadership team, the Sierra Club California Legislative Committee, and a delegate to COP21. He is a volunteer with the Sierra Club.



Meetings

The public is very welcome at ALL Sierra Club Meetings and Activities! All members traveling across the state should feel free to drop in and attend another Group's meetings. You will find yourself among friends and learning something interesting.

CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

Pot Luck Party, Jan. 10, 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M., Audubon Acres Visitor Center: Special Welcome to our New Members - You're invited to a Party! And all our members are invited as well!! Bring friends and a covered dish to share, we'll supply drinks, utensils, plates, etc. and the Hursts always donate wine! Come start the new year with people who share the same interests and dreams for our environment as you. Location: Audubon Acres Visitor Center, 900 Sanctuary Road, Chattanooga, TN 37424 -- the new building just inside their gate, in East Brainerd, off Gunbarrel Road. Directions: <http://www.chattanoogaaudubon.org/audubon-acres.html>

Before we eat, we'll have time to walk to the South Chickamauga Creek bridge and explore the mini-museum inside the Visitors Center, tracing the human habitation of the property back 1400 & 1500's. Then we'll have supper, while enjoying a roaring fire in the fireplace. If you haven't been to a Sierra activity in a while, make this your first of 2016. And if you haven't been at all, jump in here! We'll start gathering at 5:00 P.M. Sunday evening. And if you can't bring a covered dish, come anyway, there's always enough for all. Fun and fellowship! Mark your calendars now.

Feb. 8 (2nd Monday) 6:30 P.M. Held at Second Presbyterian Church, at the corner of E. 7th Street and Pine, 700 Pine Street (parking is free in their Pine Street lot, across the street from the church.) Come add your ideas and share your concerns. We've got committees on clean energy, forest watch/protection, mining/fracking issues, and energizing our Outings program. The building looks like an old school - knock on the door, and if somebody doesn't answer, call 423-718-5009 for a door un-locker! All are welcome!

January Program: 4th Monday, Jan. 25, 7:00 P.M. at Green|Spaces, 63 E. Main St., Chatta. 37408. Sierra Town Hall Meeting: Contribute to planning this year's activities to Preserve Our Wild America. Whether you want to work towards better regulations, help clean up the landscape or monitor what is happening in our community or in the mountains and forests, the Cherokee Sierra Group needs your ideas and participation. Please come to the meeting to add your input and involvement.

February Program: 4th Monday, Feb. 22, 7:00 P.M. at Green|Spaces, 63 E. Main St., Chatta. 37408: Clean Caves, Clean Water. Caves funnel large amounts of water into surface rivers and creeks. Since humans depend on every source of water, using large amounts, we should protect this valuable resource. Caves seem to be attractive places to place trash, and

unfortunately, dumping trash into caves happens all the time. In the past 12 years, cavers have become motivated to clean up caves or roadside areas near caves. Many clean-ups have been done in the Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia area, home of some of the finest caves in the USA. A vertical haul system was devised to lift appliances, boats and tires out of steep ravines. Anne Grindle's presentation will show the work done to accomplish some pretty impressive clean-ups. A Sierra Club member for many years, Anne taught Environmental Education at Elachee Nature Center in Gainesville Georgia for 10 years. Her love of cave exploration brought Anne and her husband to southern Tennessee.

Learn about local Sierra Club outings and advocacy activities. The public is very welcome, healthy snacks are served. Invite your friends!! Look for our banner.

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

Check <http://www.facebook.com/Chickasaw.Group/> for meeting information.

HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

Harvey Broome Group monthly programs are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919. Our business meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at The Church of the Savior, 934 N. Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville, TN 37909. Both start at 7:00 P.M. Both are free and open to the public.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

January 4, 2016 (Monday) - 6:15 P.M. - ICO MEETING: Come join our Nashville Inspiring Connections Outdoors Group as we meet at the Mad Platter restaurant at 1239 6th Ave. North, Nashville. We will discuss our outings for disadvantaged kids and senior citizens, and training. Contact Daniel Shaykevich at daniel.a.shaykevich@vanderbilt.edu to make sure the meeting is still on. Put "ICO" in the subject line.

January 14, 2016 (Thursday) 7:00 P.M. "Venerable Trees" - PROGRAM: at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville. Tom Kimmerer, PhD, botanist, forestry/ tree physiologist, and author of Venerable Trees: History, Biology, and Conservation in the Bluegrass, will present this program on the five-hundred-year ongoing story of our historic trees in middle Tennessee and Kentucky. When the first settlers arrived in this region, they found an astonishing landscape of open woodland grazed by vast herds of bison. Farmers quickly replaced the bison with cattle, sheep, and horses, but left many of the trees to shade their pastures. Today, central Kentucky and central Tennessee boast one of the largest populations of Pre-European settlement trees in the nation. Tom will explain the biology

of Bluegrass trees, the reasons they are now in danger, and the efforts of those fighting to conserve these remarkable three-hundred- to five-hundred-year-old plants. You must enter the park from Granny White Pike to reach the visitor center (which may require ignoring your GPS). Free and open to the public.

January 19, 2016 (Tuesday) - at 6:30 P.M. LOCAL ISSUES MEETING: Everyone is welcome at this local issues and business meeting. Meetings are usually held at the Lucky Bamboo Restaurant, 5855 Charlotte Avenue, but there may be times we meet elsewhere. If you are not a regular attendee, please contact Jim at (225) 281-4089 or jamesmredwine@gmail.com in case the meeting location has changed. Come a bit early if you want to order dinner because we start the meeting at 6:30 P.M. We meet in a private room towards the back of the restaurant. Tell them you're looking for the Sierra Club. We look forward to seeing you.

February 1, 2016 (Monday) - 6:15 P.M. - ICO MEETING: Come join our Nashville Inspiring Connections Outdoors Group as we meet at the Mad Platter restaurant at 1239 6th Ave. North, Nashville. We will discuss our outings for disadvantaged kids and senior citizens, and training. Contact Daniel Shaykevich at daniel.a.shaykevich@vanderbilt.edu to make sure the meeting is still on. Put "ICO" in the subject line.

February 11, 2016 (Thursday) 7:00 P.M. "Wildflowers (or maybe Favorite Natural Areas)" - PROGRAM: at Radnor Lake Visitor Center, 1160 Otter Creek Road, Nashville. Join State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath for photos, folklore, and anecdotes about the natural decorations (i.e. wildflowers) that will be appearing soon. Also, the good places to see the real things. Or, he may do a "Favorite Natural Areas" slide show or in depth info on the new parks with photos. We hadn't quite decided at the time of this printing. In any event, it will be a program that you won't want to miss! You must enter the park from Granny White Pike to reach the visitor center (which may require ignoring your GPS). Free and open to the public.

February 16, 2016 (Tuesday) - at 6:30 P.M. LOCAL ISSUES MEETING: Everyone is welcome at this local issues and business meeting. Meetings are usually held at the Lucky Bamboo Restaurant, 5855 Charlotte Avenue, but there may be times we meet elsewhere. If you are not a regular attendee, please contact Jim at (225) 281-4089 or jamesmredwine@gmail.com in case the meeting location has changed. Come a bit early if you want to order dinner because we start the meeting at 6:30 P.M. We meet in a private room towards the back of the restaurant. Tell them you're looking for the Sierra Club. We look forward to seeing you.



Outings

CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

John Doyal is our Outings Chair, and point-person for outings information for our Group. Our activities are always open to the public and members of the Club from across the state! For more information, contact John at baldie052@yahoo.com. Also check our Meetup - Green Events page for the latest on our outings.

Jan. 16 (Sat) TN Sandhill Crane Festival, Birchwood. We'll meet at 8:30 A.M. in Chattanooga, at the YMCA parking lot off Lee Highway, just north of Gunbarrel, then travel to the Birchwood Community Center to catch the shuttle buses to the Hiwassee Refuge to view the thousands of cranes that migrate through or spend the winter on and around the Hiwassee Refuge. Bring binoculars, a sack lunch and water; dress for the weather! We'll be able to view some of the special programs going on at the Center, and hear an update on Tennessee's golden eagle population. Go here for the event schedule: <https://www.tn.gov/twra/article/sandhill-crane-festival>. For more information, and to register, contact Barbara Kelly at bk1rivers@gmail.com or 423-718-5009 for details.

Cherokee News

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Keep those e-mail addresses coming so you will get our E-News. Did you know that only about 1/3 of our members provide email addresses? Due to the high cost of postage, we can't send out paper mailings - so we maintain a monthly email newsletter. Please provide your email so we can reach you with timely info on activities and issues: send your email address to Alice at demetre-on1981@gmail.com

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

Time and dates of outings are to be determined. For information check: <http://www.facebook.com/Chickasaw.Group/>

HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

17 Jan 2016 (Sun). Dayhike, Panther Creek State Park. This hike is approximately 4 miles, and moderately difficult. We hike up to and then along a ridge overlooking Cherokee Lake. With the leaves off the trees we should have some great views. One-way drive: 40 miles. Preregister with Denise Bivens: denisebivens@gmail.com; phone 865-385-5138.

30 Jan 2016 (Sat-Sun). Winter Backpack, Big South Fork NRR. This hike will take us through some of the most scenic trails in the Big South Fork. Starting from Leatherwood Ford, we'll take the Angel Falls Overlook Trail (part of the longer John Muir Trail) to the Grand Gap Loop Trail, with a short side trip to the Overlook where we'll have some great winter views of the Big South Fork River and gorge. We'll double back to take the John Muir Trail to its junction with the Fall Branch Trail. We'll camp along the Fall Branch Trail, roughly halfway to its junction with the John Litton Farm Trail, which will take us to Bandy Creek parking area and Visitor Center. This hike involves a short car shuttle. Total distance (over 2 days): 10.5 miles. Rated difficult due to season and some steep sections. Driving distance 70 miles. Preregister with Ron Shrieves: 922-3518; ronaldshrieves@comcast.net.

13 Feb 2016 (Sat). Day hike, Middle Creek and Slave Falls Loops, Big South Fork. The southern part of the Middle Creek loop passes many spectacular rock houses and cliffs. Some of them are huge. We'll take an 0.8 mile connector trail to the Sawmill trail and Slave Falls side trail. The Falls are quite high, but generally have only a small flow. We'll eat lunch at the falls, then visit an interesting formation known as Needle Arch before returning to our vehicles. 9.4 miles total, rated moderate. One-way drive: 85 miles. Pre-register with Ron Shrieves: 922-3518; ronaldshrieves@comcast.net (email preferred).

20 Feb 2016 (Sat). Day hike, White Rocks and Sand Cave, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. Two outstanding natural rock formations await hikers in the north end of this Park: White Rocks and the Sand Cave. We'll take a loop route that takes us to the fabulous overlook at White Rocks, where we'll have great vistas into both Kentucky and Virginia. We then follow the Ridge trail to a side trail into Sand Cave, a huge rock house with a sandy floor, where we'll relax and have lunch. The return to our vehicles will be via the Ewing Trail. Distance about 8.5 miles, rated moderate. One-way drive: 75 miles. Pre-register with Brad Reese: bradktn@gmail.com; 865-599-1708 (email preferred).

MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

We have an active outings schedule and want you to come along! Many times our outings are planned too late to be included in this newsletter. To check out our outings, please click on the outing of choice at <http://www.meetup.com/Middle-Tennessee-Sierra-Club-Outings-and-Adventures/events/calendar/>

10 Essentials for Hiking



Sierra Club outings offer a variety of wilderness and near-wilderness experiences. It is important to realize that while all trips are guided by a leader, it is ultimately the responsibility of the individual to operate in a safe manner. To this end, the following is a list of essential items which should be modified according to the particular type of outing. These are:

1. Adequate map
2. First aid kit
3. Compass
4. Rain gear
5. Extra clothing (it is a good idea to always have a wool hat)
6. Matches
7. Knife
8. Flashlight
9. Extra food, water
10. The tenth essential: You decide what is the most important thing to bring!

Tennessee Chapter Winter Retreat Cedars of Lebanon State Park Group Lodge You Are Invited JAN 29-31

Explore

Hike with State Naturalist, Randy Hedgepath on Saturday and/or Sunday morning in the Red Cedar Forest and Glades at Cedars of Lebanon State Park. For map and directions to Cedars of Lebanon State Park click on link or type <http://tnstateparks.com/parks/contact/cedars-of-lebanon> into your browser.

Enjoy - Come join the fellowship, hikes, fireplace chats, meetings, live music and star gazing. Meet folks from across the state that share a vision and love for the environment.

Saturday Night Live! - After dinner enjoy the musical style of Antoinette Olesen, an award winning songwriter who has toured internationally and shared the bill with many artists including Sheryl Crow, Paula Abdul, Gloria Estefan and on occasion has been invited to lend backing vocals to artists including Martha Reeves, Ronnie Spector, The Doobie Brothers and Bonnie Raitt.

Co-writing with chart topping writers, producing projects and hosting out of town artists are added to Antoinette's mentoring of teens in music and local volunteer work.

A frequent industry guest of songwriting organizations and music conferences throughout the country, Antoinette owes her love of country music to riding rodeo and showing horses which garnered her State and National Championships. She owes her love of pop and rock music to her father who would show up with tickets to every kind of concert you could imagine.

Answers Retreat FAQ - Group Lodge includes two heated bunkhouse wings both with restroom and shower accommodations at Cedars of Lebanon State Park. Pay upon arrival. Early bird reservation fee is \$40.00 if confirmed by Jan 24. Regular price is \$50.00. The weekend includes Sat & Sun breakfast plus dinner on Sat night. Specify vegetarian or omnivore when you confirm. Daytripper's delight: One day price includes meal: Saturday/\$30 or Sunday/\$10.00

Bring bed linens or sleeping bag, towels, toiletries, comfortable walking shoes, flashlight, Saturday lunch, your favorite beverages, water bottle and tea/coffee mug. Everyone pitches in to help with clean-up before 11am Sunday check-out.

Special Offers: 1/2 off regular price for first time attendees, children under 15 are free and several scholarships or student rates are available with two week advance approval.

Watauga Group is hosting and reservations may be confirmed by contacting Gloria at Gla4797@embarqmail.com or call 423-727-4797

See You There!

Cities Across the Country Rally Against Toxic Trade

By Emma Friend

The environmental community was geared up for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) last December, but while the world prepared to commit to a universal climate agreement at the Paris negotiations, twelve of its countries have negotiated a separate agreement with disastrous environmental implications--the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP.

The TPP is a trade deal between the U.S. and eleven other Pacific Rim nations, finalized earlier this month after years of secret negotiation. This trade deal, which includes a controversial provision called Investor State Dispute Settlement that would greatly increase corporate power, has led to highly divided political opinion and increasing public outcry against the TPP. When the TPP's full text was finally released on November 5, opponents' worst fears were realized, and many said the deal was worse than they thought.

It's no wonder, then, that as environmental actions, rallies, and demonstrations increase and take on a more international focus in the lead-up to the climate talks in Paris, responsible trade and anti-TPP sentiments were also on the rise. Sierra Club volunteers participated in six such events over just the past couple of months.

In Washington, D.C., the Moral Action on Climate gathered on the National Mall before Pope Francis' address to a joint session of Congress during his September visit to the U.S., to celebrate the environmental focus of his encyclical *Laudato si* published earlier this year.

Speakers at the rally included environmental leaders such as Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune, faith leaders, and musical performers. Sierra Club activists turned out to highlight how trade could lift up or, in most cases, undermine the climate action that Pope Francis said the world is responsible for delivering.

Several weeks later came the People's Climate Movement National Day of Action. Communities across the nation held events on October 14 to demand bold action from leaders on climate change at COP21 – as well as good jobs, justice, clean energy, and responsible trade policy.

More than 200 different actions took place nationwide, several of which emphasized trade and stopping the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

For example, more than 1,000 activists filled Seattle's streets for a March for Climate Justice ending with speakers including notable environmentalist Naomi Klein who stressed the connection between bad trade policy and climate disruption.

Prior to the march, the Sierra Club, Seattle 350, Washington Fair Trade Coalition, and several unions put on street theater against the Trans-Pacific Partnership with Monopoly characters at a mock press conference (right).

Meanwhile, in San Diego, a Sierra Club-led coalition hosted a live art event the Friday

before the National Day of Action, in which community members collaborated on an art piece about climate, trade, and justice, illustrating everything from the increase of the dirty and dangerous practice of fracking to a trade document ripping trees out of the ground.

Then, on October 14, activists hand-delivered the art piece to the offices of Representatives Peters and Davis.

A Connecticut event took on an educational nature: labor and climate representatives led an information session with the local community to talk about the ways in which global trade undermines climate and labor justice.



Photo Credit: Tapan Bhargava

Washington DC's action, which brought together labor, environmental and social justice groups, focused on drawing connections between local impacted communities and the "climate culprits" headquartered in the nations' capitol.

The action's 500 participants started with a die-in (photo below) and street theater at American Petroleum Institute's headquarters, calling out Big Oil's involvement in the TPP and opposition to the Paris climate talks.

Activists then took to the streets to march and divert rush hour traffic.

At DC's Freedom Plaza, the rally took on a more uplifting tone, and included musical performances that stressed TPP's threats and speeches from communities facing the realities of climate disruption. The event got the attention of the media, including international press coverage!

While America was busy rallying for action on climate and drumming up opposition to the TPP, Europe was



Photo Credit: Tapan Bhargava

hosting its own anti-trade protest, against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), another trade deal that the U.S. is negotiating with the European Union.

On October 10, in the largest-ever demonstration against a trade deal, a quarter-million people crowded the streets of Berlin, Germany to protest the TTIP. The TTIP has been called the U.S.-EU version of the TPP. Similarities include a lack of transparency and inclusion of special powers for corporate investors.

Sierra Club Responsible Trade Program Senior Policy Advisor Ben Beachy spoke to the massive crowd in Berlin, underscoring that many Americans join with European allies protesting any so-called trade deals that would advance the interests of fossil fuel corporations while degrading our common home.

The end of 2015 was an exciting time to be a climate activist promoting responsible trade.

Demonstrations, rallies, and actions grew in both quantity and scope as a drumroll toward the climate talks in Paris, where we urged world leaders to come to a strong agreement on climate. Alongside bold action at COP21, stopping the TPP and other bad trade deals is critical to averting climate chaos. We know what we're up against. And now the deal is one step closer to a vote from our Senators and Representatives. It's critical that we build on this momentum and stop the TPP once and for all.

Emma Friend is an intern for Sierra Club's Responsible Trade Program



Photo Credit: Karen Moskowitz

Public Support for Energy Access Should Be Clean

By Vrinda Manglik

Coal, an industry in terminal decline in the U.S. and around the world, has turned to developing country markets in a desperate effort to gain more stable footing. Despite being ill-suited to meet the basic electricity needs of much of the world's un-electrified population, the coal industry is attempting to portray itself as the key to ending energy poverty. Among coal companies, Peabody Coal has been particularly vocal in trying to convince the public that there's a place for coal in decreasing energy poverty.

But coal is the wrong tool for the job for several key reasons:

- Coal doesn't reach rural areas quickly. Eighty-four percent of people without electricity access live in rural areas which often are not connected to a centralized electricity grid, as a report from the Carbon Tracker Initiative has noted. Further, only seven percent of those without electricity access in sub-Saharan Africa live in a country with infrastructure for mining and producing coal.
- Coal is expensive. The combined costs of grid extension and grid-based electricity are often more expensive than off-grid solutions including small-scale solar PV. A report from Oxfam America and the Overseas Development Institute, *Speaking truth to power: Why energy distribution, more than generation, is Africa's poverty reduction challenge*, makes the compelling case for distributed, clean energy interventions to address energy poverty.
- Coal hurts community health. The extraction

and combustion of coal pollutes communities, resulting in significant adverse health effects for the people living or working near such projects.

Recognizing the plummeting relevance and, indeed, dangers of coal, the World Bank and countries including the U.S. have made commitments to stop financing coal overseas. In July 2015, Rachel Kyte, then-climate change envoy for the World Bank's, made it clear that she does not see coal as the solution to energy poverty. Kyte pointed out that connecting the world's un-electrified to a coal-fired grid would not necessarily wreck the planet but would definitely contribute to respiratory illness rates. Through President Obama's Climate Action Plan, the U.S. has committed to stopping the financing of coal overseas except in rare circumstances, with strict associated criteria.

Nonetheless, public subsidies are still part of what is propping up fossil fuel industries such as coal. According to new research from Oil Change International, G20 countries are providing \$452 billion per year in subsidies for fossil fuel production domestically and abroad in developing countries. As the new report points out, "Without government support for production and wider fossil fuel subsidies, large swathes of today's fossil fuel development would be even less profitable, particularly for coal and for new hard-to-reach oil and gas reserves." Given the various harms of fossil fuels like coal, and how ill-suited they are to meeting energy access needs, this is no time for the world's richest countries to be investing in dead-end energy

sources like coal.

Oil Change International's report notes that, of the G20 countries, Japan was found to provide the largest amount of public support to fossil fuels at an average of \$19 billion per year. As noted in an article from last month, this isolated Japan among G7 countries. Japanese projects have also been highly controversial in affected communities. One plant Japan may finance is the Batang Power Plant in Indonesia, which has been met with tremendous local opposition, delaying the project for four years. However, late last year the OECD countries announced a deal on international coal financing that represents the first restrictions on coal plant subsidies from major supporters such as South Korea and Japan. While the agreement does not fully reflect the ambition shown by the United States, France, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and the Nordic countries, as it could have been stronger were it not for the recalcitrance of a few countries like Australia, South Korea, and Poland and Japan, it remains a major step forward for international climate diplomacy.

On November 14, 2015 Oil Change International and partners organized a Day of Action to expose the huge quantities of public funding that are propping up the fossil fuels industry. People supporting the campaign sent more than 15,000 tweets and emails to world leaders. You can still send a message urging leaders to stop funding dirty and outdated fossil fuels, using tools from the Stop Funding Fossils campaign website.

Vrinda Manglik is the associate campaign representative for the Sierra Club's International Clean Energy Access Program

Zero Emission Buses Making Our Cities Healthier

By Gina Coplon-Newfield

Momentum for cleaner public transit is building in both big cities and smaller communities. With the recent announcement out of Lane County's planned purchase of five zero emission buses, Eugene, Oregon joins Los Angeles, California; San Antonio, Texas; Louisville, Kentucky; Nashville, Tennessee; and dozens of other cities embracing zero emission bus technology.

This is fantastic news. If you've ever stood behind a diesel bus spewing hot pollution as it left a bus stop, you'll know why. Buses that rely on diesel engines are big polluters. That brown soot and exhaust isn't just unsightly and smelly, it's dangerous. Particulate matter from trucks and buses contains numerous harmful gases and upwards of 40 cancer-causing substances. And buses fueled by compressed natural gas are hardly better. In fact, research shows that a diesel bus emits a whopping 3,000 grams of carbon per mile, CNG 2,800, diesel hybrid 2,300, fuel cell 1,550, and battery electric 650 (factoring in the emissions from the electricity used).

In Eugene, Oregon, Lane Transit District (LTD) officials announced their planned purchase of zero emission buses at an event organized by the Sierra Club to demonstrate the community's enthusiasm for the purchase. Sierra Club organizers and residents unrolled a 50-foot banner of more than 1,000 signed postcards in support of cleaner buses. Backed by widespread community support, LTD is considering buying more electric buses in years to come.

Hundreds of thousands of diesel buses continue to operate around the country, and most average less than five miles to the gallon. The emissions from these diesel buses can cause or exacerbate diseases like asthma. It's no coincidence asthma rates are highest among city dwellers; they live where diesel buses are more

prevalent. And people of color and low-income residents, especially children, typically suffer disproportionately from particulate matter, like the kind emitted from diesel buses. African-American children, for example, are three times more likely to be admitted to the hospital for asthma than other children, and Latino children are 60 percent more likely.

Zero emission buses are one important solution that will make our communities safer. Electric buses use electricity to power a battery, so there's no gas guzzling, no dirty oil changes, no internal combustion engine, and no dirty exhaust. Whether it's for buses or cars, electric vehicles are lower in emissions than conventional vehicles, even factoring in the emissions from the electricity. And these electric buses and cars will get even cleaner over time as we switch to more renewable sources of power. Additionally, hydrogen fuel cell buses, when the hydrogen is derived from solar, are an intriguing transit option too.

In Eugene, LTD expects to save \$42,550 for the five buses in equivalent fuel costs each year compared with diesel-electric hybrid models. Worcester, Massachusetts, a city with six fully electric, zero emission public transit buses, expects each of the buses to cut operating costs by nearly \$3 million over 12 years and eliminate 130 tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year.

Sierra Club is working on the ground in key cities to get more zero emission buses on the road. In the Tampa Bay, Florida area, we successfully campaigned to get Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority to reverse its decision to replace aging dirty diesel buses with new dirty diesel buses. Instead, with 35 Sierra Club supporters in attendance, the PSTA board voted recently to invest in seven new hybrid buses and voted unanimously to research opportunities over the next few months to invest in fully electric buses

and submit a grant application to purchase up to ten electric buses for their fleet. "There is no reason to wait," said Sierra Club Florida Healthy Air Campaign's Phil Compton, who has helped to set up bus demos for transit agencies with both Proterra and BYD buses.

But Pinellas County isn't the only place in Florida that's looking to go electric. Tallahassee already has five zero emission buses in its fleet. Miami-Dade Transit has been testing a 40-foot electric bus as part of the community's initiative to seek cleaner energy sources for its bus fleet. Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez recently announced his vision for a fleet full of electric transit buses.

Sierra Club has received funding for zero emission vehicle advocacy from a number of our donors. A small portion of the funding for this initiative comes from Proterra, the zero emission bus manufacturer, which recently opened up a new U.S. headquarters in Silicon Valley. While we are fans of Proterra's work, we are also fans of other companies succeeding in the zero emission bus arena, such as BYD, which will supply LTD's buses, New Flyer, which supplies Chicago's electric buses, and a combination of companies building hydrogen fuel cell buses with solar-derived hydrogen, as the masses have enjoyed in Oakland, California. We're advocating for transit agencies to invest in any kind of zero emission bus technology, no matter which company provides the buses.

With lower operating and fuel costs, slashed carbon emissions, and the ability to decrease asthma rates, zero emission buses are the cleaner, greener, and healthier transportation option. Many more transit agencies should climb on board.

Gina Coplon-Newfield is the director of the Sierra Club's Electric Vehicles Initiative.

Several Hearts, One Goal

As the twenty first conference of parties (COP21) opened on Monday, November 30th thousands of people from all over the world found their way to the magical city of lights; Paris, France. These people came for a variety of reasons, but all with one common goal in mind: holding their delegates accountable for an agreement that can be the most effective for the world as a whole. With the recent tragic terrorist attacks in France, the French government had put an end to several planned climate action events such as a climate march and a large concert planned for the end of the COP, because they felt these events could jeopardize the security of the city. While these events in particular were suspended this did not deter people from having their voices heard. Many who came to the city found different ways to share their stories. Many groups even got together and formed several types of art events to promote their voices and show that they would not be silenced by the emergency state. They wanted to ensure that France and the world know what is going on in Paris and that change is necessary for a sustainable future.

On Sunday, November 29th a large march was planned in the streets of Paris and all over the world. Despite the Paris march being canceled due to a ban on demonstrations, symbolically the march went on. Beginning at 6:00 A.M. that Sunday morning thousands of shoes (one pair donated by Pope Francis

himself) were placed out in La Place de la République to show solidarity and support the voices that would not be silenced even though a physical march could not happen. The event came to a close by afternoon and all shoes were donated to charity afterwards.

As of Sunday, November 29th, another form of artwork displayed as the Eiffel Tower got a new look. The One Heart One Tree campaign turned the tourist hotspot into a virtual forest! Every night from Nov. 30th to Dec. 3rd from 6:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M. images of forestry, water, and the sun were projected on the historical tower along with the message of moving towards 100% percent renewable energy. As of December 1st, 50,531 trees have been donated and will be planted. The project promotes reforesting the planet. Each tree donated will be planted in one of seven reforestation programs taking place in Australia, Brazil, Senegal, India, France, Peru, and the Ivory Coast. By going to 1heart1tree.org you can donate 10 euros to participate in this fantastic program.

It's always encouraging to see these displays of expression as art has always been effective for self-expression in a time where voices are begging to be heard. Attention needs to be given to such a vital cause and



these events have modeled the true expressionism and dedication of individuals from across the world by sharing a positive message to save our planet and our future.

Image Source: Nicole Snider

Nicole and Daniel are members of the Sierra Student Coalition International Committee and Delegates to the United Nations Climate Negotiations COP21 in Paris, France.

**Please support the
Sierra Club Defenders, and
contact your legislators about
important bills.**

Please support Sierra Club Defenders and sign up for legislative alerts at:
www.sierraclub.org/tennessee/tennes-sierran

Tennessee Sierra Defenders Marks 20 Successful Years

The Defenders are a group of Sierrans who have contributed to our legislative efforts, enabling our lobbyist, Mike Murphy, and our dedicated volunteers and staff to make an impact on our state legislators. Because of their hard work, our legislators know who we are and what we want; and they listen as we advocate for what is right for our environment and for the citizens of Tennessee.

Generally, only people who have been part of this effort in the past are sent a letter each year, but because of natural attrition, it is imperative that we increase our donor list. We ask you to become a Defender by supporting this invaluable program. Any amount is helpful!


Some issues that we expect to address next legislative session include:

- Mountain top removal coal mining;
- Defense against any bill moving surface mining regulation from the Department of the Interior to the state, which would lead to weakening of enforcement;
- Requirement for public notice when there is an application to store toxic wastes, including low-level radioactive waste, in landfills;
- Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) legislation;
- Defense against any bills that would threaten the environment or environmental regulations;
- Defense against any efforts to privatize state facilities, especially state parks.

We are grateful to our November contributors, including:

- | | |
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