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## Optimism in the Age of Unreason

*[An earlier version of this essay appeared in the newsletter of Marcellus Protest. It has been updated and expanded to include more recent events. – Ed.]*

**PITTSBURGH:** With the approach of the Paris “COP21” conference (Nov. 30–Dec. 11), we’re trying to be optimistic about yet one more (“*This time we really mean it*”) commitment to begin taking action on the climate crisis.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, hoping to “streamline” the Paris meeting, has already drafted a fill-in-the-blanks agreement, needing only dates and numbers to be supplied by the negotiators. But, even assuming such negotiated “commitments” would survive national ratification battles, no one knows how the dates and numbers would be achieved.

The world’s carbon-based economy is like a fully loaded train running at high speed toward a cliff. We’re still debating about how far to the



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**The Sierra Club’s** members and supporters are 2.4 million of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America’s oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. *The Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club* was organized in the early 1970s. It is one of 10 groups comprising the Pennsylvania Chapter.

**Explore, enjoy and protect the planet**

*Continued from Page 1*

cliff, as if that will tell us precisely when (*and how hard*) to hit the brakes. The fact is, no one has ever used the brakes before; no one has even located the brake pedal yet. And we certainly have no idea what our stopping distance will be, or whether our “train” can withstand the braking forces without going to pieces. Meanwhile, we’re not even coasting to a lower speed; we’re actually accelerating.

In the U.S., most investors and elected officials are still running on autopilot. If there’s anybody who expects big changes to come out of Paris, they don’t seem to be influencing Washington, or Wall Street or Harrisburg. Climate negotiators and the business community might as well inhabit different planets.

**For example:**

Gov. Tom Wolf just announced a state task force to expedite construction of more than 30,000 miles of new gas pipeline in Pennsylvania (“*and citizen acceptance of it,*” says the task force’s marching orders). Nationally, the gas industry is seeking \$100 billion for investment in pipelines.

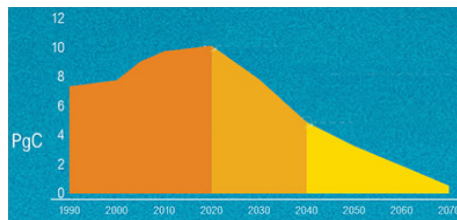
The Carbon Tracker Institute estimates that \$1 trillion is already committed to planned fossil energy projects, all of which would be scrapped if meaningful action were taken on the climate crisis.

Shell Oil has final Federal approvals to resume drilling in Arctic waters off of Alaska. Shell has spent over \$7 billion so far, trying to bring this untapped oil to market.

Major shale gas companies (*including Range Resources and Con-sol*) and well service companies are reporting financial losses, as

“hedges” on gas pricing have run their course. The managements of these companies talk bravely of “better days ahead” as they look forward to international markets and rebounding economic activity.

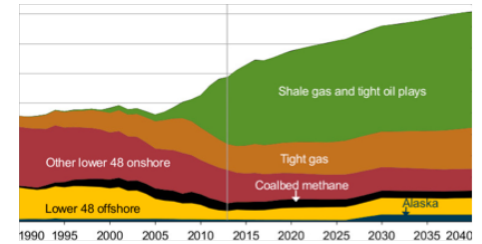
These two graphs illustrate the competing world views. One view anticipates maximally aggressive action, able to reverse the direction of global CO2 emissions by 2020. Five years. To agree on what to do, join together in doing it, and see the results of our labors. After that, we’d need even more effective measures to drive emissions to pre-industrial levels in another fifty years.



*To limit global warming to 2°C, CO2 emissions must be cut in half by 2040, and virtually eliminated by 2070*

The other view is exemplified by the U.S. Energy Information Agency. Its latest “Annual Energy Outlook” calls for a doubling of U.S. shale gas extraction. This growth would be brought about by new fracking technologies, infrastructure and markets for global exports, availability of capital and the development of new gas-bearing formations. Forecasts like this one are the intellectual “feedstock” for government policy, such as the determination (*by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission*) that exporting Marcellus gas will not harm the domestic economy because the potential supply of shale gas is so vast. The same forecasts are cited on Wall Street as reasons

for investing in companies that depend on cheap and available energy.



*Official US economic forecast of domestic natural gas shows extraction continuing to grow through 2040 and beyond.*

Official US economic forecast of domestic natural gas shows extraction continuing to grow through 2040 and beyond.

So, if you’re looking for optimism, there’s a lot to be found. Unfortunately, the optimists on each side are optimistic about precisely the opposite outcomes. And **that** isn’t encouraging.

*John Detwiler*

# Solar is Hot In W.PA

The fastest growth in new electricity generation in the world is natural gas – wait, no, it’s not - it’s actually solar!

In the first quarter of 2015, solar was the predominate energy source for all new electricity capacity in the United States, outpacing new generation from natural gas and wind combined (the second and third contributors, respectively: see <http://cleantechnica.com/2015/05/10/renewables-84-of-new-electricity-generation-capacity-in-1st-quarter-of-2015/>).

According to the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), overall solar capacity increased from 500MW in 2004 to 20 GW this year. Next year, solar capacity is expected to double, reaching 40GW. Solar power in the U.S. now supplies enough electricity to meet the equivalent of the yearly demand of Hawaii, Rhode Island, Alaska and Vermont – just 46 more states-worth until we’re at 100%! (<http://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/us-solar-electricity-production-50-higher-than-previously-thought>).

Despite these advances, the U.S. is lagging behind the leading solar nation - Germany – that during a day in July produced 78% of its electricity from renewables, with a large portion from solar. We wonder – could Pittsburgh be the new Germany some day?

Of course, but western Pennsylvania has a long way to go to catch up, even though our technological capability is much greater. Germany receives as much sun as Alaska, yet they are decades ahead of us in their political willingness and societal appetite for solar. In Pennsylvania, there are 8,000 solar systems, but western Pennsylvania solar amounts to only a pittance of that total, with a mere 220 systems in Allegheny County (*less than 3%*).

However, there is momentum growing in our region through a new program called Solarize Allegheny, a project funded by the Heinz Endowments and managed by the nonprofit marketing firm SmartPower to highlight the benefits of solar investment to home and business owners. The campaign started in January in five communities – Point Breeze; Etna; Millvale; Moon Township; and South Fayette Township – that had applied to be selected for community outreach activities over a 20-week period. This summer, three additional communities were added: the team of Friendship-Highland Park-Morningside; Ross Township; and Squirrel Hill.

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The campaign provides education about solar energy to community members and links them to local, qualified solar installers – making the process simple and straightforward for participants. Because the campaign is providing leads to the installers and they are competing with each other to win the business, the campaign process is also lowering the cost of solar for customers.

The enthusiasm and interest has been overwhelming. So far, 300 people have requested quotes from the solar installers with 20 people signing solar contracts and about 130 people still in the decision making phase. The remainder will not be going solar because of shading problems or other considerations. Because of the increase in exposure, the solar installers have seen an uptake in their business outside of the campaign as well – even those installers who are not active in the program. Therefore, we predict that there will be 60 – 70 new systems by the end of the year. In comparison – in all of last year, only 16 solar installations were installed throughout the County.

Even though outreach is focused on specific communities, anyone can go through the campaign to request a solar quote by going to the website [www.solarizeallegheny.org](http://www.solarizeallegheny.org). Click on the blue button “Find Out if My Home is Good for Solar” and fill out your contact information and details about your roof and electric bill. Your information is automatically sent to the pre-screened, qualified installers who will contact you about next steps and provide you with a quote. All you have to do is select the quote you like; they take care of the rest so that you can start generating pollution-free, carbon-free energy.

The cost of solar is half of what it was in 2010 and is now about the cost of the monthly electric bill with a solar loan or home equity line of credit. The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) of Pittsburgh offers a 0%-interest Home Improvement Loan that can be used for solar for people with qualifying incomes, making the cost of electricity more affordable than dirty, fossil fuel electricity.

### **Solar is just warming up in western Pennsylvania, but it’s spreading like wildfire!**

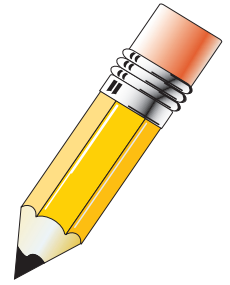
*Sharon Pillar, Solarize Allegheny*

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## **Notes from the Chair**

### **Making a Difference:**



### **Fall 2015**

Surprise! Surprise! The summer has flown by despite, or perhaps because of, some time for vacations with family and the opportunity to hike, bike, garden and just enjoy nature and the beautiful outdoors. Hope all of you were able to enjoy some time with family and friends during these past few months since our last issue.

I am most excited about the national Sierra Club’s launch of its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) campaign. We are very enthusiastic about this effort designed to build a movement for social and economic justice and change. Please read the article on page 8, “Join us in This Walk Through the World Together”, by Aaron Mair, President of the Sierra Club’s Board of Directors. He clearly explains the purpose and commitment of the DEI campaign. Locally, we are reaching out to communities and organizations to determine how the Sierra Club can work with them in addressing concerns relevant to their communities. Environmental issues are completely intertwined with social and economic justice issues. We all know that the industries that are most likely to pollute the air and contaminate water resources are too often located in communities dominated by low income workers and people of color.

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We must attend aggressively to such issues.

The Allegheny Group continues to collaborate with other organizations to address many environmental issues around southwestern Pennsylvania. Articles within this newsletter address issues concerning coal ash and mining under streams in Greene and Fayette counties, protecting Allegheny County parks from fracking, storm water concerns with our Clean Rivers Campaign, progress on increasing solar panel installation in the area, and Climate Change work through our new Pittsburgh 350.org group.

I want to alert you to our Executive Committee Elections that will be held again this fall. We need your EMAIL ADDRESS to reduce the cost of conducting these elections. Our By-Laws require that all our Allegheny Group members (*over 5000*) have the opportunity to vote. If we have your email address, we can send you the information and ballot for FREE! You can vote on-line which is FREE to you. Otherwise, we need to send you a paper ballot (which costs us postage) and perhaps costs you the stamp to return the ballot. If you received a paper ballot last fall and you have an email address you are willing to share with us for yearly Executive Committee elections, please send it to: *membership.service@sierraclub.org* include your name and address.

Once again, I encourage you to review the articles in this newsletter for more details on our activities and go to our Web site, [www.alleghenysc.org](http://www.alleghenysc.org) for the latest news and events. There are many opportunities to be involved and know that **‘YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE’!**

**Thank you!** And please contact me with your questions or concerns at 412-521-9526, or *barbgrover1@gmail.com*.

*Barbara Grover, Group Chair*

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## **Regional Green Study: Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority Leading the Way**

We all want to live in a clean, vibrant Pittsburgh with good jobs and healthy neighborhoods. The Sierra Club is a founding member of the Clean Rivers Campaign that has been organizing for four years to invest in that future now. ALCOSAN, our region’s sewer authority, will spend somewhere in the neighborhood of \$3 billion to get the sewage out of our iconic three rivers. Right now when it rains – even just a little – storm-water running off roads, parking lots and other paved surfaces overwhelms our sewage treatment system and we get millions of gallons of raw sewage dumped into the Mon, the Allegheny and the Ohio. Half of the days of our boating and recreation season the water is not safe to touch.

It is good for families, workers AND the environment if we maximize this largest ever public investment in a way that stops wa-

ter pollution AND solves multiple community needs at the same time. As ratepayers, it’s our responsibility to ensure that this public investment in our infrastructure creates economic opportunities and healthy communities for generations to come.

Mayor Bill Peduto has been an important voice for a green-first approach to this major public works project. In partnership with the City of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) is undertaking the first strategic analysis of the potential of green infrastructure in the ALCOSAN service area. PWSA’s plan includes two main components. The first is an Integrated Watershed Management approach for the Saw Mill Run Watershed. The second is to evaluate the effectiveness of green infrastructure in reducing combined sewer overflows within the City limits. PWSA will look at the best locations for green

infrastructure and the additional benefits that would come with it, including reduced flooding. The Clean Rivers Campaign believes this approach is critical because investing first in strategically placed and effective green solutions will help our region to “right size” our gray infrastructure as we seek to meet the EPA’s water quality standards.

This PWSA study is also breaking ground in another critical area – regionalization. Water does not recognize municipal boundaries, so we need a regional approach that studies water in the ways that it flows naturally. PWSA has been working closely with the several municipalities along the Saw Mill Run corridor and their new Watershed Association in the Integrated Watershed Management Plan. It will study how water flows and how combinations of green and

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gray infrastructure can maximize water quality. It will then identify green demonstration projects that will begin to improve that water quality right away – for the whole watershed. Working with multiple communities is critical to finding the best solutions for the service area as a whole.

Along with Saw Mill Run Watershed communities, other municipalities have expressed an interest in a cooperative approach to looking at the whole ALCOSAN service area and finding the best solutions to cleaning our region's waterways. An analysis of the potential of green infrastructure and the installation of large scale, strategic demonstration projects throughout our region is essential to showing EPA and other regulators that our region can go in a new direction.

The Clean Rivers Campaign invites *Sierra Club* members to get involved in this effort. If you want to help, contact Tom Hoffman at [tom.hoffman@sierraclub.org](mailto:tom.hoffman@sierraclub.org). Additional information is available in Post-Gazette articles: one in the June 2, 2015, edition by Diana Nelson Jones (<http://www.post-gazette.com/local/south/2015/06/02/Group-strives-to-improve-Saw-Mill-Run/stories/201506010024>); and the other in the August 13, 2015, edition, by Molly Born (<http://www.post-gazette.com/local/city/2015/08/12/Pittsburgh-Water-and-Sewer-Authority-awards-grants-for-neighborhood-stormwater-projects/stories/201508120183>).

Tom Hoffman,  
Sierra Club Conservation Program  
Coordinator-  
Clean Rivers Campaign-  
Pittsburgh

## Updates about Ten-Year Long Battle to Save Duke Lake and 9th Annual DRYerson Festival

The Center for Coalfield Justice has been fighting for the last ten years to restore Duke Lake, once a gem of Ryerson Station State Park in Greene County, PA. In late July 2015, DCNR Secretary Cindy Dunn announced



that the ground at Ryerson Station State Park is still moving and a new dam cannot be constructed. Since 2005, CCJ has been involved in the litigation between DCNR and Consol over the damage to the dam, and CCJ is now challenging a new permit expansion that would allow Consol to mine underneath fourteen streams in and around the park.

Over the years, CCJ has strived to represent the interests of the local community and everyone who values the park. From hosting the Annual DRYerson Festival, holding community meetings, engaging in litigation, and reaching out to the local community in other ways, CCJ has worked extensively around Ryerson Station State Park. On June 27, 2015, CCJ hosted the 9th Annual DRYerson Festival. This year's Festival was a special time to reflect on the loss of Duke Lake and enjoy Ryerson Station State Park, because this year marked 10 years since the lake was drawn down.

This year's festival was the first solar-powered festival ever in Greene County thanks to Zero Fossil, a Pittsburgh based company dedicated to designing and manufacturing power systems which use clean energy. Due to dredging activities at the park, the pool and pavilion areas were closed for the season, so we held the festival in the shady grove next to the park office. This area provided a view of one of the feeder streams we are fighting to protect, views of the lakebed, and trails along the edge of the lakebed. The theme for this year's festival was 'Our Streams Feed the Lake, Not Yours to Take' to emphasize the ongoing fight to save the park's streams from mine subsidence and preserve fishing and recreation opportunities in the park.

Although the streams in and around the park will not serve as feeder streams to a restored Duke Lake now, there is all the more reason to protect them because they will be a main source of recreation and the only spots for fishing within the park. CCJ's appeal challenging DEP's approval of a permit for Consol to undermine these precious streams is more important than ever today, and we will continue to work to protect the fourteen streams under threat from current longwall mining. DEP

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continues to issue permits for mining which are predicted to have impacts that will devastate the park and surrounding area. To help support this fight, make a target donation to the Ryerson Campaign at donation link ([www.bit.ly/DefendRyerson](http://www.bit.ly/DefendRyerson)) or mail a check to the CCJ office at *P.O. Box 4023, Washington, PA 15301*, with "Ryerson" in the memo line.

The Center for Coalfield Justice is committed to staying engaged as DCNR moves forward with accepting proposals for how it can use the money from the Duke Lake settlement to enhance Ryerson Station State Park and preserve it for future generations.

Board Member Chuck Hunnell and I are both on the Duke Lake Task Force, which has been reconvened to work on solutions in light of the news that a new dam cannot be reconstructed. We will provide updates as this process moves forward, reporting back from task force meetings and sharing feedback from you all with the task force and other state officials.

The Task Force is meeting in August and there will be a public meeting in September, open to the public, to receive input on projects for the park. Please contact me ([veronica@coalfieldjustice.org](mailto:veronica@coalfieldjustice.org)) with any questions or suggestions on how you would like to see DCNR invest in Ryerson Station State Park (and look for updates on the dates of both meetings). And for further information on this and other related issues, please see the CCJ website (<http://coalfieldjustice.org/>).

*Veronica Coptis, Deputy Director,  
Center for Coalfield Justice*

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## People Are Organizing in LaBelle

Along the Monongahela River, in Fayette County, there is a small community called LaBelle. Once home to the largest coal processing facility in the country, the residents have long felt the legacy impacts of the coal industry.

Since 1997, the community has been a dumping ground for the toxic waste material resulting from the burning of coal-coal ash. Coal ash contains a variety of heavy metals, including lead, arsenic, mercury, barium, cadmium, chromium, thallium, selenium, and so on. Coal ash issues have been in the spotlight as a major environmental issue across the nation following the recent coal ash spills in Tennessee and North Carolina.

But now there is HOPE in LaBelle. A new community group -- Helping Organize to Protect our Environment -- has recently formed in LaBelle, PA. The group's mission is to work together towards a healthy and safe environment for their families and future generations by putting a stop to the impacts of the toxic coal ash dump and contaminated water sources in this community. Many people in LaBelle have experienced negative health impacts that can be linked to exposure to coal ash such as respiratory problems, skin conditions, thyroid problems, kidney problems, and various forms of cancer.

To get a better understanding of the health issues in the community, HOPE for LaBelle will be conducting a health survey of local residents. The survey is in coordination with a health survey that is being conducted at the nearby maximum security prison, State Correctional Institute Fayette, by a human rights based legal organization, the Abolitionist Law Center. People who are incarcerated and people who work in the prison have experienced similar health impacts as people living in LaBelle. Collecting health surveys from community members, prisoners, and prison guards will create a full picture of health impacts and allow for a comprehensive assessment of impacts in the area.

HOPE for LaBelle is hoping that this health survey will encourage community members to get more involved with the group and actively speak out about the impacts they have experienced due to the toxic coal ash dump in their back yards. Community members have been working for years to make their voices heard and to have the coal ash dump shut down and cleaned up. Now people across this community are working together and amplifying their power.

For further information on this and other issues, please see the CCJ website (<http://coalfieldjustice.org/>).

*Eva Westheimer, Community Organizer,  
Center for Coalfield Justice*

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# Join Us in This Walk Through the World Together

I was pleased to be a part of the Sierra Club Board of Directors' historic effort in May 2015 to approve our multi-year Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan. One of the significant points about adopting DEI at this time was to ensure that the Sierra Club moves forward to engage and encourage the entire organization to value and learn from our nation's rich, diverse mosaic of people and cultures. This is critical if we are going to be serious about our organization's core mission to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth.

No one race alone can speak for all human experience or determine what constitutes fair, adequate, and inclusive stewardship of the environment. Moreover, no one group of people speaks for all species or living things that do not have voices to speak for themselves. We all do. In order to enjoy and restore and protect these resources, we must struggle and build new communities of respect and awareness of our interdependence. In short, we must build a new inclusive environmental movement.

The Pope just last week identified that our capitalist and colonial heritage of exploiting natural resources, people, lands, water, and air for the benefit of a few is neither sustainable nor morally responsible. In fact, it has led to a degradation of the people, species, and the planet.

Our current society has created a culture of privilege for the few at the expense of the many -- and at the expense of the planet. To correct that, we must break down barriers of race, class, and social privilege or entitlement to build a movement that is inclusive, diverse, respectful, and truly welcoming to people of color and First Nations. We must move beyond the paradigm of one group's perspective on the environment -- and environmentalism -- to build a movement that is transparent, inclusive, and representative of all Americans' perspectives.

The Sierra Club's DEI Plan and organizational cultural shift will provide individuals, groups, and chapters with guidance to help them articulate and advocate for justice and fairness in local and

state policy settings, as well as adapt local strategies that recognize the concerns and needs of local partners.

The tragic events in South Carolina last week illustrate how warped perceptions of one race, people, or culture directly and deeply affect others' right to live, enjoy, and share our planet. Our nation, and by extension the Sierra Club, has long delayed serious, meaningful, and open conversation on being open-minded, accepting, and respectful of other races, groups, and their right to share this planet.

Like our nation, the Club has failed to connect with these communities to understand how they often face the front-line impacts of pollution and environmental degradation created by a governing and regulatory framework from which their voices are being blocked by "voter ID" schemes that have historically denied these communities a say in shaping their lives. The Club has not been immune to this culture of privilege and the advantages that privilege conveys to one segment of America at the expense of all others.

The problem is not simply privilege; it is also the failure to recognize that conscious and unconscious perceptions and beliefs about race, economics, land use, and politics can have deadly impacts. (The Charleston shooter was a 21-year-old whose actions were anchored in his beliefs about African Americans.) Charleston is a reminder of how deep we must dig -- as a nation, a people, and a Club -- to deprogram our communities, culture, and society of class privi-

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lege so that racism and all its associated evils are recognized and dismantled.

This journey to build a diverse and inclusive environmental movement is not optional, nor should it be perceived as a distraction from our environmental work. DEI is more than the work; it is the work ethic! Without these ethics and values our work cannot be done. This is part of that deep population morality, respect for others, and stewardship of the planet that the Pope spoke of.

The Pope has reminded us that we have built a nation -- or more correctly, many nations -- whose power happens to be rooted in injustice to others and the destruction of our planet. We as environmentalists must tear down these exploitative constructs that view people and nature as raw materials for the benefit of the few and move to create new constructs in nurturing new sets of relationships that value nature and mankind so that we can save the planet.

We are really shaking off our colonial ancestors' attitudes that were not sustainable at the founding of this nation, and have proven to be unsustainable even now. In fact, it is this colonial privilege and attitude of entitlement that has held back the Club from being a true population- and planet-mobilizing resource. Our skills and resources are now being called upon with unprecedented urgency to solve the climate and extinction crisis and to restore our democracy and redress the legacy of exclusion.

*By Aaron Mair, June 22, 2015.*

*Mr. Mair, of Schenectady, New York, is the president of the Sierra Club's board of directors. An epidemiological-spatial analyst with the New York State Department of Health, Mair's experience includes more than three decades of environmental activism and over 25 years as a Sierra Club volunteer leader, where he has worked diligently for environmental justice. Source for this article: <http://www.sierraclub.org/change/2015/06/join-us-walk-through-world-together>.*

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## How to Accomplish Our Goals for Operation Diversity

The national Sierra Club Board of Directors has announced a new strategic plan. It is a good plan, but flawed from the second sentence on. When the Board says, "Since you are grassroots . . ." it has started off on the wrong foot. The relationship of Board to membership immediately translates as the relationship we find in senior professor to freshman student. It is the kind of relationship that makes it easy for us in the trenches to put ducking before charging (*to use an infantry metaphor*).

Those of us in the lower echelons can admire the plan, even approve of it; but we also find it easy to say, "Okay, it's your plan. Do it."

The first and perhaps most important point of the plan is that the Sierra Club needs to be more diverse. We need to include ethnic

and racial groups whom we have ignored and/or patronized. We need to reach out to labor, blue collar workers, many of whom work for industries that aren't exactly green. We need to include religious minorities. We need to take up justice issues that aren't narrowly environmental, recognizing that environmental justice is related to other justice issues. We need to reach out to business people, especially those who are threatened by expansion of bigger and less local business. To the extent that we are old, we need to reach out to the young.

But none of this comes easy. None of reaching out works if it does not involve as much listening as telling. Telling us what we should do doesn't work if telling comes like an edict from above.

We are the elite. We are the right minded. We are sincere. We are the knowing. How can we listen to commoners?

Do you see where I am going? The Board has told us that they are elite and that as commoners we should listen. That they are right doesn't make their task easier or their edicts easier to swallow.

One laudable goal is to "Address non-energy emissions such as agriculture and methane." How do we "address" farmers about that? Do we tell them that their emissions are increasing global warming, and that they should do something? At some point do we listen? They are grassroots. We know the answers. How do we discuss this issue with them? Farmers should be real partners, but right now they believe

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in the Farm Bureau and the Farm Bureau sees us as the enemy. Is this something we can change?

I am an old guy. I should welcome young guys and gals into the Club. But I know the answers and they don't. Do I really have to listen to them? If we are to be inclusive, the answer is "yes."

A SUGGESTION: As a lowly grassroots person, I'm not at all sure my suggestion will be taken seriously, but here it is, anyway:

The final section of the Board's plan is headed: "ENSURE OUR FINANCIAL STRENGTH AND SUSTAINABILITY." It mentions fundraising and other things and then concludes with the following point: "Ensure that all of our chapters and groups have the financial resources and opportunities to succeed." Beyond fundraising (which got us into trouble recently), one thing we could do is to move the headquarters out of the most expensive city in America. If we move to the Midwest, all aspects of our headquarters costs – including salaries – will go down. Think of reduced airline travel and lower energy consumption as an added savings. I know that Sierra Club has an historical connection to San Francisco. Let's end the excess expense and energy consumption.

Let's quit paying excessive but necessary staff salaries. The savings can be used for conservation programs.

*Phil Coleman (originally published in "The Sylvanian," the newsletter of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club)*

# SPEECHES FROM THE PITTSBURGH CLIMATE ACTION RALLY

## Pittsburgh Climate Action Rally, June 21, 2015

Held on the Northside of Pittsburgh, the rally was organized by 'Pittsburgh350' and co-sponsored by: Allegheny County Clean Air Now; Allegheny Defense Project; Allegheny Group – Sierra Club; Center for Coalfield Justice; Citizens Climate Lobby – PGH; Clean Rivers Campaign; Clean Water Action; Communitytopia; Divest Pittsburgh; Fight Back Pittsburgh; GASP; Green Faith; Marcellus Outreach Butler; Marcellus Protest; Mountain Watershed Association; Nature Abounds; New Voices Pittsburgh; Nine Mile Run Watershed Association; Penn Environment; PennFuture; Pennsylvanians Against Fracking; Pittsburgh-Matanzas Sister City Partnership; Pittsburghers for Public Transit; Pittsburgh United: SEIU32bj; Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter; Solarize Allegheny; Three Rivers Rising Tide; Green Sanctuary Committee, First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh; and Women for a Healthy Environment.

Following are the texts of the various statements for the Rally. Chris Bangs from Divest Pittsburgh and Evan Endres from Penn Future also spoke.

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# Part 1

## Impact of the Climate Crisis

Wanda Guthrie

Green Faith:

Thomas Merton Center:

Pope Francis's long awaited encyclical is finally here! On Sunday, June 28, there will be a huge rally marching to St. Peter's Square where people of many faiths and those of no faith will celebrate. Around the world bells, gongs, chimes, and shofars will herald the letter addressed to the world at noon.

One hundred and fifty young faith leaders from all over the world are arriving in Rome now to meet and learn how to carry this message home. This is a pivotal time in our world history. The letter is full of implications and recommendations and the implications for the compassionate care of all Creation.

The Pope writes that what we need is "a global consensus that could lead to the planning of sustainable and diversified agriculture; better forest and marine management; development of renewable and less polluting forms of energy; and universal access to drinking water."

How are we to reach a global consensus? We will certainly have to try.

The spirit of the Encyclical calls us to a newer approach. It calls for "deeply spiritual work," work that aims to uncover the profound wisdom that our traditions, old and new can share.

Moreover, "deeply spiritual work" may seek not only intellectual understanding of these shared truths but also the great wisdom for concerted action -- we can create

# SPEECHES FROM THE PITTSBURGH CLIMATE ACTION RALLY

a new kind of world community to address shared problems. Our future depends on it.

This letter clearly expresses how seriously he takes the cry of the earth. He laments the coral reefs, writing "who turned the wonder-world of the seas into underwater cemeteries bereft of color and life?"

He has clearly managed to make the ecological crisis inescapable.

I cannot do this letter justice. Pope Francis writes, "We can finally leave behind the modern myth of unlimited material progress. A fragile world, entrusted by God to human care, challenges us to devise intelligent ways of directing, developing, and limiting our power." As Bill McKibben remarked of the letter, because "Our way of life literally doesn't work!"

The Earth population is nearing eight billion mostly poor people. As we prepare for the UN Climate gathering in Paris we are called to remember that the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor cannot be separated. It really just doesn't work.

---

*Michelle Naccarati-Chapki*

*Women for a Healthy Environment:*

Our dependence on fossil fuels is impacting every aspect of our community, from extreme weather patterns, to public health, to changes in our food system.

### **Extreme Weather Patterns:**

Scientific studies indicate that extreme weather events such as

heat waves and large storms are likely to become more frequent or more intense with human-induced climate change. Between 1958 and 2010, the Northeast saw more than a 70% increase in the amount of precipitation falling in very heavy events. If we continue on this trajectory, what's ahead?

### **More frequent heat waves:**

Record-setting daily high temperatures have become more common than record lows. The decade from 2000 to 2009 had twice as many record highs as record lows.

More significant storms, which impact life on so many fronts: human lives taken, displaced families, loss of home and personal property, destruction of infrastructure, and economic hardship.

A higher number of droughts with water restrictions.

An increase in wildfires and losses to our forests and ecosystems.

More extreme snowfalls from increased precipitation.

An increase in heavy precipitation events leading to more flash flooding as often witnessed in our own backyards. Current 100-year flood levels will change and we are now predicted to have 100-year flood events every 10 to 22 years.

Flooding also leads to water-borne illnesses from sewage overflows (already a stressed system in our City) and a breeding ground for insects carrying disease.

*Continued on page 12*

# SPEECHES FROM THE PITTSBURGH CLIMATE ACTION RALLY

## Public Health Impacts:

More hot summer days, which means a greater impact to air pollution. This certainly won't help our Pittsburgh region, as we continue to grace the top of many lists for our poor air quality and increased asthma rates. This translates to more air quality action days. We've already had several of those this year. Poor air quality impacts all of us including those most vulnerable: children, the elderly, those with respiratory disease, those who work outdoors, and those without access to air conditioning. According to the US Climate Change Science Program, northeastern cities are likely to experience some of the highest numbers of heat-related illnesses and deaths, compared with the rest of the nation.

Itchy eyes, runny nose, constant sneezing? Are you one of the estimated 25 million Americans suffering from allergies? Unfortunately, an increase in temperatures, carbon dioxide and precipitation is proving to make our allergy symptoms worse and longer every season.

Spring will arrive earlier, meaning longer days for tree pollen sufferers. A study out of Rutgers found that pollen counts over the past five years have been double that of any prior five-year period. During the fall we now see more ragweed days. Quest Diagnostics found a 15% increase in ragweed sensitivity from 2005 to 2009.

And it's likely that non-sufferers will be impacted by these allergens as well and will develop symptoms. An increase in ground level ozone results in an increase in asthma rates. Already a national epidemic, Federal data report a 17% increase in U.S. asthma prevalence from 2001 through mid-2012.

Allergies and asthma already cost the United States nearly \$33 billion annually in direct health care costs and lost productivity. How often will my daughter, many of you, and all the other asthma sufferers now have to reach for their inhalers?

And it's important to remember that mental stress increases with all of these events and public health impacts.

## Food and Climate Change:

What does climate change mean for our food system, the basic building block on which we live, grow and thrive? The National Climate Assessment, a team of more than 300 experts guided by a 60-member Federal Advisory Committee has stated how climate change will impact our access to food. Agriculture contributes \$200 billion to the economy each year and it's an industry that depends greatly on climate. However, climate change is threatening this industry daily.

Many agricultural regions will experience declines in crop and livestock production from increased stress due to: heat and drought damage, degraded cropland soil, increased soil erosion, weeds, diseases, insect pests, and other climate change induced stresses.

High night-time temperatures can reduce grain yields and increase stress on animals, resulting in reduced rates of meat, milk, and egg

production. Habitat ranges for fish are shifting. Plant hardiness zones have shifted north. The security of our food supply will be impacted as we face:

Decline in crop yields

Increased risk of hunger

Risk of crop failure on a year-to-year basis

Change in price

Each of these factors affects food processing, storage, transportation, and retailing. That which nourishes us each and every day, our food, is becoming greatly impacted by our change in climate.

In closing, the risks of climate change are real and each and every one of us is part of the solution. Let's stand together today to raise awareness, take personal action, and call upon our elected officials to be a part of the solution and enact legislation that protects our health, our environment, and our climate.

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*Veronica Coptis*

*Center for Coalfield Justice:*

Hello, I am Veronica Coptis, Deputy Director with the Center for Coalfield Justice. The Center for Coalfield Justice is a grassroots environmental justice organization that works with communities being negatively impacted by longwall mining and fracking in southwestern Pennsylvania. Longwall mining is an extreme form of underground mining that leads to dewatered streams, destroyed homes and is devastating our communities' way of life.

I grew up in the coalfields of western Greene County, next to the largest coal processing facility in the country which caused a valley

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# SPEECHES FROM THE PITTSBURGH CLIMATE ACTION RALLY

to be filled with toxic waste. Currently, my home in eastern Greene County is surrounded by fracking. My husband and I cannot enjoy sitting on our front porch because of the constant truck traffic and have to wonder how much air pollution we are being exposed to and whether it is safe to start a family.

The impacts of climate change are disproportionately forced onto environmental justice communities, which are communities where people of color and/or lower income folks live. Southwestern Pennsylvania has too many environmental justice communities that are bearing the costs of producing fossil fuels. There is no such thing as cheap energy. There is energy where the companies pay the true costs of their actions, and energy where someone else pays those costs. In the end, most often, it is coalfield residents who pay the most immediate price. The looming climate crisis will call all of us to pay. It is only a matter of time.

This region is ground zero for fracking and mining activities that are contributing to the climate crisis and devastating the communities in which they operate at the same time.

Do you want to join the fight to keep dirty fossil fuels in the ground to stop the climate crisis and help frontline communities?

Do you know that the largest underground coal mine in the country is only 40 miles south from here?

Are you fighting for change not only across the globe, but also close to home? Companies like Consol Energy are scrambling to dig as much coal as they possibly can, before they are truly held accountable.

Are you going to help us in this fight? From city sidewalks to county roads we need to band together and unify our voices demanding a better future and stop of the current destruction from extreme extraction!

How many of you are from Pittsburgh? I challenge you all to support the folks facing extraction everyday by attending the 9th Annual DRYerson Festival, this Saturday, June 27th from 1-4 at Ryerson Station State Park, where we are fighting to keep more than 50 millions of tons of coal in the ground and protect public lands.

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*Mel Packer*

*Marcellus Protest:*

I was tasked with making the connection between fracking and climate change. But I suspect that doesn't need to be explained here. So instead, I'm going to touch somewhat generally on the concept of climate, what it is, whose climate it is, and what it can be.

First, fracking, along with shale oil, bomb trains, pipelines, and coal burning is not our main climate problem that must be changed. OUR climate problem is the climate created and operated by a predatory, sociopathic, and very small group of folks who use the economic system of capitalism to screw the 99.99% of creatures who inhabit this planet.

THEY subscribe to a philosophy of unbridled growth, that more is always better, that perpetual and

ever-increasing debt is good for us and for our nations, and that a climate of exploitation is the pinnacle of success for all. THEIR climate is one in which they destroy democracy by buying our federal, state, and even local politicians by handing out bribes disguised as "campaign contributions."

THEIR climate is, quite simply, toxic to all and must be replaced with "non-toxic climate" that serves all of us. And, if we are to live as moral and ethical human beings, we must not allow the word "climate" to be limited to just thinking about air, water, and land, but must understand that our "climate" is the world around us, from the coal mines of WV to the homeless living in the slums of Lagos, Nigeria, the refugees of our wars in the Middle East, and even those being displaced from their dwellings in our very own East Liberty by profiteering developers who see the poor as "expendable."

We are, as the Pope has so eloquently stated, under attack from a brutal class of corporations that sees THEIR climate as something they have a right to pollute, to control, to own, and most of all to profit from at our expense.

THEIR "climate" is one in which they are allowed to poison our water, land, and air as long as they hold up the promise of a few jobs. THEIR climate not only poisons our physical environment, but it poisons our lifestyles, our way of thinking, and even the allegedly democratic processes we somehow have been deluded into thinking represent our interests.

But the climate most of us are born into is one in which we, as individuals, are creatures of innocence, seeking only love, warmth, and security from others. And, as

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# SPEECHES FROM THE PITTSBURGH CLIMATE ACTION RALLY

very young children, we often naturally share with others and understand that those who harm others are evil. But, as we grow, we are eased into THEIR climate that permits and even encourages exploitation of everything and everyone around us, and we, all too often, come to accept this as something that cannot be changed.

Well, we are wrong. We are wrong if we believe that. Because we know, from our history, that a new climate of peace and justice can be created if we are allowed to work cooperatively. That climate change, whether it refers to the air, water, and land or the economic systems that are toxic to us, is possible . . . and desperately needed.

But we must also understand that “climate change” means “change” to the entire world in which we live, that the battle to prevent planetary destruction by the financial ruling class is a battle not only FOR climate justice but AGAINST the climate INjustice that permits and even encourages such evils as racism, wars, homophobia, and the lack of financial security for the 99.99% of the world.

For we will never achieve climate justice if we do not simultaneously take on every aspect of climate injustice. They are inextricably linked. The latter cannot be won by ignoring the former and vice-versa. To do less is to fail in our responsibility as moral and ethical human beings. For the sake of our children and our children’s chil-

dren, we must not fail to fight for an all-inclusive climate change of justice for all . . . and to win.

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Zoe Ofomata

*PennEnvironment:*

While I’m not originally from PA, spending four years here for school has made Pittsburgh start to truly feel like home.

It’s also one of the best places to be when it comes to fighting climate change for one simple reason: our power plants are dirty. They are really dirty. In fact, Pennsylvania power plants are the third largest global warming polluter in the nation. And they are responsible for half a percent of the entire world’s carbon pollution. That’s a lot of pollution.

Today’s rally is about many things because there are many fronts in the fight against climate change. But, we have an opportunity right now to slash the pollution spewing from power plants. A new EPA proposal will slash this pollution by 30% by 2030 under the Clean Air Act. That’s a huge step forward. And it will drive investments in renewables and energy efficiency.

But King Coal is teaming up with their allies in the Senate to stop the EPA in its tracks. And our Senator Casey hasn’t publicly supported this effort. And we need him. We need him to stand up to energy companies and say, “I’ve seen the damages from global warming.” We need him to stand up to the coal industry and say “Climate Change is a moral issue.” We need him to stand up to the oil companies and say, “I stand with our kids.”

Today is just a step to ensure Senator Casey stands with us—and

I need everyone here to join PennEnvironment and many groups who helped make today possible. Give a few hours to organize an event, collect letters from your friends, write a letter to the local paper.

If you want to stay involved or get more involved, we’ve got volunteers in the crowd passing around petitions to Senator Casey and telling you what the next steps in this campaign with PennEnvironment are.

Together, we’ll get Senator Casey on our side. And together we can begin to invest in solar, wind and other forms of clean, renewable energy to ensure our health and the health of generations to come. A future where we slash carbon pollution from power plants.

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## Part 2 Steps We Can Take

*Dr. Randy Wiesenmayer*

*Citizens Climate Lobby*

Politicians don’t create political will, they respond to it. Citizens Climate Lobby is a non-partisan and non-profit group creating the political will for a livable world. Based on what climate scientists and economists tell us, we believe that a carbon-pollution fee-and-dividend is the best FIRST step that we can take.

There are a lot of reasons to feel discouraged about the directions humanity is taking our planet, But hopelessness is not a strategy for making a difference and neither is acting alone.

Billionaires and Corporations

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# **SPEECHES** **FROM THE** **PITTSBURGH** **CLIMATE ACTION** **RALLY**

have millions of dollars to spend and they are using those dollars to influence members of Congress. But We the People have millions of voices!!! We must raise our voices together so they can hear us in Congress.

We have a plan. We have hope. We continue to lobby Congress to pass a revenue neutral fee on carbon dioxide emissions that will both boost our economy AND drastically cut our carbon dioxide pollution.

In the week of June 22 members from Citizens Climate Lobby represented you in Washington DC. There were five us joining over 900 other members of the Citizens Climate Lobby from around the country, including Dr. James Hansen. But now we need your help.

Call your members of Congress today and leave a voicemail message to support a revenue neutral fee and dividend on carbon dioxide. Your calls, together with thousands more, will make sure they hear us. Learn more about our carbon pollution fee and dividend proposal at [www.citizensclimatelobby.org](http://www.citizensclimatelobby.org).

When "We the People" lead, government will follow!! Please let your voice be heard!!

*Dr. Joylette Portlock*

*Communitopia*

First, a little known fact: 97% of climate scientists and every science academy in the world are telling us that we've got a big problem. For a long time, the climate crisis has remained unsolved. Not because the science isn't clear about the need to act. Not because we lack the technology. Our problems aren't technological, they're psychological.

The good news is that more than ever before, there is a growing movement to overcome the misinformation and get this right. You can see the results in the Pope's encyclical urging climate action, and you can see it in the leaders of the G7 countries agreeing to phase out fossil fuels this century. You can see it in the rise of solar and wind energy (our fastest growing energy sector), in the growing divestment movement, and in businesses embracing efficiency and clean energy. The good news is real, and points to change in a system that many believed and still believe would never change. But the challenge before us is also still very real. The job is not done, when oil barons pledge almost a billion dollars to buy our next election, and close to a third of Congress actively denies the evidence of the human fingerprints on our changing climate.

We need a transition to energy sources that will give us a fighting chance to stabilize our climate before billions suffer. The most important part of any climate solution? It's all hands on deck. We need the retirees looking for lower energy bills, the students looking for a better future, the workers looking for training and job prospects in the industries of tomorrow, the parents who want to create a better legacy, AND the vegan EV

drivers who already have geothermal heating systems installed at their home. Because this is about what humanity - what all of us require to thrive on this planet. All of us, including coal miners, need a transition to an economy that protects the land, our health, and our bottom line. This is everyone's fight, and everyone's right.

I could talk about all the different individual things to do - increase energy efficiency, green our power supply, make smarter transportation choices, and support policies to make doing all that easier for everyone. But above all, as a society, we need to accept that in the future, what are seen now as "green" actions or "environmentalism" will just be "the way."

It will take hope, and perseverance, and as most of you here already know - a lot of hard work. But it's time to free ourselves from thinking of the future with guilt and remorse, and focus instead on renewing the promise of tomorrow.

These are exciting times. Times for the history books. Because when the story of this time is written, the story of this rally, and this movement, and this chapter in our history - I believe it will be written with gratitude, to each of us, at all levels of this society, who stood up and chose not to settle for the dystopic future that the billion dollar fossil fuel industry wants to sell us.

Science reminds us again and again and again that the cost of that future is too high. I see us instead, creating a future of our design, that we've purposefully built, not just to meet the needs of this moment, but meet the needs of the next moment, and all the moments yet to come. I see us rising to this challenge, and I am proud of us.

*Continued on next page*

# SPEECHES FROM THE PITTSBURGH CLIMATE ACTION RALLY

## Closing Remarks

*Dr. Patricia DeMarco*  
*Visiting Researcher,*  
*Carnegie Mellon University*

Thank you all for coming out today for the Pittsburgh-350 Climate Action Rally. I am Patty DeMarco, Rachel Carson scholar, researcher and writer, with the Green Sciences Institute at Carnegie Mellon University. We are here on this first day of summer to stand together and bring attention to the urgent need for action on climate change. A symbolic walk from here to Point Park calls attention to the need to MOVE from awareness to ACTION!

It is important to know what we are doing when we come together to make a physical statement as a group. In the words of one of our Pittsburgh Heroes from the beginning of the environment movement, Rachel Carson, “We should be very clear about what our cause is. What do we oppose? What do we stand FOR?”

We have heard the description of the problems we face in the health effects of climate change, the social inequity of coal and gas extraction, and the erosion of our humanity from the constant blight of pollution. We know that action requires the motivation of supporting a posi-

tive result, not only opposition to the current situation. We have heard of our opportunities to support a carbon tax, and to divest from fossil resources and use renewable energy, and the importance of each person taking action.

It is important for us to stand together. To help each other – to remain steadfast in the face of all kinds of obstacles.

This movement to make significant rapid changes in the behavior that has caused this climate crisis will require all of us. I look out over this crowd, and I ask- who is not here? Who needs to be standing with us to be sure we make the deep changes that are necessary? Who do we need to reach?

We cannot leave anyone out! We need to reach to the places that are not comfortable, and try to find common ground with other people. There are hundreds of businesses in Pittsburgh participating in the efficiency initiatives of the 2030 District, with the Green Workplace challenge, developing energy efficient technology, renewable energy systems, and integrating solutions that cross boundaries. We celebrate them, though they would never walk for a march in the streets! We talk about equity and justice and diversity and recognize these values as critical and important- We must move from an attitude of tolerance to one of embracing change- in our behavior, in our attitudes, in our expectations.

I challenge each of us here today to reach one person that does not stand with us, and find common ground. We are more alike in our common humanity than different in our politics, culture or religion.

Rachel Carson showed the power of one voice – to move hearts and to move Congress.

*If we stand together, and reach out to each other we can raise a chorus of strong voices:*

*Protecting the living environment so we all can be healthy;*

*Working together for justice so we all can have peace;*

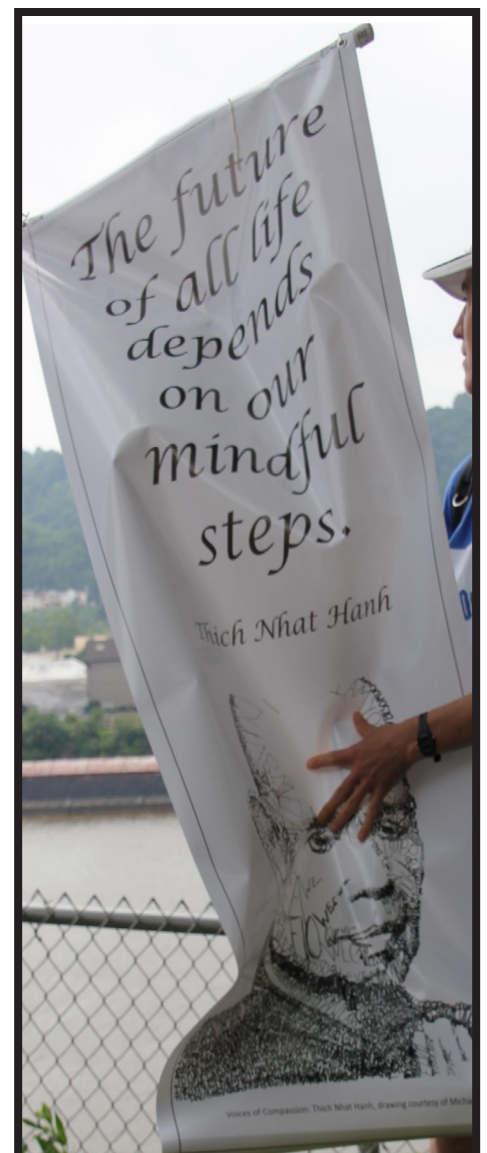
*Standing for social equity so we all can share prosperity;*

*And demanding accountability from those in power so we all can have freedom.*

*Know what you oppose and believe in what you stand for. Reach out to one more person to grow this movement for climate action*

**NOW!**

Thank you.





# Huplits Foundation Environmental Grants

The Myrtle V C Huplits and Woodman E Huplits Foundation Trust is a small family charitable trust initially established in 1990 for the purpose of supporting organizations whose work is related to animal welfare and the protection of wildlife and its habitat. This Trust was created to devote and apply the Trust Fund exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes, and for the prevention of cruelty to animals.

The Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club (ALG) is named to distribute 20 percent of the income (*dividends and interest only*) of the Trust. The four other chosen recipients are The Philadelphia Zoo, The Women's Humane Society of Philadelphia, The Nature Conservancy, and The Wilderness Society.

The amount of the first Huplits gift to the Allegheny Group was \$22,600 in 1997, following the deaths of Myrtle and Woodman Huplits in 1995. Over the ensuing eighteen years the ALG has received annual gifts from the Huplits Trustee totaling \$1,070,440.00 (*approximately \$59,500.00/year*). The ALG-Huplits Wildlife Committee administers the annual Huplits gifts to meet the goals of the Trust through public education, grassroots campaign organization, litigation, scientific research, and land acquisition.

Each year, the ALG-Huplits Wildlife Committee conducts a grant competition. The competition begins in early March when the Committee issues a Call for Proposals, which are due in early May. The Call for Proposals indicates the anticipated total funding

available to the Committee and application guidelines. It provides the required specific features of proposals: the purpose and goal of the project, its objectives, major activities, resources required, specific timelines, and a detailed budget. Typically, the maximum time for any award is two years. The Committee begins its review of the applications in early May, and it follows a standard three round process. All applicants are then notified of the results of the competition and any stipulations concerning their grant. The annual competition concludes usually at the end of June or in July.

In 2015, the ALG-Huplits Wildlife Committee awarded nine grants totaling \$49,479.00. The following are the 2015 Group recipients and a précis of the individual projects in the order they accepted their awards:

## **2015-A: Pennsylvania Chapter Sierra Club Wildlife Committee**

The Huplits Grant will provide funding for a permanent educational installation at Gull Point on Presque Isle in Erie, PA, in order to protect a vulnerable habitat. Gull Point supplies a stopover and resting point for migratory birds and is one of PA's and North America's important refuge and nest areas for birds and bats.

2015 Award: \$6,975.00

## **2015-B: ALG Pennsylvania Firefly Festival**

The Huplits Grant will help provide two years of funding in order to grow and expand the Firefly Festival's educational outreach project. Specifically, the Firefly

Festival seeks to attract greater participation from scientists; to partner with agencies (local, state, federal) overseeing PA forests and parks; and to create an internship program with local higher education institutions.

2015-2016 Award: \$10,290.00

## **2015-C: California University of PA Biological and Environmental Studies**

The Huplits Grant will help fund a scientific and professional bio-assessment of abandoned mine drainage mitigation in the Blackleggs Creek watershed of the Kiski-Conemaugh River basin. Specifically, the bio-assessment will focus on pollution problems and mine discharges on small tributaries which hamper complete watershed recovery and will provide a current measure of the efficacy of the previous remediation strategies and a benchmark for future monitoring.

2015 Award: \$3,200.00

## **2015-D: Heritage Conservancy**

The Huplits Grant will support the Heritage Conservancy's Quakertown Swamp Preserve's "Bioblitz Project," which will provide essential information and insight so that the Conservancy can implement future restoration and stewardship of the Swamp. Specifically, in the Spring of 2016 the 24 hour "Bioblitz" event will bring together teams of volunteers, scientists, and naturalists as well as teachers, students, and other community members working together to find, identify, and locate the species of flora and fauna on the Quakertown Swamp Preserve, in order to con-

*Continued on Page 18*

serve and balance the Preserve's threatened and endangered species.

2015 Award: \$6,140.00

**2015-E: Lehigh Valley Group**

The Huplits Grant will support the LHV Group's proposed "Lehigh and Delaware Canal Flow Study and Wildlife Survey" project. Historically, the Lower Lehigh River's natural aquatic ecosystem was altered by the construction of 3 dams installed to provide water for 3 canal systems for coal and goods transportation below each dam, which in turn transformed the riverine system into a series of impoundments. The flow characteristics and management are poor and deleterious to wildlife populations that establish in the canals. During a 12 month-4 seasonal period, the project will: determine the Lehigh & Delaware River canal water flow rates; document the current controlling method for the in-flow and exit-flow of the canals system; survey and record the wildlife within the canal system; and also offer alternate watering strategies that improve habitat and that do not require the Lehigh River dams.

2015 Award: \$14,880.00

**2015-F: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy**

The Huplits Grant will provide supplemental funding for "Additional important roosting and maternity habitat for imperiled bat populations in Western Pennsylvania." Specifically, the WPC's project's purpose is to increase survivorship for several cave bat species whose populations are in decline because of the white-nose syndrome infestation. WPC will conduct monitoring visits to col-

lect information on the use of the houses by bats.

2015 Award: \$3,490.00

**2015-G: Kittatinny Group**

The Huplits Grant will help initiate funding for the "Wild Places, Clean Spaces" project proposal to highlight the health and safety risks to wildlife and wild lands by the application of sewage sludge as "fertilizer." The project's primary objective is to create a multi-media educational outreach presentation, which will highlight the dangers to the environment, wildlife, flora, soil, air and water quality of the use of municipal treated sewage sludge waste marketed as a "fertilizer" on public and private wild lands.

2015 Award: \$286.00

**2015-H: Allegheny Land Trust**

The Huplits Grant will help fund the purchase in order to acquire and protect 30 acres in the Little Sewickley Creek Watershed in Bell Acres Borough, Allegheny County, PA—known as the Roby Property. The Roby Property contains a mix of woodlands, meadows, wetlands, springs and seeps, which provide a diversity of habitats (including grassland) needed for declining bird species such as the endangered upland sandpiper and eastern meadowlark. The watershed carries a DEP "High Quality" designated Trout stocked fishery and possesses some of the best quality water in Allegheny County.

2015 Award: \$1,290.00

**2015-I: Allegheny Defense Project**

The Huplits Grant will continue to help fund the Allegheny Defense Project's "Stop FERC's Fracking Pipelines Project" to protect wildlife habitat in Pennsylvania from the impacts of rampant natural

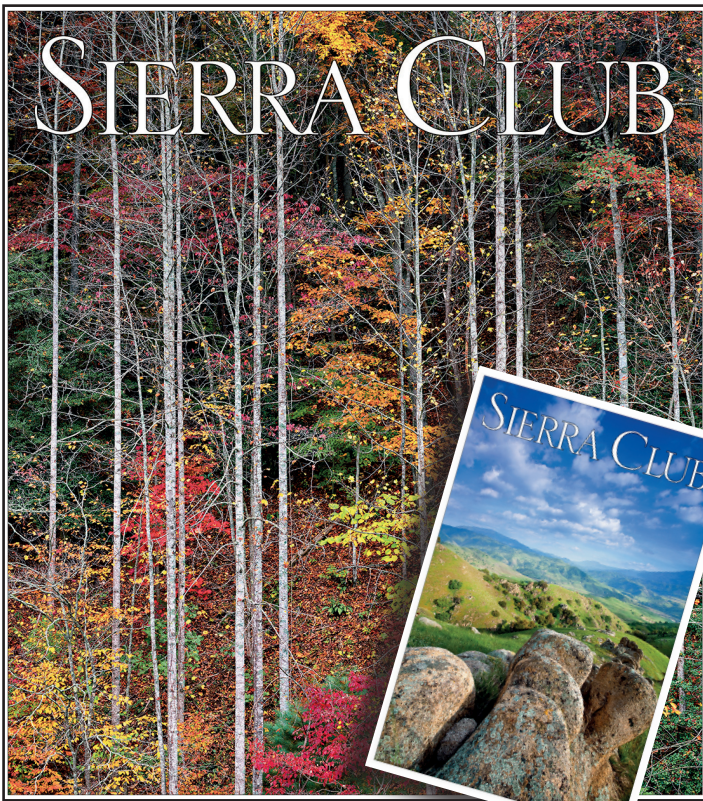
gas pipeline construction. New gas pipelines and shale gas fracking are rapidly fragmenting forested wildlife habitat throughout Pennsylvania. ADP believes that the combined impact of pipeline construction and related fracking for shale gas is the most significant environmental issue effecting wildlife in Pennsylvania.

2015 Award: \$2,928.00

*Edward J Chute, PhD.,*

*2015 ALG-Huplits Wildlife Committee Chair*

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# 2016 SIERRA CLUB CALENDARS &

## western pennsylvania hiking guides

	Cost	Quantity	Total
Engagement Calendar	\$13.95	_____	_____
Wilderness Wall Calendar	\$12.95	_____	_____

*Make checks payable to Allegheny Group, Sierra Club. Send check and order form to: Rick Arnold, 839 N. Sheridan Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15206 1bud401@gmail.com 412 600 6695*

Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_  
Shipping & Handling \* \_\_\_\_\_  
Total \_\_\_\_\_

*We have the new 2016 calendars, and they are available to be ordered. Please expect delivery within 7-10 days of placing your order.*

\* Prices include sales tax.

\* Shipping & Handling: For calendars to the same address, add \$3.50 for one item and \$0.50 for each additional item.

### Ship to

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Calendars can also be ordered online at [www.alleghenysc.org](http://www.alleghenysc.org) using a credit card.*

### Allegheny National Forest Hiking Guide

The 800-square mile Allegheny National Forest contains over 250 miles of foot trails for hiking, backpacking and ski-touring. Edition 4 of this guide describes hiking and ski-touring opportunities and points of scenic interest. 192 pages. \$9.95

### The Laurel Highlands: A Hiking Guide

This guide to the foot trails of Chestnut Ridge, Laurel Ridge and Allegheny Front covers 446 miles of foot trails, mainly in state forests and state parks. Features: directions to trailheads, ski-touring and backpacking info, difficulty ratings and more. Does not cover Laurel Highlands Trail (see separate guide). 288 pages. \$8.95

### Hiker's Guide to Laurel Highlands Trail

The 6th edition of this guide to the 70-mile Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail features: the geology, climate, vegetation and wildlife of Laurel Hill; tree identification; elevation profile; directions to the trailheads; back packing info and shelter reservations; a list of hiking organizations in the area and more! 128 pages. \$7.00

***These trail guides and other items can be ordered online at [www.alleghenysc.org](http://www.alleghenysc.org) using a credit card.***

"This is our only fundraising event of the year. When you purchase a calendar, then your donation will help us continue our important environmental work."

## Western Pennsylvania Hiking Guides

	Cost	Quantity	Total
Allegheny National Forest Hiking Guide .....	\$9.95	_____	_____
Laurel Highlands: a Hiking Guide .....	\$8.95	_____	_____
Hiker's Guide to Laurel Highlands Trail .....	\$7.00	_____	_____

*Make checks payable to Allegheny Group, Sierra Club. Send check and order form to: Rick Arnold, 839 N. Sheridan Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15206 1bud401@gmail.com*

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# Sierran

## Fall Newsletter, 2015

### Upcoming Events:

**Sept. 1, 8, 15, 22**, (and every Tuesday evening except Sept.29, Nov. 3, 23, Dec 8, 22, 29):

Activist Nights 6:30-8:30pm at the SC office, 425 N. Craig St., or 3875 Bigelow Blvd. (upper entrance) because of construction on Craig St., Suite 202, Pgh 15213 (412-802-6161). ALL are welcome. Check Events schedule at [alleghenysc.org](http://alleghenysc.org) for details.

**Sept. 9** Talk on Climate Change: What is happening, why is it happening, and what you can do about it. By Rod Elder, at the Bethel Park Library, 5100 W. Library Ave. #4, Bethel Park 15102, (412) 835-2207, 7:00pm.

**Sept. 10** EPA Stream Protection Hearing – Double Tree Hotel, Green Tree, 500 Mansfield Ave., Pgh 15205; 5:00-9:00pm; FREE. Check [alleghenysc.org](http://alleghenysc.org) for details.

**Sept 12** Landscape Today: Community Impact Summit; 8:00am-5:00pm on the Washington & Jefferson College campus in Washington, PA 15301. FREE and open to the public, and will include lunch and a cocktail hour at the end of the day. For schedule and more information, visit [coalfieldjustice.org](http://coalfieldjustice.org). Please register at <http://goo.gl/forms/6qRYfTTjnL>. Call (724)-229-3550, or e-mail [eva@coalfieldjustice.org](mailto:eva@coalfieldjustice.org) for more information and answers to any questions.

**Sept. 12** Household Chemicals Collection, South Park, Allegheny County; 9:00am -1:00pm; go to [prc.org](http://prc.org) for details.

**Sept. 14** Allegheny Group Executive Committee Meeting, 7:00-9:00pm. All Sierra Club members welcome; Sierra Club Office, 425 N. Craig St., or 3875 Bigelow Blvd. (upper entrance) because of construction on Craig St., Suite 202, Pgh 15213 (412-802-6161). If you plan to attend, please contact Barb Grover ([barbgrover1@gmail.com](mailto:barbgrover1@gmail.com)) to receive parking and building entry information.

**Sept. 26** Allegheny Green and Innovation Festival, Hartwood Acres Amphitheater, 11:00am–4:00pm. FREE: food, hay rides, fun for the family. Sierra Club will have a table there; come visit us.

**Sept. 29** Film Fest; 7:00-9:00pm; Climate Action: Creating Bridges to Clean Air; An evening showcasing selected film episodes from artists/activists, followed by a panel discussion. Pittsburgh Filmmakers, 477 Melwood Ave, Pgh, PA 15213.FREE

**Oct. 2** Clean Water Fund Event: Union Project, 203 N. Negley, Pgh; 6:00-8:30pm. Sierra Club Sponsorship: \$35 a ticket- See [cleanwateraction.org](http://cleanwateraction.org) for details.

**Oct. 3** Center for Coalfield Justice 21st Birthday Bash- Washington County Park. Email [info@coalfieldjustice.org](mailto:info@coalfieldjustice.org) or call 724-229-3550 for more information.

**Oct. 3** Hard to Recycle Collection: The Mall at Robinson, 9:00-:001pm; go to [prc.org](http://prc.org) for details

**Oct. 10** Household Chemical Collection: Bradys Run Park, Beaver County 9:00-1:00pm; go to [prc.org](http://prc.org) for details

**Oct. 12** Allegheny Group Executive Committee Meeting, 7:00-9:00pm. All Sierra Club members welcome; Sierra Club Office, 425 N. Craig St., or 3875 Bigelow Blvd. (upper entrance) because of construction on Craig St., Suite 202, Pgh 15213 (412-802-6161); Please contact Barb Grover ([barbgrover1@gmail.com](mailto:barbgrover1@gmail.com)) if you plan to attend, to receive parking and building entry information.

**Oct. 29** Talk on Climate Change: What is happening, why is it happening, and what you can do about it. By Rod Elder, at the Upper St. Claire Library, 5100 W Library Ave. #4, Bethel Park 15102 (412) 835-2207; 7:00pm.

# Sierran

## Fall Newsletter, 2015

Nov. 3 ELECTION DAY --- VOTE!

Nov. 9 Thomas Merton Center Awards Dinner; Awardee Congresswoman Barbara Lee; Sheraton Station Square, 300 W. Station Square Dr., Pgh 15219 6:00-8:30pm: \$60, scholarships available; 412-361-3022. See [thomasmertoncenter.org](http://thomasmertoncenter.org) for details.

Nov. 18 Shale & Public Health Conference; sponsored by the League of Women Voters of PA; 8:30am-5:30pm; FREE University of Pittsburgh University Club, 123 University Place, Pgh 15260; \$14 charge for lunch if desired; Register at <http://shale.palwv.org/?p=871>.

Nov. 30 - Dec. 11:

Conference of the Parties (COP21) – Climate Change Conference in Paris, France.

## Word Search

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Diversity  
Equity  
Inclusion  
fracking  
sustainability  
flooding  
climate change  
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# Allegheny Sierran

Allegheny Sierran is published by the Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club. For issues sent via the United States Postal Service, third class postage is paid at Pittsburgh, PA.

Opinions expressed in the Allegheny Sierran are those of the authors, and should not be taken as Sierra Club policy unless specifically so stated. The Allegheny Sierran is the newsletter of the Allegheny Group and is intended to keep the membership posted on the activities of the Group. Any production costs are paid from Group fundraising activities.

All parties are encouraged to respond to any of the articles we publish and submit any material they feel may be appropriate. Submissions and questions regarding newsletter content should be addressed to the editor, Claudia Kirkpatrick ([ck02@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:ck02@andrew.cmu.edu)).

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The Sierra Club's members are 700,000 of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest, and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

The Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club was organized in the early 1970s. It is one of 10 groups comprising the Pennsylvania Chapter.

## Contact Information:

Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club  
425 N. Craig Street, Suite 202  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
412-802-6161  
[info@alleghenysc.org](mailto:info@alleghenysc.org)  
[www.alleghenysc.org](http://www.alleghenysc.org)

**Matt Peters**  
(also Public Lands Chair)  
[mattnedludd@gmail.com](mailto:mattnedludd@gmail.com)

**Mike Pastorkovich**  
(also Transit Co-Chair)  
[treesnrivers@yahoo.com](mailto:treesnrivers@yahoo.com)

**Naomi Swerdlow**  
[nswerdlow@gmail.com](mailto:nswerdlow@gmail.com)

**Tim Ludwig**, Shale Gas Chair  
[bsballtim@gmail.com](mailto:bsballtim@gmail.com)

**Lisa Mekovsky**, Political Chair;  
Fundraising Co-Chair  
[lisamekovsky@gmail.com](mailto:lisamekovsky@gmail.com)

**Peri Unligil**, Air Quality Chair  
[unligil@hotmail.com](mailto:unligil@hotmail.com)

**Eva Westheimer**, Mining Chair  
[eva@coalfieldjustice.org](mailto:eva@coalfieldjustice.org)

**Peter Wray**, Conservation Chair  
[pjwray@verizon.net](mailto:pjwray@verizon.net)

---

## Executive Committee

**Barb Grover**, Chair  
[barbgrover1@gmail.com](mailto:barbgrover1@gmail.com)

**Gwen Chute**, Vice Chair  
[gwenchute42@me.com](mailto:gwenchute42@me.com)

**Chris Shepherd**, Treasurer  
[shepherd999@gmail.com](mailto:shepherd999@gmail.com)

**Rick Arnold**  
(also Publications Chair)  
[1bud401@gmail.com](mailto:1bud401@gmail.com)

**Veronica Coptis**  
[veronica@coalfieldjustice.org](mailto:veronica@coalfieldjustice.org)

**Bob Lauth**  
(also Membership Chair)  
[bobby2socks1@gmail.com](mailto:bobby2socks1@gmail.com)

---

## Additional Issue Chairs:

**Jacqueline Apone**,  
Fundraising Co-Chair  
[japone46@hotmail.com](mailto:japone46@hotmail.com)

**Tom Hoffman**, Water Chair  
[tom.hoffman@sierraclub.org](mailto:tom.hoffman@sierraclub.org)

**Roni Kampmeyer**, Coal Chair  
[kampmeyerr@gmail.com](mailto:kampmeyerr@gmail.com)

**Claudia Kirkpatrick**,  
Transit Co-Chair  
[kirkclaudia@gmail.com](mailto:kirkclaudia@gmail.com)

**Michael LaMark**,  
Communications Chair  
[lamarkmichael@yahoo.com](mailto:lamarkmichael@yahoo.com)

