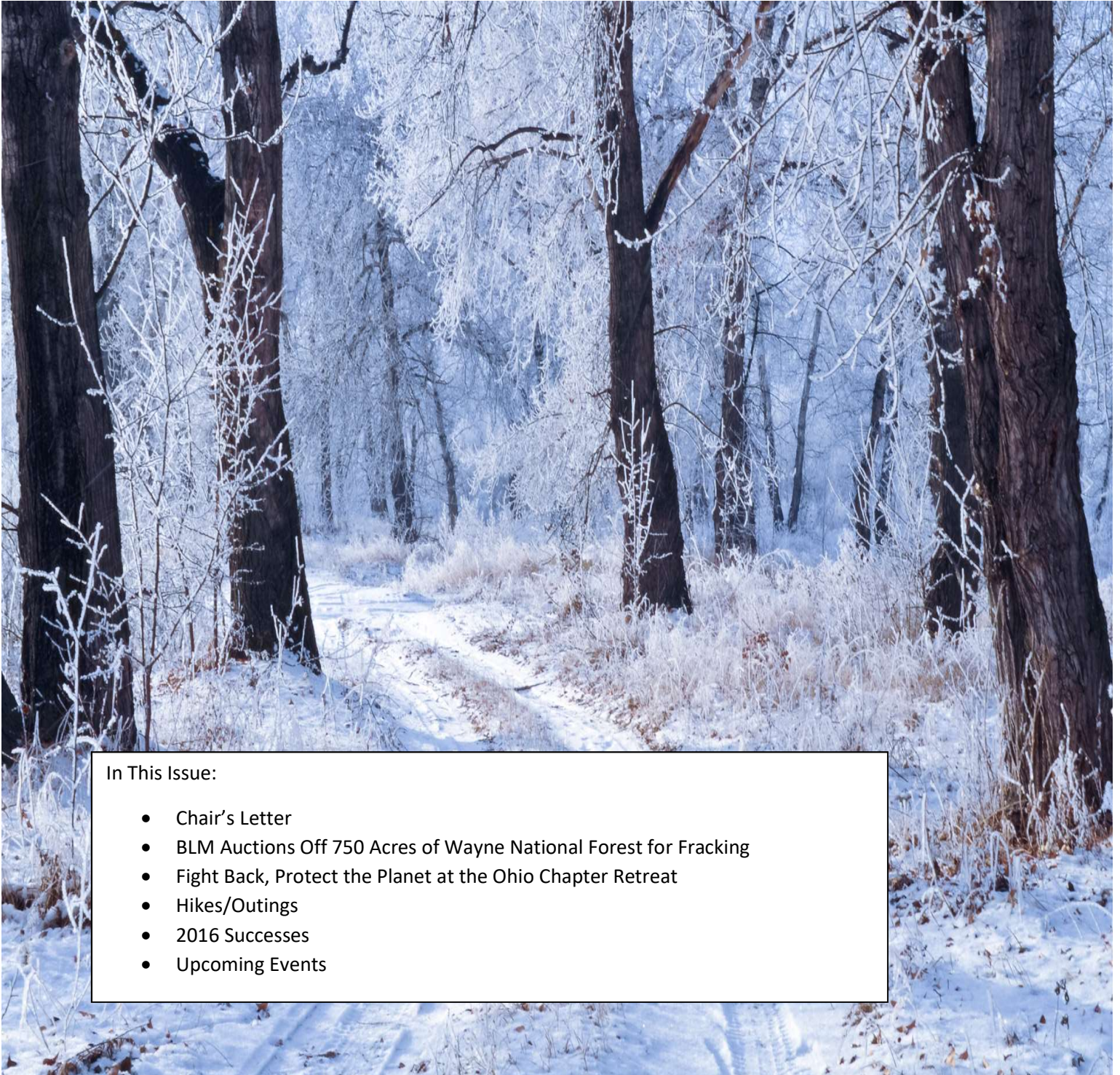


the Central Ohio

Sierran

Sierra Club Central Ohio Group

January-March 2017



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Letter from Our Chair

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year all. The 2016 elections brought some heckuva surprises for us environmentalists which will make for a busy 2017. As a result the Sierra Club is already experiencing a large influx of new concerned members. We welcome your active participation wherever you desire on any level to battle the many anti-environmental threats. Together we can achieve much progress in Central Ohio.

Locally we've had nice successes. I am pleased to report that in 2016 COG conducted and collaborated in five local rallies (parades, demonstrations, protests), exhibited at five events and festivals, worked eight service projects (watershed/park clean-ups, tree plantings, invasive removal), and led 17 educational programs (movies, speakers, tours) and over 40 outings (hikes, bike rides)! Behind the scenes we held numerous meetings, diligently continue to meet with and testify to elected officials, legislative staff, various public agencies, businesses and green-minded organizations to advocate for a clean sustainable healthy environment and fight for social justice.

Let's extend a hearty congratulations and welcome to Sierra COG's first 'Fellow' employee Miles Van Blarcum who will be working for us part time during this winter college semester while at The Ohio State University studying Environment, Economics, Development, and Sustainability. Miles be assisting in recruiting and coordinating new volunteers from our membership base. I'd also like to thank all of those members who have recently come forward interested in helping Sierra COG.

I look forward to seeing many of you for our Central Ohio Group member's new year social gathering on January 26th in Columbus. And, the Sierra Ohio Chapter's annual retreat at Maumee Bay State Resort Park on January 28-29 will be jam packed with conservation programs, educational activities, guest speakers to develop committee strategies, address issues, and grow grassroots campaigns. Read our newsletter for more details and RSVP.

You're invited to attend COG Executive Committee business meetings that are routinely scheduled on first Wednesday of every month stating at 6:45 PM - January 4, February 1, March 1, etc. Contact me to provide a meeting agenda item for our consideration.

Don't forget that you can enjoy the outdoors with us on various hikes that that we have scheduled weekly throughout the winter time. Check <http://www.sierraclub.org/ohio/central-ohio/hiking-outings>

Please be sure to follow and subscribe to our FaceBook <https://www.facebook.com/Sierra-Club-Central-Ohio-Group-283206737601/> and keep an eye on our web <http://www.sierraclub.org/ohio/central-ohio> and e-calendar <http://www.sierraclub.org/ohio/central-ohio/calendar> for latest news, events, alerts, photos and updates.

David Roseman

Chair, Sierra Club Central Ohio Group
COGchair@SierraClub.org

BLM Auctions Off 750 Acres of Wayne National Forest for Fracking

By: Cathy Cowan Becker, Central Ohio Sierra Club Executive Committee Member

Over the objections of the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations, the Bureau of Land Management on December 13 auctioned off leases for parcels in Wayne National Forest to oil and gas corporations for fracking.

More than 750 acres across 17 parcels in the forest's Marietta unit were sold to 22 oil and gas companies for a total of about \$1.7 million. Winning bids ranged from \$2 per acre to \$5,806.12 per acre.

Originally the BLM had posted 31 parcels in Wayne National Forest, in southeast Ohio, for lease, but pulled 17 at the last minute, finding that they already had existing oil and gas leases. A few of the pulled parcels even have operational wells.

Discussion of fracking in Wayne National Forest goes back to 2011, when the BLM proposed leasing parcels of the forest to oil and gas operations. At that time the Sierra Club joined with other groups such as Athens County Fracking Action Network and Buckeye Forest Council to successfully lobby Wayne Forest supervisor Anne Carey to withdraw consent for fracking.

But in late 2015 the BLM brought back plans to frack Wayne National Forest. The agency held information sessions near each of the forest's three main units in Athens, Marietta, and Ironton. In Athens 200 citizens showed up to oppose fracking.



The sale came after BLM issued a draft Environmental Assessment, a "fast-track" assessment of the risk of oil and gas drilling in the Marietta unit, along with an unsigned Finding of No Significant Impact in April 2016. Their proposal was to lease fracking rights to 40,000 acres, including 18,000 acres in the first auction. More than 50 oil companies expressed interest.

In response, the Sierra Club with Center for Biological Diversity, Friends of the Earth, and Ohio Environmental Council submitted a 78-page letter demanding a full Environmental Impact Statement, a much more comprehensive examination of environmental risks.

The groups said the draft assessment had not taken into account that:

- Fracking poses a risk to water quality through contamination of rivers, streams, and water tables from fracking fluid and disposal wells.
- Fracking harms air quality through pollutants such as nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and ozone.
- Methane from fracking significantly increases greenhouse gas emissions, adding to climate change that increases the chances of extreme weather events, sea level rise, and impacts to infrastructure.
- Fracking poses significant human health and safety risks such as increased risk of cancer, birth defects, and heart attacks.

- Fracking poses a risk to wildlife species such as the northern long-eared bat and threatens loss of wildlife habitats.

Sierra Club also worked with Center for Biological Diversity and Ohio Environmental Council to ask the U.S. Forest Service to intervene to stop the sale of Wayne National Forest for fracking. Under federal rules, BLM oversees oil and gas operations, but the Forest Service must consent to these activities and can withdraw consent at any time.

“Public lands are for the people, not for the benefit of Big Oil and Gas,” Lena Moffitt, director of the Sierra Club's Beyond Dirty Fuels campaign, said in a statement last month. “Drilling for oil and gas means more fracking, and fracking means poisoning our air and water, and threatening the health of our communities and our environment. At a time when clean energy like solar and wind is proving to be safest, healthiest and most cost-effective way to power our country, it’s high time we recognized that we need to leave dirty fuels like coal, oil and gas in the ground.”



Unfortunately, the BLM did not take concerns raised by Sierra Club and other groups into account and declined to do an in-depth Environmental Impact Statement. In October the BLM published its final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact, setting the auction date for December 13.

The auction was conducted entirely online. To bid, interested parties had to sign up through the auction portal, declare they intended to use the land for oil and gas exploration, and provide their bank account information to receive a maximum bid allowance.

Several environmental groups ran campaigns against fracking in Wayne National Forest. More than 4,000 people sent letters to the U.S. Forest Service through an action alert posted by Ohio Sierra Club. A petition posted by Ohio Environmental Council got over 8,000 signatures, and one posted by Athens County Frack Action Network netted over 99,000 signatures.

In addition, protests were organized at the offices of Senators Rob Portman and Sherrod Brown, as well as at U.S. Forest Service offices in the Athens unit.

Coincidentally, also on December 13, the Environmental Protection Agency released its final report showing that fracking has indeed contaminated drinking water. This was a change from the draft report that found such contamination only in isolated cases.

The EPA updated the report after a virtually unanimous outcry from environmental protection organizations across the country as well as its own Science Advisory Board.

BLM has 60 days to issue the fracking leases sold on December 13. Companies then must apply for a permit to drill, a process that takes at least six months.

Parties interested in opposing fracking in Wayne National Forest will meet on January 17, 6:30 PM, in Columbus (OSU Northwood-High Building/Rardin Family Practice Center, 2231 North High Street, Room 100) to discuss options following the December lease. For more info please contact Cathy Cowan Becker at cog.conscom@sierraclub.org Check out Sierra Club Ohio Chapter web site - Forest and Public Lands Committee <http://www.sierraclub.org/ohio/forests-and-public-lands> about this and other related statewide issues.

Fight Back, Protect the Planet at the Ohio Chapter Retreat

Each year, over one hundred Sierra Club leaders, members, staff and student activists gather at our annual retreat. The 2017 retreat will be at Maumee Bay State Park, Saturday and Sunday January 28th and 29th . The weekend will be filled with fun activities, presentations on local environmental issues, and speakers including Sierra Club's national President Aaron Mair. Go on a group hike, and meet members who are promoting clean air, forests and public lands, and water conservation in your corner of the State. There will be plenty of time for catching up with old friends or making new connections. We encourage folks to come early for our Friday evening open social.

Please RSVP for more info and to Save Your Spot. -

<https://sierraclub.org/ohio/blog/2016/11/fight-back-protect-planet-ohio-chapter-retreat>

*Meals are included for current members. We have a group lodging rate of \$75 per room per night.**Special lodging rate for Sierra Student Coalition members*



2016 Sierra Local Successes: A Year in Review

- Sierra COG met and worked with the city of Columbus Department of Public Utilities, director and senior staff, providing our input to help revise their “stormwater manual.” That includes enhancing the stream corridor protection set-back provisions and the developer variance request notification process with better public posting process.
- Held 17 educational programs about water quality and climate change.
- Participated in five rallies.
- Exhibited at 5 festivals including ComFest and Earth Day Celebration.
- Participated in or organized eight service projects where over one hundred fifty people helped remove trash and honeysuckle bushes.
- Organized and led 45 hikes and outings.



Upcoming Events

SIERRA CLUB MEMBER NIGHT – Thursday, January 26 6:00- 8:00 PM,
OSU Northwood-High Building/Rardin Family Practice Center
2231 North High Street, Room 100, Columbus.

Join us for our New Year Member social night! We'll provide some refreshments (wine & soft drinks) and light appetizers. 6 – 7 PM meet and greet fellow member activists, volunteers, Executive Committee leaders, and Sierra staff. 7 – 8 PM take a look at last year's accomplishments, discuss our challenges and plans for 2017 and discover how you can contribute to this year's success!

Free parking in back lot (use R spots).

For more info contact COGchair@SierraClub.org

HIKES/OUTINGSs – *See following pages 8-10. Stay tuned to our website for up to date information* <http://www.sierraclub.org/ohio/central-ohio/hiking-outings>

CLIMATE CHANGES IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE – Thursday, March 23 6:30 PM
OSU Northwood-High Building/Rardin Family Practice Center
2231 North High Street, Room 100, Columbus.

Ohio State PhD student, Alex Turo, will discuss climate change - how it will enhance plant diseases and how it will affect agriculture in the United States.

EARTH WEEK - April 8 - 15

Sierra Club will register to host some work sites with Green Columbus throughout metro Columbus where we'll plant trees and clean-up trash. Stay tuned for master listing of project locations and dates, and then register on-line to volunteer.

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION - Saturday, April 22 all day

Come to the Columbus Commons for family friendly free events and outdoor activities. Stop by Sierra Club's exhibit table to say hello.

RUMPKE RECYCLING CENTER FREE TOUR – Tuesday, May 23 1:00 PM
1191 Fields Ave., Columbus.

Tour the working recycling plant facility. See and learn what happens to the contents of your blue (or red) recycling bins, discover the technologies, commodity economics and science involved in the sortation process. Answer the perplexing questions, such as is the chasing-arrow numbering symbol (imprinted on disposable recyclable containers) an accurate or reliable system? Why aren't plastic bags, yogurt or plastic cups and margarine type containers wanted? Please wear flat shoes. Due to limited space and popularity your [RSVP](#) is required.

For our latest events, any updates or changes - please be sure to follow [COG's FaceBook events](#) and keep an eye on our e-calendar <http://www.sierraclub.org/ohio/central-ohio/calendar>

Sierra Club Central Ohio Group

Outings Schedule & Descriptions: January - February 2017

Fri 01/27 Walk: Reynoldsburg. Ratings: E/S = 2/2.

7:00 pm Leader: Debra Orellana – Orellana727@yahoo.com – Ph: 614-284-3512

Join us for a walk through Reynoldsburg. The walk will be on sidewalks and asphalt trails for about 2-3 miles. Please bring a flashlight and weather-appropriate clothing and footwear. Optional dinner afterwards. Meet in the Post Office parking lot at Davidson & Main St. The GPS address is: 7185 E Main St, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068.

Sat 01/28 Joint Hike: 44th Annual Winter Hike @ Clear Creek. Ratings: E/S=2/2.

10:00am Note: *This is a Columbus MetroParks hike - not a Sierra Club hike*

Columbus MetroParks is holding the 44th Annual Winter Hikes series at Clear Creek park starting at 10am. Enjoy a 1-, 2-, 3-, 5-, or 7-mile guided or self-guided hike (Some hikes, including the 7-mile hike, are guided only - Please call 740-969-9001 for more info). Meet at Mathias Log Cabin, 185 Clear Creek Road, Rockbridge, OH 43149.

Sun 01/29 Moderate Hike: Highbanks MetroPark. Ratings: E/S=2/3.

11:00 am Leader: Sherri Soble – Sherri.Soble@yahoo.com – Ph: 614-804-3215

We will hike about 3-6 miles depending on weather and trail conditions including some small but steep hills. Bring lunch, water, and sturdy footwear for possible wet or muddy conditions (poles optional, but may be a good idea). Meet at the Highbanks Park Nature Center (1st driveway on the right), 9466 Columbus Pike, Lewis Center, OH 43035.

Note: This hike may be cancelled if road or trail conditions are hazardous.

Fri 02/03 Walk: Bexley. Ratings: E/S = 2/2.

7:00 pm Leader: Ed Norwood – EdNorwood.hiking@gmail.com – Ph: 614-649-5701

Scenic walk around Capital University campus and surrounding neighborhoods of Bexley on this hike of about three miles. Flashlight and reflective clothing are recommended. Optional dinner close by after the hike. Meet at the Bexley Library parking lot at 2411 E Main St, Bexley, OH 43209.

Sat 02/04 Joint Hike: 44th Annual Winter Hike @ Blendon Woods. Ratings: E/S=2/2.

10:00am Note: *This is a Columbus MetroParks hike - not a Sierra Club hike*

Columbus MetroParks is holding the 44th Annual Winter Hikes series at Blendon Woods Metro Park starting at 10am. Enjoy a 2, 4, or 6 mile hike through the forests and fields, on and off trail. Food served afterward. Meet at Cherry Ridge, 4265 E. Dublin-Granville Rd, Westerville, OH 43081.

Sun 02/05 Moderate Hike: 3 Creeks. Ratings: E/S = 2/3.

11:00 am Leader: Courtney George – George.707@osu.edu – Ph: 248-494-3698

We will walk along the hiking trails (weather permitting) or paved paths around 3 Creeks Park. Hiking boots & poles are recommended for possible snowy/icy/muddy/wet conditions. Pack water and lunch or snacks for the trail. Meet at 11am at the 3 Creeks Bulletin Board: 3860 Bixby Rd, Groveport, OH 43125. **Note: This hike may be cancelled if road or trail conditions are hazardous.**

Fri 02/10 Moderate Hike: New Albany. Ratings: E/S = 2/2.

7:00 pm Leader: Line Martineau – LineNMartineau@gmail.com

We will walk around the prestigious New Albany golf club and the surrounding neighborhoods. Flashlight and reflective clothing is recommended. Optional dinner close by after the hike. Meet at the New Albany Library, 200 Market St, New Albany, OH 43054 and park at the northeast corner of the library parking lot. (The far right corner when facing the library).

Sat 02/11 Joint Hike: 44th Annual Winter Hike @ Highbanks. Ratings: E/S=2/2.

10:00am Note: This is a Columbus MetroParks hike - not a Sierra Club hike

Columbus MetroParks is holding the 44th Annual Winter Hikes series at Highbanks Park starting at or before 10am. Enjoy a 2.5 or 5-mile trek along the banks and bluffs of the Olentangy River. Meet at the Northern Reservable Shelter: 9466 Columbus Pike, Lewis Center, OH 43035.

Sun 02/12 Walk: OSU Wetlands. Ratings: E/S=2/2.

11:00 am Leader: Courtney George – George.707@osu.edu – Ph: 248-494-3698

This walk will take us along the Olentangy River, the OSU Wetlands, and North Campus. Lunch option afterwards close by. Meet at the NORTH end of the Giant Eagle parking lot - park WEST of the GetGo fuel pumps along the fence. The GPS address is: 2845 N High St, Columbus, OH 43202.

Fri 02/17 Walk: Dublin. Ratings: E/S = 2/2.

7:00 pm Leader: Nicole Tabit - Tabit.2@buckeyemail.osu.edu - Ph: 614-302-7042

Join us for a 3 mile walk along the South fork of Indian Run, including Indian Run Falls, the Scioto Rover, and historic old Dublin. Optional dinner after the hike. Meet at the Dublin Library, 75 N High St, Dublin, OH 43017. Park in the back left corner of the lot by the trail.

Sun 02/19 Moderate Hike: Delaware State Park. Ratings: E/S=2/3.

1:00pm Leader: Dave Dorsky – ValOrDave@hotmail.com – Ph: 614-848-7879

This is a dog-friendly hike of 5-8 miles, depending on the weather and trail conditions. The wooded terrain is mostly flat with a few rolling hills. Hiking boots & poles are recommended for uneven terrain and possible snowy, icy, muddy and/or wet conditions. Pack water and lunch or snacks for the trail. Meet at the west end of the Wal-Mart parking lot in North Pointe Plaza shopping center, 8659 Columbus Pike, Lewis Center, OH 43035. **Note: This hike may be cancelled if road or trail conditions are hazardous.**

Fri 02/24 Walk: Grandview. Ratings: E/S = 2/2.

7:00 pm Leader: Ed Norwood – EdNorwood.hiking@gmail.com – Ph: 614-649-5701

We will take a neighborhood walk through this lovely community of majestic trees and homes. Optional dinner close by after the hike. Meet at the Grandview Library parking lot, 1685 W First Ave, Grandview, OH 43212 (2 blocks west of Grandview Ave).

Sat 02/25 Joint Hike: 44th Annual Winter Hike @ Battelle Darby. Ratings: E/S=2/2.

10:00am Note: *This is a Columbus MetroParks hike - not a Sierra Club hike*

Columbus MetroParks is holding the 44th Annual Winter Hikes series at Battelle Darby park starting at or before 10am. Enjoy a 2-, 4-, or 6-mile trek along the banks and bluffs of Big Darby Creek. Meet at the Ranger Station: 1775 Darby Creek Dr, Galloway, OH 43119.

Sun 02/26 Upper Arlington Sunday Hike

11:00 am Leader: Sherri Soble – Sherri.Soble@yahoo.com – Ph: 614-804-3215

We will hike 4-6 miles around Upper Arlington (depending on weather). We will stop for lunch at an area restaurant. Meet at the Lane Rd Library parking lot (just West of Reed Rd). The GPS address: 1945 Lane Rd, Columbus, OH 43220.

Note: Sierra Club COG Outings web page with Calendar + PDF file:

<http://www.sierraclub.org/ohio/central-ohio/hiking-outings>



Sierra Club Central Ohio Group Volunteer Interest Form & Contact Info

Are you currently a Sierra Club member: Yes _____ No _____

Contact Information (please print):

Name(s)_____
If family: Spouse Name _____
Home Address_____
County_____City_____State OH Zip_____
Email*_____Home Phone_____
If college student: school name_____

Your contact information will not be shared or used for any purpose beyond Sierra Club's correspondence with you.

*It is critical that we have your current email address on file. Sierra Club's standard communication for news, newsletters, and action alerts is sent out via email.

I would like to get further involved with Sierra Club. I am interested in volunteering to assist with the following:

- Public education & outreach - attend community events; work at display tables & exhibits, talk to local groups or schools
- Political - lobby, legislative, call/email, public hearings; local, regional, state or national issues. Political candidate elections
- Outing activities - recreational hikes in various local/state parks/communities (Saturday, Sunday, or Friday eve)
- Service Projects - watershed & parkland trash clean ups, greenway plantings, invasive species removal
- Conservation Committee - water, air, public lands/forests, transportation, clean energy, nuclear free, anti-fracking
- Water Sentinel - monitor water conditions of stream, creek river, pond, lakes; collect & report data & observations
- Educational Programs - coordinate quarterly events - speakers, movie, field trips, socials, etc.
- Newsletter - assist writing & collecting articles, relevant news stories and photos
- Web - posting updates, news & photos, calendar of events
- Communication - publicity, calendars, advertising, FaceBook, list serve, media
- Organizational support - assist with mailings, special events, research, administrative
- Membership - distributes Sierra brochures, solicit new members & renewals, update & track, coordinate new volunteers
- Fundraising - solicit donations and PAC supporters, help Treasurer & finance committee
- County Representative - coordinate issues, activities, needs with Sierra Central Ohio Group & State Chapter
- College/University - help on student issues, programs, or activities (with State Chapter and Central Ohio Group)

Please list your special skills, expertise, and any other interests:

Please complete this form using one of the following options:

Mail this sheet to: 1) Sierra Club COG, 131 N. High St, Suite 605, Columbus, OH 43215

2. Scan this side and email to: COG.volunteer@SierraClub.org

3. [Use online form](#)



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Sierra Club Central Ohio Group
131 N. High St., Suite 605
Columbus, OH 43215-3026

Name(s) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip _____ Phone (____) _____
Email _____

Table with 3 columns: Membership Categories, Individual, Joint. Rows include Special Introductory Offer, Standard, Supporting, Contributing, Life, Senior, Student/Limited Income.

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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- Visit our website http://www.sierraclub.org/ohio/central-ohio
We are on Facebook as the Sierra Club Central Ohio Group.
Follow us on Twitter http://twitter.com/Sierra_Club_COG

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Vice-Chair

Cathy Cowan Becker

Treasurer

Adam Johnson

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Cathy Cowan Becker

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Emma Beasley

Outings Chair

Ed Norwood

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