



TRACKS: THE NORTH CENTRAL PA NEWSLETTER

2023

North Central PA Group Collaborates to Expand Our Group

We reported early last year that we were working to get our name changed from Otzinachson to North Central PA. Our new name became official last summer!

In 2023, we plan on focusing on improving our group and activities, in addition to continuing to focus on appearing at several local events, donating to worthy local efforts, and speaking up about local issues. In an effort to improve the North Central PA Group, we've eagerly taken initiative and have connected with the neighboring Moshannon Group. The Moshannon Group has graciously shared their methods of sustaining regular outings, staying communicative with members in their area, and hosting a wildly successful annual fundraiser via a local film festival. We hope to plan joint outings in the future.

We're excited to work to provide more opportunities for Sierra Club members in North Central PA to connect with one another, stay updated on philanthropic efforts and cleanups, and get involved. We welcome all ideas and input on the North Central PA Group. If you have any ideas (large or small) we invite you to reach out to Lana or Gary, below.

Executive Committee (ExCom) Members

Chair Lana Gulden (Northumberland) guldenlana@gmail.com
Vice Chair Gary Kendall (New Berlin) vista703gear@gmail.com
Secretary Judy Marvin (Lewisburg)
Treasurer Roy Fontaine (Williamsport)
Other Members Kristen Carino (Mansfield), Dave Hafer (Lewisburg), Richard Sahn (Williamsport)

Introducing Kristen!

We are delighted to have an ExCom member from the Northern Tier, Kristen Carino. Kristen is a fairly new resident of Tioga County, originally from Montgomery County, and moved to the Northern Tier after falling in love with the Endless Mountains. While she loves the outdoors, She's most passionate about expanding opportunities for localization and sustainable, regenerative agriculture on a small and large scale. Kristen recognizes the importance of protecting our water, soil, and ecosystems to ensure a healthy and responsible food system. She joined Sierra Club to meet like-minded, passionate residents of her area, and take a more active role in creating real change. Kristen and her husband are undergoing the slow learning process of wilding much of their land, and learning to grow their own food.

Please welcome Kristen!

2023 Upcoming Events

Here's what we have planned so far. More events will likely be added and some dates are subject to change. Check our website for updates.

Susquehanna Greenway's [Outdoor Expo](#) at Shikellamy State Park: June 3rd
Litter Pickup: Saturday, October 28th 1:00 - 4:00 PM (tentative)

Executive Committee board meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM. Please contact Lana or Gary for next meeting location and details (contact info is listed above)

What We've Funded:

In 2022, we funded a bench at R. B. Winter State Park, and a bench in honor of Jack D. Miller, longtime Sierra Clubber and outdoors enthusiast, funded by members of the NC PA board privately, has been installed.

In 2022, we also funded a battery box to collect batteries for recycling at the Mondragon Bookstore and the CommUnity Zone in Lewisburg.

Our most successful event, in terms of publicity and reaching a wide audience, was sponsoring Van Wagner, musician, popular high school science teacher and environmental advocate, for his concert in Lewisburg Arts Council's Music in the Park series in Lewisburg. In addition to a lengthy introduction, Van Wagner himself gave a long speech praising the Sierra Club's work in protecting the environment.

Our Group Helps A New Park Get Going

For years, an abandoned 4.5 acre wooded tract in downtown Sunbury was plagued with illegal dumping and drug users. Now, former mayor Kurt Karlovich is making changes. He's turning the city-owned property into a municipal park called S.W.E.E.P. – Sunbury Wetlands Ecological and Educational Park. The project is being funded with grants from various organizations and volunteers perform most of the work. Last year, the North Central PA group donated \$500 to the new park. The park is the site of a federally protected Palustrine Wetland. Volunteers, including Boy Scouts, are in the process of removing invasive plants among other necessary work preparing the location. The Park is between 6th and 8th Streets and Race and Line Streets.

Out and About in 2022

We tabled at several events last year:

Susquehanna Greenway's Outdoor Expo at Shikellamy State Park
Citizens' Climate Lobby's Joy to the Earth in Selinsgrove, PA
Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper's event in Lewisburg in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act

Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance Memorial Field Project Honored with 2023 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence

To celebrate the installation of signs that noted the contribution of both our North Central PA Group and the Huplits Foundation, whose grants are overseen by the Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club, we visited Kulpmont at the invitation of Steve Motyka, VP of the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance (SCRA), to tour the park SCRA has created on the site of an old colliery and see the storm water retention area or "rain garden" that our money is helping to fund. This small group of volunteers working on restoration of the Shamokin Creek is impressive with their dedication, professionalism, and achievements.

The Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance has worked tirelessly for the past decade to improve conditions of Veterans Memorial Field, revitalizing it and drawing visitors. On April 25th, the project will be honored at an event hosted by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

The Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence chooses twelve projects each year across the state to receive the award. Congratulations to the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance, and we are proud to be part of such an important and successful project.

Read more SCRA improving Quaker Run in Kulpmont [here](#).



Photo: Sign at Veterans Memorial Park in Kulpmont recognizing contributions from the Allegheny and North Central PA Group for the Improvement Project. (Photo credit to Steve Motyka, Vice President of the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance)

Working to Save the Climate

Jack Miller and Judy Marvin continue to serve on the State Chapter's Food & Ag Conservation Team, and, happily, now we are joined by Kristen Carino. Judy Wicks of All Together Now PA agreed to be our speaker at our webinar on hemp.

165 people have watched this webinar, [Localization and Hemp](#), on YouTube, and if you haven't, take a look! Bio-based materials like hemp can replace PVC and plastics in many industries, including the building sector.

According to [Hemp Today](#), the USDA has \$3.1 billion to support crops that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon, but only \$35 million, or 1%, has been granted for hemp projects.

The Food & Ag Conservation Team also hosted a recent webinar on [the prevalence of PFAS chemicals in PA](#) waters and soil, and plans on an upcoming webinar later in the year on personal and environmental benefits of adopting a plant-based diet.

Fighting a Proposed Plastics "Recycling" Plant

One year ago, the residents of the Northumberland/Danville area learned we could be the site of a Chemical Plastic Recycling Plant, Encina. Nearby residents express concerns about the proposed plant because it is a new company, with just one pilot plant in Texas for which we have seen no information. Citizens are concerned about the safety of the plant and the process they plan to use. Plastic from New York City, Philadelphia and other urban centers will be sending 100 trucks a day to the facility. Chemical Recycling has shown very poor results.

For more Information on the proposed plant, visit:

SaveOurSusquehanna.org

[Encina recycling process concerns citizens](#) (The Daily Item)

[Plastic Recycling Plant Could Send Toxic 'Forever Chemicals' Into the Susquehanna River, Polluting a Vital Drinking Water Source](#)
(InsideClimateNews.org)

[Concerns mount over proposed plastics plant](#) (The Standard Journal)

To learn more about greenwashing, and the hazards of chemical recycling:

[Recycling Lies: "Chemical Recycling" of Plastic Is Just Greenwashing Incineration](#)
(NDRC.org)



Photo: Concerned citizens meet to discuss the proposed Encina recycling plant organized by Save Our Susquehanna (photo credit to SaveOurSusquehanna.org)

Contact us

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<https://www.sierraclub.org/pennsylvania/north-central-pa>