

M A S S A C H U S E T T S

SIERRAN

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Reaching More Than
26,000 Sierra Club Members
in Massachusetts

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Massachusetts Sierra Club

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Annual dues in the Sierra Club are \$39, of which \$1 is for a subscription to the Massachusetts Sierran.

REWARDED FOR BAD BEHAVIOR?

State Revisits ORV Policies on Public Lands

Letter from the desk of James McCaffrey, Director

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the state agency responsible for managing approximately 460,000 acres of forests and parks throughout the Commonwealth, has an ambitious project to overhaul the state's program for Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs) or All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs). An ORV rider can easily cover 30 miles in a four-hour ride. In contrast, a hiker might go 10 miles in a day; most only go a few miles. ORVs can churn up soil and water, destroy habitat, and pour pollutants and noise into the air (the engines are not required to meet EPA clean air or noise standards).

But the state is under pressure from ORV enthusiasts to provide places to ride. Riders turn out in large numbers at public hearings to argue vigorously for more trails. Ten years ago the state developed a policy to open trails in eight state forests to ORV users. The policy included a largely "self-policing" system for both trail maintenance and rider activities.

It hasn't worked. MASS ATV, an ORV users lobbyist group, commenting on the condition of trails in Georgetown-Rowley State Forest notes that "all show signs that there hasn't been much volunteer maintenance done here lately." And while many responsible riders do exist, DCR recently closed one of its riding areas, Savoy Mountain State Forest, because deteriorating trail conditions threatened public safety and environmental health.

Worse, many ORV users drive where they are not permitted, on public and private property, going off-trail, in stream beds or across wetlands or streams, a clear violation of the Clean Water Act. The vehicles' power and the terrain-gripping tires destroy plant and wildlife habitat, cause erosion, and increase polluted runoff into wooded areas, lakes, and streams. Unfortunately, the

continued on page 12

ON THE COVER: Quabbin Reservoir in New Salem

Photograph by Elisa Campbell

MASSACHUSETTS

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Should MWRA Sell Water from Quabbin Reservoir?

by Alexandra Dawson

The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority's (MWRA) Board of Directors is currently reviewing a proposal to increase the number of communities that buy water from the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs. The water-supply system could grow by up to 50 percent, including as many as 75 cities and towns, mostly within the Route 495 belt. The effect of such expansion could be profound over the long haul: more development; less interest in water conservation; more export of the state's water into the ocean; and less interest in the stream-flow of the "donor" basins, the Connecticut and Nashua Rivers.

Heavy debt owed by the MWRA from the cleanup of Boston Harbor and the new water tunnel east of Wachusett Reservoir is a principal pressure for increasing the customers. This debt, incurred since 1985, will burden the MWRA's rate payers greatly over the next 20 years. In addition, ironically, water use has fallen radically within the system — from 330,000 gallons per day (gpd) to about 230,000 gpd — thus pushing up water and sewer bills even more as the system increases rates to pay its obligations. In this sense the MWRA is being punished for its good deeds in effectuating one of the most successful conservation programs in the whole country, through leak repair, metering, device retrofits, and public education. The high price charged for MWRA water has helped too.

The MWRA argues that the system now has a surplus of water and since most of the proposed new customers only want water for summer use (lawn watering), water use will not increase significantly; in fact, the MWRA is mostly interested in collecting the one-time entry fee based on the cost of system infrastructure. And, incidentally, the low-flow rivers in eastern Massachusetts, such as the Ipswich, will welcome the summer relief. So where's the beef?

The first beef is political: With 75 customer communities, the MWRA could become an unstoppable force in the legislature. This worries western Massachusetts folks because they, in the end, will pay the price if even more water is sought in the future. The second beef is priority:



Quabbin Reservoir from Rattlesnake Hill in New Salem

Photograph by Elisa Campbell

If there is extra water, should it not go first to the rivers from which the water was drawn? Both of them could benefit from having millions more gallons a day for the fish in the water and to dilute the pollutants from runoff and sewage treatment plants. Over 20 watershed associations have expressed this concern in letters to the MWRA. The third beef is about conservation: How are we ever to get a handle on lawn watering if water can so easily be imported from another basin? Some suburban communities more than double their water use in summer.

There are other ways to reduce the burden of MWRA's debt on its customers. After all, cleaning up the Boston Harbor benefits many communities and people who are not served by the MWRA. The Commonwealth's water resources should not be converted into a commodity that is sold to raise large quantities of cash. ❖

Alexandra Dawson has been active in the Sierra Club for decades. She is also the Legal Affairs Director for the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, and recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Environmental Protection Agency.

How are we ever going to get a handle on lawn watering if water can so easily be imported from another basin?

Saving Energy City by City

COOL CITIES

by Michael Blouin

As oil and electricity prices continue to skyrocket across the United States, citizens and governments alike are realizing that we must take energy use seriously. In many instances, local governments are leading the charge, creating sophisticated action plans to reduce energy use and develop alternative energy sources. The 33 cities and towns within the Sierra Club's Greater Boston group's area vary greatly when it comes to energy: some municipalities have developed aggressive energy-use reduction plans and have begun implementing everything from efficient lighting to wind turbines, while others do little more than follow state building codes. Motivations differ significantly as well, from a desire to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and help slow global warming, to reducing high energy costs.

Half a dozen of these communities have drawn up some sort of "Climate Action Plan." These local initiatives aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within a specific timeframe through smart energy decisions. For example, the city of Newton has published an Energy Action Plan which will try to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 7 percent from 1998 levels by the year 2010. It suggests — among other things — adopting LEED standards (the US Green Building Council's measure of sustainability) for all new and renovated public buildings and purchasing 10 percent of city electricity from renewable power sources by 2010. Newton joins Boston, Cambridge, Brookline, Medford, and Somerville as local leaders when it comes to tackling global warming. These municipalities are all at the forefront of addressing their energy consumption, and they are most committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

About 20 communities in the Greater Boston area have worked to improve energy efficiency as a means of reducing municipal energy costs. Many of these cities and towns have adopted more efficient street lighting and LED (light emitting diodes) traffic lights; they have made use of rebates from utilities to install more efficient lighting and heating systems in municipal buildings. In Melrose, for example, an "energy commission" was recently formed in response to exorbitant energy costs. The city has started taking a closer look at energy efficiency in build-

ings and has even considered wind turbines as a source of renewable energy. However, a leading committee member noted that this interest in energy has much more to do with minimizing costs than reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Most cities and towns have not yet looked into renewable energy sources or more complex initiatives, instead emphasizing relatively cheap and easy fixes that will save money. A handful of communities are doing nothing more than following state law, and have not yet committed to elaborate energy conservation efforts.

The most serious problem in these local energy initiatives can be summed up in a single word: implementation. In Cambridge, for instance, a city that enjoys one of the most sophisticated greenhouse gas reduction plans in Massachusetts, emissions have actually *increased* since the plan was published in 2001. Though much of this can be blamed on emissions from recently constructed buildings, the increase clearly indicates that no significant progress has been made. Together we can help by connecting with one another through the Massachusetts Chapter, and putting real pressure on municipal governments to develop goals and follow through with them. We have the power to encourage real progress in addressing the energy crisis and slowing global warming — the next step is to use it.

The Sierra Club's Cool Cities initiative provides guidelines and goals for promoting local emissions reductions — take a look at this project to get some ideas of where to start. Learn more at: http://www.sierraclub.org/global_warming/coolcities/ Or, contact Jeremy Marin at the chapter office (Jeremy.marin@sierraclub.org) to work on this project. ❖

Michael Blouin, a Sudbury resident and student at Pomona College, served as a Mass Chapter/GBG intern in January 2006. During this time, he conducted extensive phone and Internet research to collect material for this article.

Editor's Note: we are aware that cities and towns outside the Boston area are also involved in reducing their energy use. Write us and tell us how!

The Cool Cities initiative provides guidelines and goals for promoting local emissions reductions

Hull Leads the Fight to Reduce CO₂ Emissions

By Judeth Van Hamm

On February 28, Hull Selectmen unanimously endorsed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement (see the story in the spring 2006 *Sierran*), vowing to reduce the town's carbon dioxide emissions to seven percent below its 1990 levels by the year 2020. Therein lies a tale.

The short version of the story begins with wind. Since Hull had installed the first commercial-scale municipal wind turbine on the East Coast, it was an obvious candidate when the chapter's energy committee began contacting communities in eastern Massachusetts to take part in the Sierra Club's "Cool Cities" campaign, which is based on the Climate Action Agreement. Ethan Hoag, chapter energy chair, sent letters to Sierra Club members in Hull asking for help in seeking the selectmen's participation. As a Sierra Club member as well as the community learning facilitator for the Hull public schools, I enlisted Hull High students to present the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement to the Hull selectmen.

The longer version of the story tells why Hull was ready to adopt the agreement. At each step in the story, a few people with a vision networked with other people, persevered, and gained community support.

This longer version also begins with wind. In the early 1980s, a Hull High teacher arranged for the installation of a small wind turbine at the high school, which reduced the school's electric bill by 28 percent. Although the turbine stopped in 1997 when high winds damaged its braking mechanism, the turbine inspired Malcolm Brown, a new resident with experience with a small hydropower dam, and others to form the Citizens for Alternative Renewable Energy. Next was a wind power study for the Hull Light Board and Light Plant Manager John MacLeod. The study was done by the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Renewable Energy Research



Photograph by Judeth Van Hamm

Hull Wind 2, manufactured by Vestas of Denmark and installed by the Hull Municipal Light Company, provides electricity for 1000 homes. It is the first wind turbine built on a landfill in the U.S. It is expected to pay for itself in about 5 years.

Laboratory, assisted by the State Division of Energy Resources. After plenty of newspaper coverage and a public hearing, the Light Plant sought bids to build Hull Wind 1 to supply electricity to approximately 300 houses. Both the study and the resulting contract with Vestas, a Danish wind turbine company, were done particularly thoroughly so they could serve as models to other communities. Hull Wind 1 went online in 2001. A town-wide survey on additional sites, followed by public hearings, resulted in Hull Wind 2, installed in 2006: it is the first wind turbine in the U.S. built on a landfill. See www.hullwind.org

The 2004 presidential campaign, concern over global climate change, and encouragement from Hull Wind 1 brought several Hull and Weymouth residents together to form Sustainable South Shore (SSSh) as a chapter of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network. Within Hull, SSSH's activities to date have included:

- Sustainable South Shore Climate InfoFest 2004 and 2005 and Sustainable Living Festival 2006, featuring energy conservation ideas, wind power plans, electric and hybrid vehicles, recycling ideas, passive and active solar designs, green technology, organic gardening and lawn displays, composting bins, rain barrels, nature connections, kite flying, and a Nantasket Beach walk.
- A series in the Hull Times on "CO₂: What's It to You" and

"CO₂: What You Can Do." As Hull is a low-lying peninsula, the series focused on sea level rise and the strategy of becoming a model sustainable community in order to inspire others to help stabilize world climate and sea level.

- Residents' survey on curbside recycling, which fell short of creating a municipal contract for curbside recycling, but which SSSH used to convince a local hauler to offer curbside recycling.
- Popular paper recycling using Abitibi Paper Retrievers at the schools (see www.paperretriever.com).
- A town Sustainable Transportation Committee working on ways to promote walking and bicycling with a goal of creating a zero-emissions rubber-wheel trolley line to connect ferries and the new greenbush trains.

Building on this foundation, the Sierra Club's support provided the impetus for the selectmen's formal commitment to climate protection. The next steps in Hull's Cool Cities participation are an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, a coordinated plan to reduce carbon dioxide, and continuing implementation.

For more information, you can contact Judeth Van Hamm at hullportside@earthlink.net. ❖

Judeth Van Hamm is a member of both the Sierra Club and Sustainable South Shore.

Earth Day Presentations in the Chapter

Greater Boston Group

The Sierra Club had a table at the Sustainable Living Festival 2006 in Hull on Earth Day, the Wild Oats stores, at MIT, and in Concord. We had fun. Do think about joining us next year.

Cape Cod Group

The group sponsors a "John Muir Lecture" every year as an Earth Day event. This year's speaker was Gussie McKusick, who gave an inspiring talk on the wastewater challenge on Cape Cod and the work that will be needed to address this problem. The group also gave an award to David Dow, who has been a leader of the group for more than two decades. ❖



Photograph by Chris Polloni

Chris Neill thanks David Dow (left) for his long service to the Cape Cod Group.

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How Much Perchlorate is Too Much?

by David Dow

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is proposing a drinking water standard of 2 parts per billion (ppb) for perchlorate, a toxic chemical that is currently unregulated. Perchlorate is used as a propellant by the military, NASA, the Department of Energy, defense contractors, and fireworks manufacturers.

Perchlorate can inhibit iodine uptake by the thyroid gland and potentially diminish the production of hormones that are critical to the growth and brain development of babies and young children. Drinking water is not the only source of human exposure to perchlorate, since it has been found in vegetables, grains, dairy milk and breast milk. Measurable amounts of perchlorate were found in the urine of 61 Atlanta residents, despite there being no contamination in the city's water supply. California assumed that pregnant women receive 60 percent of their perchlorate exposure from drinking water and 40 percent from food. DEP has assumed that 20 percent comes from drinking water and 80 percent from food sources.

Perchlorate has been detected in water supplies around the nation. In 2001 it was found in groundwater at the Massachusetts Military Reservation on Cape Cod at 100-300 ppb, and in sentinel wells for the public water supply for the town of Bourne, and private drinking water wells at low concentrations of less than one to 2 ppb. DEP sampling of public water supply wells throughout the Commonwealth has detected perchlorate, generally at low levels, in nine systems that are not associated with defense activities or military training.

Currently there are no agreed-upon standards for how much perchlorate

should be permissible in drinking water supplies. Defense contractors favor 200-400 ppb. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposes 24.5 ppb; its methodology has been criticized by many, including Melanie Marty, chair of EPA's Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee. The Department of Defense is using 24 ppb as their target for a potential level of concern. The Environmental Working Group has proposed a safe perchlorate level for adults of 4.3 ppb and 0.04 ppb for infants. California set its standard at 6 ppb. The Sierra Club's Environmental Quality Strategy Team (EQST) is having a dialogue on developing a national policy on the "safe" level of perchlorate.

In the meantime, faced with significant contamination, the DEP has been working on its own standards. The DEP included both animal studies on perchlorate's toxicity and human exposure studies in developing their proposed standard of 2 ppb. In addition, they made adjustments for sensitive populations (babies and children).

Given the financial cleanup liability faced by the perchlorate manufacturers and users, the DEP standard of 2 ppb will be strongly opposed by these influential members of the military/industrial complex. Given the inadequate federal (EPA, FDA, and CDC) response to regulating perchlorate exposure in drinking water and food, it is up to the citizens of Massachusetts to support the DEP in developing a more protective drinking water standard. For more information about how to help, please contact David Dow, at ddow@cape.com. ❖

David Dow is acting chair of the Cape Cod Group of the Sierra Club.

For More Reports

Go to the DEP website <http://massgov/dep/drinking/perc.info.htm>

for background information on the potential sources for perchlorate contamination in food and drinking water.

State Selects Town to be Greylock Glen Developer

by Elisa Campbell

In mid-April, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) announced the designation of the Town of Adams as the Provisional Developer for Greylock Glen at the foot of Mt. Greylock, Massachusetts' highest peak. Adams' plan proposes an environmental education center, a performing arts amphitheatre, outdoor environmental art, camping, lodging and meeting facilities, and conservation lands. Over 1,000 acres of the site would be preserved as open land.

Adams is the latest in a long list of would-be developers in twenty years to try to do something on the site that will be both environmentally sustainable and an economic boost to the region. The others were all private

development companies, which were going to "partner" with the state; the earlier plans were also for larger scale developments. The Sierra Club and many other environmental organizations worked to scale back or defeat the earlier proposals.

The announcement about Adams' selection said that Adams "plans to develop the Greylock Glen Outdoor Recreation and Environmental Education Center in close consultation with the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art." Phase I will be the recreational facilities, including a multi-use trail system, a campground, ancillary outdoor recre-

ation, and outdoor environmental art. It is estimated this phase will cost \$6.4 million; the entire project is projected to cost \$44 million.

The Sierra Club will continue to watch this proposed project to be sure it does not grow or morph into something else. Many of us who have been involved with this area for two decades would like to see something reasonable done there, to protect the land from neglect and abuse, or more grandiose plans in the future. The project will be required to go through the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) review process. If you would like to be involved, contact Elisa Campbell at ecampbell@sierraclubmass.org. ❖

Doing Something About Global Warming

by Marc Breslow

You can do something about global climate change today! You can help ensure a safer and healthier energy future for your family by signing up for Clean Energy. Participation in the Clean Energy Choice Program supports the production of new sources of clean energy such as solar and wind.

Visit www.CleanEnergyChoice.org to sign up. Massachusetts electric ratepayers now have two convenient options:

Option 1: National Grid and Cape Light Compact customers can support clean energy through an added cost to your electric bill, ranging from approximately \$6 to \$12 per month depending on your electric usage. Part or all of your purchase will be tax-deductible.

Option 2: Any Massachusetts resident can support new renewables with a minimum one-time payment of \$25 to the nonprofit Mass Energy Consumers Alliance for a 500 kWh block of electricity. Your purchase will be partially tax-deductible. Go to www.massenergy.com/Options.html

Under either option, for every dollar you spend on clean electricity:

- Up to one dollar will go to your city or town for investment in renewable energy projects.
- Up to one additional dollar will go towards similar projects that benefit Massachusetts low-income residents. ❖

Marc Breslow is the Director of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network.

Did You Forget?

We've looked everywhere for your response to our March appeal.

In March we sent out an appeal to each of our members, asking for contributions directly to your Chapter. These contributions really do make a difference to us, and are an important part of our Chapter's budget. When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's work in your own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, and to promote the enjoyment of nature. Please be as generous as you are able—remember, these funds directly affect your way of life in your neighborhood. Thank you.



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BOOK REVIEW:

In the Thick of It: My Life in the Sierra Club

by Michael McCloskey
Shearwater Books, c 2005
\$29.95

by Gilbert Woolley

If you want to understand environmental policy in this country during its formative years, read this book.

Mike McCloskey's entire career was with the Sierra Club. When he was hired in 1961 as the club's first field organizer, the club had 25 employees, an outings program, and some interest in conservation. When he retired in 1999 the club had become an environmental organization of half a million members, which also had an entire outings program. McCloskey had a great deal to do with this transition and with the evolution of the club into a unique and effective combination of professional staff and hard-working volunteers at the state and local levels.

McCloskey's story is interesting and inspiring both as a personal history and as a Sierra Club history. To those of us who have been active in the club at the local level, it provides a frank account of club politics in San Francisco; things that we had heard about, but not always understood. He also discusses the not-always smooth relations with other national environmental organizations.

McCloskey Moves Up in the Club

In 1961 Sierra Club members and the Board of Directors were primarily "outdoor people"; McCloskey brought a broader perspective. From childhood he had been an active outdoorsman, but also became involved in politics, and he understood politicians. Executive Director David Brower hired him as the club's first field organizer and McCloskey soon became one of the main protagonists of the pioneering Wilderness Act of 1965. As the club grew and became increasingly involved in influencing laws and policies, McCloskey took on increasing responsibilities in new positions,

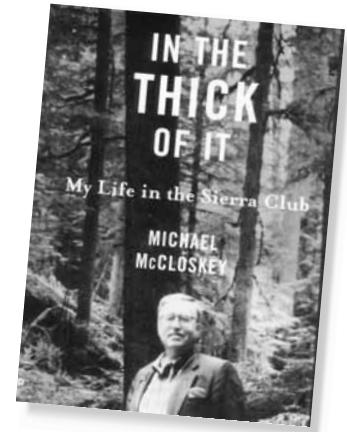
becoming conservation director in 1966.

David Brower became a controversial figure, especially when the club's expenditures were grossly exceeding its income, and in 1989, he resigned and McCloskey was appointed executive director.

His Contributions

Mike McCloskey's term as executive director, which ran from 1969 to 1985, coincided with exponential growth of the environmental movement as a whole, and of the Club's membership and organizational complexity. You may not always agree with McCloskey, but his book includes thoughtful comments on every issue of policy and organization that I can think of. In 1969 the Club was still focused on public lands, but by the time I joined in 1972 we were already involved in issues such as the effects of highway construction, protecting public water supplies, and the need for better public transportation, all the while not neglecting the traditional issues. Under McCloskey's leadership, interests expanded to include coastal zone management, energy, and the environmental effects of international trade. He played an active role in all these issues while also being responsible for the staff.

In 1985 McCloskey resigned as executive director and was then elect-



ed to be president of the club, which became a full-time staff position. During his 16 years in office, the Sierra Club played a major role in enacting over 100 pieces of environmental legislation: It stopped the Timber Supply Act (which opened national forests for logging), the Supersonic Transport plane (a fast but energy-inefficient passenger jet) and significantly helped to pass the Environmental Policy Act and National Environmental Protection Act. The club also played a leading role in legislation to promote clean air and water, expanding and protecting national parks, and had spearheaded the fight to eliminate James Watt as Secretary of the Interior.

Since his retirement, McCloskey has continued to participate in environmental causes. Sadly, as we write this issue of the *Sierran*, we learned that McCloskey's wife, Maxine, long his colleague in environmental battles, has passed away.

This book provides a short course on every aspect of environmental affairs and I thoroughly recommend it to anyone seriously interested in the subject. ❖

Gil Woolley has been an activist in the Sierra Club since he joined in 1972.



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Our Parks Need *Our* Protection

by Philip Saunders, Jr.

Since the last issue of the *Sierran*, progress has been made on the Parks Protection Package, but we still have a long way to go. This update was written in April, so a bill's status may have changed somewhat before you see this.

Article 97

The Article 97 Open Space Bill (S. 2360) would require that public lands acquired for natural resource purposes not be converted to other uses without demonstration of lack of a feasible alternative and replacement with equivalent land set aside for public use. While it has passed in the Senate, the House referred it to the Joint Rules Committee. The bill has been there in previous sessions and has gone nowhere, so it will take Sierra Club members calling their representatives and asking that the Open Space Bill be "reported out" so it can be voted on by the full House.

Old Growth Forest Bill

The Old Growth Forest Bill (H. 1381) would establish a system of permanent old growth forest reserves in state forests, parks, and reservations. The bill is still in the House Ways & Means Committee.

The Parkways Bill

The Parkways Bill (H. 4283) would help protect the scenic, cultural, and natural resources of parkways by mandating the creation of policies to ensure effective maintenance and management of these public lands.

For example, if the proposed development of a 40.7-acre site surrounded by the Middlesex Fells Reservation is approved, it will add up to 8,000 daily car trips on the Fells parkways. There would be severe pressure for modifying the parkways such as widening roads, adding turning lanes, striping crosswalks, cutting trees, removing medians, and signaling intersections.



Road in Middlesex Fells

Photograph by Mike Ryan

These changes would result in a loss of parkland.

The good news on the Parkways Bill is that the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is drafting maintenance and management policies. Arguably this bill has prodded the DCR into action as they plan to complete the Historic Parkways Preservation Treatment guidelines in June for public comment and input.

The Parkways Bill is still needed because the question of oversight is unresolved. We know from past experience that oversight is needed to ensure guidelines are enforced. The Parkways Bill would create an oversight committee, consisting of repre-

sentatives from the DCR, the Massachusetts Highway Department, and several non-profit organizations, such as the Sierra Club, Massachusetts Audubon Society, and Friends of the Middlesex Fells. The oversight committee would provide us with some assurance that the new guidelines would be followed.

You can make a difference

All three bills need to be reported favorably out of committee so the full House can vote on them. We need to let the leadership of the House of Representatives know that voters want the PPP bills passed.

Contact your State Representative and ask him or her to support the PPP bills. If the representative's staff tell you a bill is still in committee, ask the

Representative to write to the Chairman of the committee, requesting that the bill be reported out favorably so it can be voted on by the full House: Angelo M. Scaccia, Chairman of the House Rules Committee, for the Article 97 Open Space Bill (S. 2360) and Representative Robert A. DeLeo, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, for the Old Growth Forest Bill (H. 1381) and the Parkways Bill (H. 4283).

Volunteer to work on passage of the PPP. Email phil@philipsaunders.com ❖

Phil Saunders is a Sierra Club volunteer, working with the Legislative Action Committee to get the PPP bills enacted.

To find your Representative and Senator, go to:

<http://www.wheredoivotema.com>

For more background on the PPP, go to

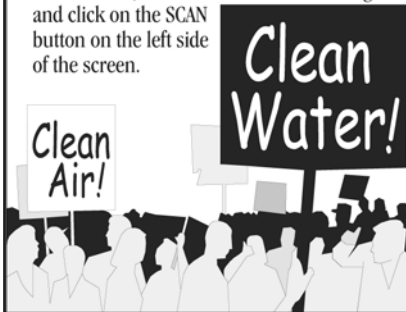
www.sierraclubmass.org

click on: *Politics and Issues*, then *Parks Protection Package*

Want an easy way to help the environment and stay informed about Massachusetts environmental issues?

Subscribe to SCAN - the Mass Sierra Club Activist Network e-mail list! As a SCAN subscriber, you'll receive information about critical environmental issues facing Massachusetts residents. You'll also be informed of upcoming events, outings, lectures, and meetings. You'll be told of ways to get involved in protecting the environment in your community or region.

To subscribe, visit www.sierraclubmass.org and click on the SCAN button on the left side of the screen.



Kerry Leaves *Clean Cars in the Dust*

by *Jeremy Marin*

In January Governor Romney directed Massachusetts to continue following California's clean car regulations, just as we have since 1991. These standards will require that new cars and trucks release 25 percent less global warming pollution starting in 2009. That was great news and we give Governor Romney kudos because it means cleaner air for Massachusetts residents and — combined with 10 other states and Canada — that one third of the North American auto market would be following stricter emission standards.

But Senator Kerry refused to sign onto a bi-partisan joint letter (signed by 21 other Senators) urging Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Stephen L. Johnson to grant an important waiver allowing these new clean car standards to come into effect.

The Senator said he was unwilling to sign-on because it would "create a patchwork" of car emission regulations. That's not the way Senator Kerry felt in 1990 when he voted in favor of the original legislation, and it simply isn't true. States can choose to follow either the federal emissions standards (weaker) or the California standards (stronger). That leaves two standards, not the patchwork that Senator Kerry and the auto industry claim.

You can help clean the air

Call Senator Kerry at 617-565-8519 or 202-224-2742 or email him at john_kerry@kerry.senate.gov to tell him you are unhappy that he refused to support clean car standards. ❖

Jeremy Marin is an associate regional representative for the Sierra Club working in the Boston office.

Forest Reserves Process Advances

by *Elisa Campbell*

According to Robert O'Connor, leader of the Forest Reserves initiative, the process is moving toward formal designation of large reserves this summer. First, the Mt. Greylock Advisory Committee gives their input after our deadline (end of April). The Division of Fish and Wildlife Board and the Stewardship Council for the Department of Conservation are expected to consider and vote on the proposal at their meetings in either May or June. The final designation will then be done by Secretary of Environmental Affairs Stephen Pritchard in July or August. Keep an eye on the chapter's website for further information. ❖



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* Valid from Boston (BOS). Packages subject to availability and price change and only available to Sierra Club members. Valid for departures 01JUN-31AUG06. All nights must be in hotels booked through Icelandair Holidays. Cancellations/changes subject to \$400 penalty 30-60 days prior to departure; nonrefundable/nonchangeable 29 days or less prior to departure. All fees are per person. Personal travel insurance not included. Lower priced packages may be available on icelandairholidays.com. Other restrictions apply. Seats are limited. Prices quoted are exclusive of applicable taxes and official charges by destination of approx \$90, including the September 11th Security Fee.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ICELAND ROVERS

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From the Director

(continued from page 2)

DCR has limited staff to monitor ORVs, and the Environmental Police force, which has the responsibility to enforce the rules, is similarly short on resources. Since vehicles are rarely impounded, and illegal riding has no effect on an individual's drivers license or authority to operate an ORV vehicle in the future, and the fine is only \$50, this "slap on the wrist" rarely changes behavior.

So the DCR is trying a new approach. The draft policy guidelines developed by the DCR establish criteria for determining which areas, if any, can sustain intensive use without unacceptable damage. This process should help determine where, when, and if ORV usage is appropriate in any of our state parks or forests.

What will result from this process? MASS ATV claims that "DCR's objective is to make ORV use illegal in Massachusetts." On the other hand, the DCR says research shows that outright prohibition of ORV riding on public lands, as is done in all other New England states, only leads to more illegal riding and destruction of natural resources. The DCR thinks it may be better to have official sites *and* an official state program to monitor it.

The Commonwealth needs a better system to manage its resources. The DCR guidelines are good, but without enforcement they will be meaningless. ORV riders represent less than seven percent of the Massachusetts population, but combined, those individuals own a total of 80,000 ORVs. That is a lot of machines that can do significant damage if the Commonwealth does not act expeditiously to increase enforcement, including impoundment or confiscation of vehicles, denial of a license to ride, and possible points or penalties on motor vehicle drivers licenses for repeat offenses. Any plan to continue, or increase, usage in our state parks system should be preceded by an effective enforcement program. The state must crack down on the current problem first, before rewarding a user group for years of bad behavior. Any truly responsible ORV rider should support these measures too. ❖

Praising Petroleum Membership Meeting and Presentation

In the December 2002 issue of *Science* magazine, Dr. Kirk R. Smith wrote an editorial, "In Praise of Petroleum," in which he suggested that liquified petroleum gas (LPG) is extremely attractive for cooking and heating in developing countries and would diminish adverse health impacts from indoor air particulates created by burning wood, crop residues and dung, as well as reducing the time required by women and children to gather fuel. According to Smith, whatever impact this new use would have on petroleum supplies and greenhouse emissions would be minor compared to its benefits and current use by automobiles and industry in rich countries. He argued that the developed countries, which create most of the greenhouse gases (GHG), should bear the cost and effort of testing new technologies to promote recycling, use of renewable energy, source reduction of solid wastes, etc.

Dr. Smith, Professor of Environmental Health Sciences at the University of California Berkeley, is in our area this year while on sabbatical at the Woods Hole Research Center. He will be giving a talk on these controversial subjects for the Sierra Club this fall. Please look for details on the Chapter's website and in the September *Sierran*. ❖

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Call For Nominations

All Massachusetts Sierra Club members are invited to submit their names for nomination to the Massachusetts Chapter Executive Committee (ExCom) and the executive committee of their groups (Greater Boston, Essex, Cape Cod, Pioneer Valley, and Blackstone Valley). The ExCom of each group serves as its board of directors, establishing group priorities, goals, strategies, and policies. To submit your name to the nominating committee, please contact the chapter chair: chapter-chair@sierraclub-mass.org; 617-442-0123 or 617-423-5775 for copies of petition forms. ❖

The dates for the 2006 elections are:

Appointment of a nominating and election committee	August 5, 2006
Receipt of names for nominating committee consideration and ballot issue petitions	August 21, 2006
Qualification of a ballot issue	August 25, 2006
Nominating Committee report of names of nominees	September 1, 2006
Certification of ballot issue	September 15, 2006
Receipt of candidate petitions	September 18, 2006
Qualification of petition candidates	October 1, 2006
Production of eligible voter list	November 17, 2006
Printing and mailing of ballots in Massachusetts <i>Sierran</i>	December 1, 2006
Receipt of ballots deadline	January 8, 2007
Count of ballots at Sierra Club chapter office	January 8, 2007

A special thank you to the 350 members who have already responded to our Chapter's March Fund Appeal by contributing over \$14,000. You are making a difference!

Mary Ann Nelson, Chapter Chair



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TTU 2700/2

Sanchita Banerjee holds an egg mass of spotted salamanders during one of two "Forestry Hikes" this spring which learned about forest management for habitat from scientists and foresters of the state Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). According to Tom Lautzenheiser, who works for Massachusetts Audubon and assists DFW in surveying for species, spotted salamanders require vernal pools for breeding. The eggs take four to seven weeks to develop; then the aquatic larvae must live in the water for another two to four months before they metamorphose to their terrestrial form, and crawl off into the surrounding woods. As adults, salamanders live mostly underground in burrows left by small mammals or in rock crevices.

Photograph by Elisa Campbell



Help Elect Pro-Environment Candidates



The Chapter Political Committee is looking for help with the upcoming elections in what is likely to be our busiest political year ever! Work in this all-volunteer committee centers around investigating candidates' records, campaign pledges, backgrounds, and reviewing questionnaires — and then making endorsements. The committee generally meets once a month — and carries on investigative work between meetings. The committee is made up of members who enjoy the political aspects of environmental work. To learn more or to join, please contact Phillip Segó, Chair, Chapter Political Committee: phil@philsego.com, 617-492-1032. ❖

Fifty Hybrids and Some Corn

by Jeremy Marin

If you've wondered why the state doesn't use more hybrid cars in its fleet of vehicles you're not alone. Sometimes it gets attributed to political ambivalence or poor planning. If only it were that simple. Truth is, the fault lies with Congress and its love for corn.

Massachusetts owns or leases approximately 10,000 vehicles. Of that, 6,500 are for the state police, the Office of Public Safety, and other agencies that require larger more powerful engines. (Nobody expects to see a state trooper rolling down the highway in a Mini-Cooper).

That leaves about 3,500 cars that could be hybrids; however, an Environmental Protection Agency regulation requires that 75 percent of each state fleet be alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs). What is an AFV? Vehicles that run on natural gas or ethanol. What is NOT an AFV according to the federal definition? Hybrid cars. So of those 3,500 autos, 2,625 must be AFVs according to federal regulations and only 875 can be hybrid vehicles.

Just to be perfectly clear — the state can have a maximum of 875 hybrid vehicles in its fleet due to federal regulations.

Add to this the fact that many of these vehicles are "flex-fuel" cars that can run either on regular gas or on E85, an ethanol blend made from corn.

Unfortunately there are exactly zero E85 filling stations in Massachusetts — that means these cars are getting poor mileage on standard gasoline.

While an exact number is difficult to come by, it appears that Massachusetts owns approximately 50 hybrids, a poor showing.

Discouraging as federal requirements may be, it is important that the state move forward and purchase as many hybrid and other fuel-efficient vehicles as it can. In 2006 EPA estimated greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂) for some common cars (at 15,000 miles per year) to be:

Ford Crown Victoria = 9.3 tons
 Mercury Mariner hybrid = 5.5 tons
 Toyota Prius = 3.4 tons
 Honda Civic hybrid = 3.4 tons

Take the above emissions numbers and multiply by the 875 autos in the state fleet that can be converted and you can see the difference it can make — 5162 tons worth of difference.

The state can and should make every effort to switch those 875 cars to hybrids and other fuel-efficient vehicles because despite being limited by federal regulations, the state can still do better. ❖

Jeremy Marin is an associate regional representative for the Sierra Club working in the Boston office.

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Massachusetts Chapter Outings

"E" indicates educational content

WILD EDIBLES WALK WITH
RUSS COHEN, WINNEKENNI
PARK (E)

June 6

Time: 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Contact Heidi at
heidiroberts@comcast.net
978-927-4157

MIDDLESEX FELLS HIKE

June 11

Time: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Contact Deborah at
holtjdj@verizon.net
617-227-8898

WILD EDIBLES WALK WITH
RUSS COHEN, BACK BAY FENS
(E)

June 22

Time: 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Contact Deborah at
holtjdj@verizon.net
617-227-8898

MIDDLESEX FELLS HIKE

July 15

Time: 10:00 AM

Contact Corey at
coreymathews@yahoo.com or
617-417-7212

BICYCLE ALONG THE
CAPE COD CANAL

July 16

Time: 10:45 AM

Contact Darlene at
darleneteves@yahoo.com or
978-335-4964

*The Chapter Outings Chair seeks a
successor to take over in 2007.
Date negotiable. Training available!
If interested, contact Deborah at
holtjdj@verizon.net.*

Energy Volunteers Needed

The Sierra Club Energy Committee's home energy outreach campaign teaches homeowners how to save money on their energy bills. We speak at various community organizations and are looking for volunteers to help us expand and promote the program. The time commitment varies and you do not need any energy experience. Come help us spread the word about energy efficiency. For more information, call the chapter office at 617-423-5775.

Invite us

Do you belong to a community organization that has guest speakers? Invite us!

Come hear us

The Sierra Club Energy Committee is presenting "Home Energy Savings" for members in June. The presentation will be on the MIT Campus in Cambridge. Watch the website or call the office at 617-423-5775 for more information. ❖

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NON-SIERRA EVENTS

MIDDLESEX FELLS RESERVATION
TRAIL RESTORATION DAYS

Sponsored by The Friends of the
Middlesex Fells (www.fells.org)

June 3, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM (rain
date June 4, 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM),
June 10, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM (rain
date June 11, 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM)

Leader: Mark Arnott

Advanced registration required at
781-662-2340 or friends@fells.org

MBTA FARE INCREASE
WORKSHOP

June 6

Time: 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Copley Square Public Library,
700 Boylston Street

The MBTA's Fare Policy is available on
its website. Written comments may
be sent through Friday June 30. Mail
to MBTA, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA
02116, Attn: Fare Policy Committee,
or email to:
fareproposal@mbta.com.

BIODIVERSITY DAY AT MIDDLE-
SEX FELLS RESERVATION — BATS!

June 10

Sponsored by The Friends of
Middlesex Fells (www.fells.org)

Place: Botume House Visitor
Center, 4 Woodland Road,
Stoneham

Time: 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM "Bats in
your Backyard" presented by
Matthew Nash

Call 781-662-2340 for details about
registering with DCR.

Time: 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM "The
Beautiful Bats" presented by
Marianne Moore

HEALTHY TREES, HEALTHY
NEIGHBORHOODS: BOSTON'S
URBAN FOREST INVENTORY

The Greater Boston Urban Forest
Inventory (GBUFI) is an initiative to
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create a complete picture of the
"urban forest" of Boston to guide the
management and preservation of the
urban forest.

For more information about how to
participate, contact Elizabeth Walsh
at walshio@bc.edu or
617-552-1563.

GROUP & CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

June 17

Time: 11:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Place: Sierra Club Office

Upcoming meetings:

August 5

September 24: 12:30 – 4:30 PM

October 21

December 2

ISSUE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

FUNDRAISING/MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

June 11

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Place: Stata Center Cafe, MIT, Main & Vassar Sts., enter doors opposite parking lot

This committee meets on the second Sunday of each month. Come with your ideas, time and energies in crafting strategies to engage current donors, recruit new members and increase revenues for the Massachusetts Chapter.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

June 21

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Sierra Club Office



EVENT

SIERRA CLUB & BEER

June 7

Time: 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

Place: Orleans Restaurant, 65 Holland St., Somerville (across from Davis Sq. T)

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www.sierraclubmass.org for current information about events and announcements

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