



**SIERRA  
CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

## Hudson/Mohawk Group



Mar/April 2005 Vol. 29 No 2

"Aspens" by Ansel Adams in This is the American Earth

### SEQRA Seminar on Planning and Zoning

**Saturday, April 9th 2005  
8:45am - 1pm at SUNYA**

Mark your calendars to attend our Group's special seminar for Sierra Club members and other environmentalists. We will focus on critical points and key issues in decision-making, and public participation in local government planning, zoning and complying with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). Key speakers will include Marc Gertsman (attorney for environmentalists fighting St. Lawrence Cement, development in North Greenbush and the Belleayre resort in the Catskills) and Lori Heitoff, head of the State Department's education programs on planning and zoning processes. Please sign up early for this seminar by contacting Susan Lawrence at 489-5721 or [shlawr2@aol.com](mailto:shlawr2@aol.com). See our separate flyer and our website for more details.

### Conservation Committee Meetings - Third Wednesday of the month (March 16th, April 20th) 7 - 9pm.

The Committee meets on conservation issues and projects - all members are welcome. We meet at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 21 Hackett Blvd., Albany (a few blocks west of intersection of Hackett Blvd. and Holland Ave., at the corner of Samaritan Drive.) For more details, please contact John VanDeloo, Pete Sheehan, or Susan Lawrence (contact info page 2)

**Garage Sale to Benefit the  
Hudson-Mohawk Group - Saturday,  
April 23rd 8am - 4pm** 32 Buckingham  
Drive, Albany - Lots of great stuff!  
Contact Pete at 489-5803

## Defend the Arctic, Again !

*Arctic Wildlife Refuge Action Day—March 12*

In the renowned words of Yogi Berra, "It's like deja vue, all over again." Sierra Club members have risen to the defense of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for more than two decades. Now, its time to do it again.

In 1987, Sierra Club members lead the fight to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from an assault by President Reagan's Interior Department, and a little-known Associate Solicitor named Gale Norton (now Interior Secretary under George W. Bush), who was making a name for herself by advocating expanded access to the Nation's natural resources by petrochemical and mining conglomerates. Environmentalists prevailed.

In 1991, President George H.W. Bush attempted to justify full-scale leasing of oil rights in the Arctic Refuge coastal plain in the context of the Persian Gulf War. Again, Sierra Club members and other environmentalists, joined by the Gwich'n Indian Nation of Alaska, prevailed. The proposed bill was defeated by a Democratic-led filibuster in the Senate.

In 1995, the Refuge was again protected from drilling when President Clinton, after thousands of call from environmentalists, vetoed the flawed Balanced Budget Act, which contained a stealth provision opening the coastal plain of the Refuge to oil and gas leasing. Under the Bush/Cheney Administration, drilling the Arctic has continuously formed the bedrock of an energy policy written and produced by Big Oil. Provisions to drill the Arctic have been placed repeatedly in budget bills and energy bills. In 2002, 8 Republican Senators broke ranks with their party and voted against drilling the Arctic. In 2005, with fewer Democrats in the Senate, the fight to protect the Arctic will be much more difficult. *With even more at stake.*

The Bush Energy Plan (sometimes referred to as the Cheney/Enron Energy Plan) is fraught with conglomerate-friendly provisions, besides drilling the Arctic, such as:

- drilling the Rocky Mountain Front Range in Montana for oil and gas;
- 1200 new power plants, 100 of which will be coal-fired and located the Midwest, upwind from New York;
- \$2 billion in subsidies for the coal industry;
- a 1/3 reduction in funding for renewable energy sources.

*(cont'd on page 3)*

## Hudson-Mohawk Group

Chair / \*Susan Lawrence 489-5721  
Programs/Volunteers SHLawr2@aol.com  
Vice-Chair / Conservation Chair -

\*John VanDeloo 370-4932  
JVDMD@aol.com

Treasurer/ \*Clarence Gregory, 393-7100  
Membership clarence.gregory@alum.mit.edu

Secretary \*Maureen Ferraro-Davis,  
235-0728 maureenfd@aol.com

Environmental Aaron Mair, 465-8523  
Justice aaronmair@yahoo.com  
Newsletter Janet Given Chen 346-5439  
jgiven@nycap.rr.com

Outings Bill Koebbeman, 399-5027  
WKEBB@juno.com

Political Chair Steve Redler 434-1540  
steveredler@yahoo.com

Fundraising J. Given-Chen 346-5439  
Volunteers Susan Lawrence 489-5721

Newsletter \* Tom Blandy 274-2098  
Distribution TBlandy@nycap.rr.com

### Issue Gurus

Hudson River - Aaron Mair, \*Pete Sheehan

(PSheehan12@netzero.net)489-5803

Cascade Lakes/Adirondacks -

\*Roger Gray (RTG50@aol.com)434-8681

Sprawl/Smart Growth - Susan Lawrence, J. VanDeloo, Aaron Mair

Energy - Susan Lawrence

Pesticides/Clean Water - John

VanDeloo

Clean Air - Susan Lawrence

Webmaster - Tom Reynolds

reynt0@cs.albany.edu

\* Executive Committee Members

The Hudson-Mohawk Group Executive Committee meets the first Monday of every month. Members are encouraged to attend! Please call Susan Lawrence to confirm.

This newsletter is published 5-6 times per year (or more) by the Hudson-Mohawk Group of the Sierra Club's Atlantic Chapter. Submit all letters, including name and phone number, to the editor to: Hudson-Mohawk Group, PO Box 8447, Albany, NY 12208-8447. We reserve the right to edit and keep all articles. Views expressed by the contributors may or may not be those of the Sierra Club or the Hudson-Mohawk Group. The subscription rate is \$5/5 issues; subscriptions for members are free.

## Outings

### Wednesday, March 30 Spruce Mt. Fire Tower Snowshoe Hike

9:30am. Located in northern Saratoga county, Spruce Mt. is a fairly easy snowshoe trek of about 2.5 mile round trip distance and 1,000 foot elevation gain. We'll learn about the history and the future of the fire tower. The future is looking brighter due to recent efforts being made for its restoration. The summit offers pretty views from a grove of hemlocks north toward Crane Mt. Call Lorraine at 765-4937 before March 18th or after March 25th. **(H, E, C)**

### Saturday, April 16th Taconic Crest Trail.

We will leave from the Petersburg Pass at the Rt. 2 parking lot and hike north to the Snow Hole, and learn how this spot got its name. We'll continue hiking north to Rt. 346 to finish this 7.2 mile hike and ride back to our origination point. Moderate difficulty. For details and registration contact John at 370-4932. **(H,E)**

### Saturday, April 30th, 2005 Great Flats Aquifer Trail

Our annual clean-up and walk around this trail. We will learn how it was formed and its present day importance. Afterwards, we can visit the Plotterkill Nature Preserve and enjoy the waterfalls as we relax and identify the newly blooming wildflowers. For details and registration contact John at 370-4932. **(H,E,T)**



### Wednesday, April 27th Tenant Creek Falls Hike

8:30am. A repeat trip from the summer of 2003 when a wonderful time was had by all! The timing for this trip is to hopefully catch the creek and falls in high water flow. Follow an old logging road that turns into a hiking trail along Tenant Creek passing three pretty waterfalls. The trail has some gradual up and down sections taking us through mixed woods and hemlocks. A delightful and fairly gentle hike. The approximately four mile round trip begins near the North end of the Great Sacandaga Lake, a little north of Northville. Call Lorraine at 765-4937. **(H,C)**

### Saturday, May 14th, 2005

**Cascade Lake** - The Hudson-Mohawk Group's annual clean-up of the highway along the lake and then a hike. With enough time we will enjoy a side trip to The Cottage in Lake Placid. For details and registration, contact Doreen and Ralph at 346-2818. **(H,T)**

**Key - H: Hiking E: Education  
C: Conservation T: Trail Work**

**Important Note: All outing members will sign an "Assumption of Risk and Release of Liability" sheet prior to participation in the outings.**

For leadership opportunities contact Bill Koebbeman 399-5027

## Public Awareness of the Sierra Club

Has anyone in your circle ever asked you, "What is the Sierra Club?", or "What does the Sierra Club do around here?" You may know what the Club does, but many people in the community do not. The Hudson-Mohawk Group is endeavoring to get the word out about the work we do by staffing tables at public events. If you would like to "table" with another Sierra Club member at such events as Earth Day celebrations and outdoor activity fairs, **give Lucinda a call at 434-4749.** It's a great way to get out and meet new people with your interests. Let's increase our membership and get more people involved!

## Protect Our Environment: Lobby State Legislature

### March 29th - Sierra Club Atlantic Lobby Day

We are looking for some Hudson-Mohawk Group members who want to join leaders from other groups and the Atlantic Chapter to meet with key State legislators and staff on high priority legislation for the Club. Priority legislation includes protecting small wetlands, reforming the Empire Zone program to protect green space and revitalize poor urban areas, and recycling water bottles (the Bigger Better Bottle Bill).

### April 19th - Earth Day Lobby Day

Join environmentalists from the Sierra Club, NYPIRG, Environmental Advocates of New York, Riverkeeper, Scenic Hudson and other groups who come to the State Capitol each year for a day of lobbying, learning and networking on the State's most important environmental issues. This is a day to come out in force; the more Hudson-Mohawk Group members that can come the better!

For more information on both these lobby days and to sign up to attend, please contact Sarah Kogel-Smucker in the Sierra Chapter office at 518-426-9144 or [Sarah.Kogel-Smucker@verizon.net](mailto:Sarah.Kogel-Smucker@verizon.net). Please also cc Susan Lawrence at [shlawr2@aol.com](mailto:shlawr2@aol.com) or 489-5721.

### Key Volunteer Needs

We are especially seeking volunteers to help us set up environmental programs for adults, youth and children and who are skilled at developing and organizing volunteers. Please contact Susan Lawrence to help. We also need volunteers to help with our many conservation projects (contact John VanDeloo, Pete Sheehan or Susan Lawrence), help with fundraising (contact Janet Given-Chen) or tabling (contact Lucinda Schoenbeck - see 'Public Awareness' page 2). We are also developing a campaign to combat sprawl and protect open space in western Schenectady County (contact Conservation Chair John VanDeloo or Environmental Justice Chair Aaron Mair - see contact info on page 2.)

\*\*\*\*\*

### Defend the Arctic, Again! (cont'd from page 1)

Sierra Club national staff expect the energy bill will be reported out in the House of Representatives in February, and that there will be a huge push to have it passed in the House and Senate by the end of March. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay (R-Tx), said, characterizing drilling the Arctic as the linchpin in the Bush/Cheney energy policy, "It's all about precedent." And Alaska Senator Ted Stevens, referring to the long battle over drilling the Arctic said, "It's never decided until I win." Now is the time for environmentalists to draw a line in the sand over the Bush/Cheney rapacious energy policies. We cannot back down.

**\*\*We need your help!! ASAP—** Call Senator Schumer (202-224-6542) and Senator Clinton (202-224-4451). Thank them for their past support for the environment, and ask them to not to budge on opposing drilling the Arctic. **Then**, email a follow-up letter to them via their websites: [www.schumer.senate.gov](http://www.schumer.senate.gov); [www.clinton.senate.gov](http://www.clinton.senate.gov) .

**\*\*On March 12, Arctic Action Day:** Call our Senators again and remind them how much you care about protecting the Arctic. Tell them you'll support them if they need a filibuster to defeat the drilling proposal.

**\*\*For more info:** [www.sierraclub.org/wildlands/arctic/](http://www.sierraclub.org/wildlands/arctic/); [www.alaskawild.org](http://www.alaskawild.org); [www.alaska.net/~gwichin](http://www.alaska.net/~gwichin); (for info on energy independence: [www.iwillevolve.org](http://www.iwillevolve.org))

**\*\*To get on our Arctic Activist list:** Send an email to Roger Gray ([rtg50@aol.com](mailto:rtg50@aol.com)) and John Nemjo ([johnnemjo@aol.com](mailto:johnnemjo@aol.com)).

*"In God's wildness lies the hope of the world - the great fresh unblighted, unredeemed wilderness. The galling harness of civilization drops off, and the wounds heal ere we are aware." (The Alaska trip, July 1890; John of the Mountains, 1938)*

## Calling All E-Activists!

For more information about pressing environmental issues facing New York State and ways to take action please join the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter's action alert e-mail list. Members receive an average of four e-mails per month. To subscribe, send an email to [listserv@lists.sierraclub.org](mailto:listserv@lists.sierraclub.org) with the message "Subscribe ATL-ACTION-ALERTS@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG your first and last name."

If you would like to get Hudson-Mohawk e-mails alerting you to key events, volunteer opportunities, critical local meetings, educational opportunities, etc., please contact Susan Lawrence at [shlawr2@aol.com](mailto:shlawr2@aol.com).

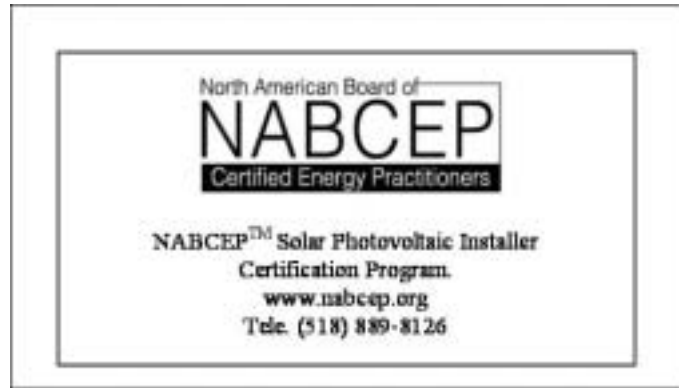
And don't forget to check our Hudson-Mohawk Group's website at [www.newyork.sierraclub.org/hudsonmohawk/](http://www.newyork.sierraclub.org/hudsonmohawk/)

### Check Your Change

Newly issued 2005 quarters representing the State of California have John Muir looking out over Yosemite Valley. Muir's birthday is April 21.

**Key Dates**

- Mon., March 7 - ExCom meeting
- Wed., March 16 - Conservation Committee Mtg
- Tues., March 29 - Sierra Atlantic Lobby Day
- Mon., April 4 - ExCom meeting
- Sat., April 9 - SEQRA Seminar at SUNYA
- Tues., April 19 - Earth Day Lobby Day
- Wed., April 20 - Conservation Committee Mtg.
- Thurs., April 21 - John Muir's Birthday
- Fri., April 22 - Earth Day
- Sat., April 23 - Garage Sale to benefit Hudson-Mohawk Group



Hudson-Mohawk Group Newsletter  
PO Box 8447  
Albany, NY 12208-0447

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
ALBANY, NY  
PERMIT NO. 806

**SEQRA Seminar**  
**See page 1**

Printed with soy based ink on recycled paper containing 30% post-consumer content.



0802