



**SIERRA  
CLUB**  
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## HudsonMohawk Group March/April 2007



HudsonMohawk Group March April 2007 Vol. 31 No. 2

### Environmental Program

#### "An Inconvenient Truth" and "Cool Cities"

Join us as we watch Al Gore's dramatic movie educating us on the perils of global warming and what the earth's people need to do to stop it. We will talk about the Sierra Club's Cool Cities Campaign, our top national priority to get local governments to do their part to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Learn how you can work on Cool Cities in your community and take other steps to help reduce global warming. Even if you have seen An Inconvenient Truth, it is very worthwhile seeing again and, especially, bring someone who has not seen it yet. **The Environmental Program begins at 7 pm (doors open at 6:30 pm) at the Colonie (William Sanford) Town Library, 629 Albany-Shaker Road (112**

#### "StepItUp" - April 14, Saturday

Join with Sierra Club members and others concerned about global warming and sustainable living to participate in the many StepItUp activities in our area. Go to [www.StepItUp2007.org](http://www.StepItUp2007.org), type in your zip code and find out what events are in your area. You can work to start your own. StepItUp April 14 events can send a big message to the public and our public officials.

#### Conservation Committee Meetings Resume! March 15, Thursday, 7 pm and April 12, Thursday, 7 pm.

Contact Susan Lawrence, Conservation Chair) if you plan to attend and to find out the location of the meeting (also watch our website for any notice). We will focus on learning about and planning for actions on key environmental issues and welcome all our activists and new people who want to become involved.

### SUSTAINABLE LIVING KEY TO CURBING GLOBAL WARMING

By Susan Lawrence

It really hit home in December, about the impacts of global warming when the U.S. Department of the Interior proposed that the polar bear be identified as a threatened endangered species due to the shrinking Arctic sea ice. The polar bear is a big beloved symbol of wildlife. What about all the microscopic plant and animal species we cannot see but are also severely threatened by global warming.

Al Gore's film, "An Inconvenient Truth" and his book of the same title really hits us with graphic examples of the projected impact of global warming on the planet earth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There is basically universal agreement now among climatologists that the planet is warming and that if we do not cut drastically cut back on our emission of greenhouse gases, primarily from burning fossil fuels, our world climate will change dramatically. The January 2007 report of the UN initiated Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change spreads the alarm about impending climate change, but does not tell the governments of the world what to do. The Kyoto Treaty signed by most nations, except the U.S., sets goals for greenhouse gas reductions by 2012.

This April 14, "StepItUp" day, there will be nation-wide grassroots actions to educate the public and decision-makers on what needs to be done to greatly reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2050. The Sierra Club is one of the sponsoring organizations of "StepItUp", founded by Vermont environmentalist Bill McKibben. To find out about "StepItUp" activities in your area, go to [www.StepItUp2007.org](http://www.StepItUp2007.org) and type in your zip code. There will be events in Albany (rally at the State Capitol), Troy, Saratoga Springs, Cohoes, Schenectady, Round Lake, and Chatham and in other communities. You can sign up to participate and even to develop a StepItUp event in your community.

We have repeatedly written about the Sierra Club "Cool Cities" campaign in this newsletter because this high priority initiative will commit local governments (cities, towns, villages, school districts, counties) to take steps, such as purchasing hybrid cars and renewable energy, which will work to meet the goals of the Kyoto Treaty. We want to work

# Hudson-Mohawk Group

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## Issue Gurus

**Cascade Lakes/Adirondacks** -\*Roger Gray and John  
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**Clean Water:** \*Susan Lawrence and \*Aaron Mair and  
\*Joe Gardner

**Energy:** \*Susan Lawrence and  
\*Pete Sheehan

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**Sprawl/Smart Growth:** \*Susan Lawrence and \*Virginia  
Traver

**\*Executive Committee Members**

The Hudson-Mohawk Executive Committee Members meet the first Wednesday of every Month. Members are encouraged to attend! Please **call** the Co-Chairs to confirm. This newsletter is published 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, Hudson-Mohawk Group, PO Box 8447, Albany, NY 11208-8447. We reserve the right to edit and keep all articles. Views expressed by contributors may or may not be those of the Sierra Club or the Hudson-Mohawk Group. The subscription rate is \$6/6 issues; subscriptions for members are free. This newsletter is also published on our Group website at:

[www.newyork.sierraclub.org/hudsonmohawk](http://www.newyork.sierraclub.org/hudsonmohawk)

Events are posted on the website prior to this newsletter. Also, old newsletters are archived on our website at no cost to you.

(sustainable, from page 1) actively with other concerned organizations and activists toward establishing many "Cool Communities". Go to [www.sierraclub.org/coolcities](http://www.sierraclub.org/coolcities) to download the 35 page how-to handbook for the Cool Cities campaign.

Some local activists have purchased 100 DVDs of an "Inconvenient Truth" that are available for loan to people who want to show the film for a group and lead discussions about what we can do to curb global warming and live sustainably. Contact Susan Lawrence to get the DVD and materials for a house party or meeting at your community library or church or wherever people might gather. Also, the national Sierra Club has a lending library of short and long films on energy issues. Contact Susan Lawrence or Virginia Traver to borrow the films for a movie showing event with discussion.

To begin the process of reducing energy consumption in your home or workplace, you can start with an energy audit by a professional certified by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority and the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP). Go to [www.NYSERDA.org](http://www.NYSERDA.org) to learn more about the energy audits and any financial incentives for homeowners to make improvements to reduce energy use and use more renewable energy. Also, the US Department of Energy website, [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov), has information on ways to save energy, renewable energy, and funding incentives.

If you have not already done so, go to the NYS Public Service Commission website [www.AskPSC.com](http://www.AskPSC.com) to find out how to sign up with a renewable energy company for your electricity. For a few extra dollars a month, you can provide seed money to build renewable energy power sources.

Reducing the amount of waste produced in the first place and using the least toxic materials or better still clean materials in production of products, buildings, and services will greatly cut down on energy use and pollution. The three R's of Reduce, Recycle, and Reuse of waste management are basic to get us to live more sustainably. The State of California has enacted legislation to reduce the waste stream by 50 percent and more. Some communities have developed a zero waste goal. The average person in the U.S produces 4.3 pounds of trash a day.

A number of community organizations are working to advocate sustainable living including organic food cooperatives and churches and synagogues. You can take a green pledge as an individual or as part of an organization. Go to [www.SierraClub.org](http://www.SierraClub.org) to learn about faith based initiatives. Finally, see our HMG website for more information on what actions you can take and what resources are available.

## OUTINGS

(Key: **H**=Hiking, **E**=Education, **C**= Conservation, **T**=Trail Work)

**Wednesday, March 14 - Call to Action! - Save the Pine Bush Public Meeting** Meet members of Save the Pine Bush and hear about legal action available to local residents. Save the Pine Bush lawyer, Peter Henner, will explain legal options available to residents suffering from the stench of the current landfill. For more information, contact Lynne Jackson of Save the Pine Bush at 434-1954, [lynnejackson@mac.com](mailto:lynnejackson@mac.com) or Tom Ellis of Citizens' Environmental Coalition at 453-8874, [pei1996@verizon.net](mailto:pei1996@verizon.net). 7:00 pm, Village of Colonie Family Recreation Center, 2 Thunder Road, Albany. (E).

**Saturday, March 17, East Dix (and possibly South Dix and Macomb) via Lindsay Brook A+** (Sierra Club & ADK) - Approximately 12 miles, mostly bushwhacking. Ascend toward Spotted Mountain, and then go along the ridge to East Dix. Possible traverse to South Dix and Macomb, and return to the Northway via West Mill Brook. Meet: 5:00 AM, at Clifton Park Park and Ride. Leader Peter Henner, e-mail preferred [pe-ter@peterhenner.com](mailto:pe-ter@peterhenner.com), phone 768-8234 before 9:30 PM. (H).

**Tuesday, March 27, "An Inconvenient Truth" and "Cool Cities"** Al Gore's dramatic movie on global warming and what to do to stop it. We will talk about the Sierra Club's Cool Cities Campaign, our top national priority to get local governments to do their part to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Learn how to help reduce global warming. Bring someone who

has not seen it yet. 7 PM (doors open at 6:30 PM) at the Colonie (William Sanford) Town Library, 629 Albany-Shaker Road (1/2 mile east of Northway Exit 4). (E).

**Saturday, April 14 - Highway Cleanup, Route 9, Latham** Join us for our clean-up of our Adopt-A-Highway site. We have a two mile stretch of Route 9, from the bridge over the Mohawk River south, and will work from 9 - 11 AM. For details call Virginia Boyle Traver at 489-5758. (C, T).

**Saturday, April 14 - Step It Up! Low Carbon Local: Step Up To the Plate** 11:00 AM - 2 PM, Honest Weight Coop and Sierra Club to host a picnic, open to the public, in Washington Park / Washington Park Lake House. Then plan to rally, make music, noise, dance, talk, and make our way to the Capital Steps, hopefully to meet with other groups in Albany organizing Step It Up! activities. A rally to force our government officials to take the issue of global warming much more seriously than they have up to this point. (E).

**Paddling Instruction** John Nemjo's Mountainman is dedicated to providing outdoor sports enthusiasts with everything you need to make the most of your outdoor experiences. Expert staff and American Canoe Association Certified Instructors offer instructional classes and day trips that are suited for beginner to intermediate kayakers. Plan a trip to the Adirondack Mountains and set aside some time to paddle! Visit [www.mountainmanoutdoors.com/pages.rentals/instruction.html](http://www.mountainmanoutdoors.com/pages.rentals/instruction.html). (E).

**Saturday, April 21- New Member Hike--Mt. Greylock (B-)** (Sierra Club & ADK) For anyone, not just new members. At 6 miles round trip, with 1400 foot elevation gain, the trail leading from Notch Rd. to the summit of Greylock rises over the shoulder peaks of Mt. Williams and Mt. Fitch. Meet 8:30 AM, Defreestville Park & Ride at routes 4 7 43. Leader: Virginia Boyle Traver, 489-5758, [virginiabt28@hotmail.com](mailto:virginiabt28@hotmail.com). (H).

**Sunday, April 22 - Schodack Island Paddle (B)** (Sierra Club & ADK). Meet at the canoe launch or main boat launch (TBD) at Schodack Island State Park. In water and ready to go by 9:00 AM for paddling and exploring to 4:00 PM. Best for touring kayaks, but strong canoers are welcome. Wet- or dry-suit recommended. Some short hikes during lunch. Possibly hike the trails in the State Park. Leader: David Pisaneschi, 459-5969. (H).

### Want to Lead an Outing, Recommend an Outing?

If you would like to become an Outings Leader (some training required), contact Joe Gardner, our Outings Chair. If you have ideas for outings, know of special events to list in our Outings, or want to be added to our Outings e-mail list contact Joe.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



### Friend or Foe?

America's water, rivers and lakes are at risk from plant, cooperate-owned factory farms which are fouling our water with pathogens and chemicals. The air around these farms is contaminated with suspended dust particles, which have been linked to asthma, bronchitis and other diseases. Our government wants to pass legislation which would allow factory farms to be free from health and environmental laws. Support Sierra Club's effort to keep our water clean and our air friendly. The hogs have gone wild, now it's our turn.

Cause a stink. JOIN Sierra Club.

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Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible. They support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

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 P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968  
 or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)

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## HELP PROTECT THE ADIRONDACKS !!

The Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Adirondack Committee is joining with other organizations to fight two huge development projects in the Adirondacks, one in the Village of Tupper Lake, and one on the Saranac River near Union Falls. Adirondack Park Agency review of these projects appears to be timed to gain approval in the 11th hour before the new Governor takes office. Contributions are needed for legal action to help us hold off the onslaught against Adirondack wild forest lands. By making your tax-deductible contribution of \$25, \$50, or \$100 to the Sierra Club Foundation Adirondack Committee Account you will enable us to develop a strong legal defense against the well-financed developers of these projects. Yes, I want to help protect the Adirondacks. I am enclosing a tax-deductible contribution of:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25, \_\_\_\_\_ \$50, \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100, \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Please send your check to:  
**Sierra Club Adirondack**

**Committee**  
**353 Hamilton Ave.**  
**Albany, NY 12210.**

Thank you for your support !

## Lobby the State Legislature to Protect Our Environment

### April 17 – Earth Day Lobby Day

Join environmentalists from the Sierra Club, NYPIRG, Environmental Advocates, and other organizations who come to the State Capitol each year for a day of lobbying, learning, and networking on the State's most important environmental issues.

Watch for e-mails and a notice in the next newsletter for how you can help with a special Sierra Club lobby day later in the legislative session.

For more information on these lobby days and to sign up to attend, you can contact Theresa Cassiack in the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Office at 518 426-9144 or [theresa.cassiack@verizon.net](mailto:theresa.cassiack@verizon.net) and also cc Susan Lawrence at [shlawr2@aol.com](mailto:shlawr2@aol.com) or 489-5721.

## **WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE: VOLUNTEER WITH THE SIERRA CLUB**

Volunteering with the Hudson Mohawk Group is a way to make a difference in your community. You can work on key conservation issues like smart planning to stop sprawl, conserving special natural areas and energy, or cleaning up air, land, and water pollution. You can develop and publicize educational programs, help with educational "tabling" at fairs and other events, lead outings, recruit new members and coordinate volunteers. You can write newsletter articles and label newsletters for mailing. In the May/June 2006 Hudson Mohawk Group newsletter (available on our website), we included a sheet for volunteers to let us know let us their volunteer interests. Volunteering can a lot of fun and a way to meet new friends. To find out more about specific volunteer opportunities, please contact one of the Hudson Mohawk Group leaders identified on page two of the newsletter. Hope to hear from you soon.

### **Calling All E-Activists!**

For more information about pressing environmental issues facing New York State and ways you can take action, join the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter's Action Alert e-mail list. To subscribe, send an e-mail 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."

To get Hudson- Mohawk Group alerts on critical local conservation issues, events, volunteer opportunities, and more, contact Susan Lawrence at [shlawr2@aol.com](mailto:shlawr2@aol.com).

Check our Hudson Mohawk Group's website, [www.newyork.sierraclub.org/hudsonmohawk](http://www.newyork.sierraclub.org/hudsonmohawk) with newsletters, event and outing notices and a lot more.

## **We Need Donations to Help with Round Lake Bypass Work**

In our last newsletter, we included a letter we sent to the NYS Department of Transportation protesting their findings in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Round Lake Bypass in Malta because the \$30 million Bypass 1.6 mile highway will go right through 400 acres of zoned conservation land impacting the wetlands, wildlife, Zim Smith trail, and view shed in the ecologically sensitive Ballston Creek Valley. We look forward to working with the Spitzer administration to emphasize the need to take into account all the stakeholder issues, including environmental ones, in making decisions on new highway construction.

Your can go to our website to see our press release, issued with the Audubon Society of the Capitol District and some local activists, raising our concerns about the Round Lake Bypass to the public and decision-makers. The press release recommends reasonable, cost effective alternatives that would greatly reduce the impacts on the environment and includes pictures from the visualization of the bypass.

We are asking for donations to fund computer generated views of the blight of the Bypass on this area, including the view from the Northway between Exits 11 and 12. The NYS DOT did not have any visualization work done for the public as part of the State Environmental Quality Review Act process to approve this project.

To donate, please write a check made out to: "Sierra Club Foundation – HMG" and write "SOS" on the memo line and send the check to Sierra Club, Hudson Mohawk Group, P.O. Box 8447, Albany, NY 12208-0447, attention Jim Dufresne. Your donation will be tax-deductible. You can download the views from <http://www.spatialexperts.com/RoundLakeBypass/RoundLakeByPassVisualization.html>.

## KEY DATES

Wed, **March 7** - ExCom Meeting

Thursday, **March 15** - conservation Committee Meeting

Tuesday, **March 27**, Environmental Program - "An Inconvenient Truth" and "Cool Cities"

Wed, **April 4**, Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday, **April 12**, Conservation committee Meeting

Saturday, **April 14**, StepItUp Events to Stop Global Warming

Tuesday, **April 17** - State Legislature Lobby Day

North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners visit **[www.NABCEP.org](http://www.NABCEP.org)** to find a qualified photovoltaic solar installer for your system

### Be An Underwriter!

Contact Michael Divak , Newsletter Editor, for rates.

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