



SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

Hudson/Mohawk Group



May 2003 Vol. 26 No. 8

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

Upcoming Events

Sierra Club Social

Monday, May 19th, 7:30
Malt River Brewing Co.

Interested in getting involved with our local Sierra Club Group and making new friends? If so, join us for some light hearted discussions about who we are and how we work. For information contact John Nemjo at 279-4777. Malt River Brewing Company is just off the Northway and Route 9 at the Latham Circle Mall.

Imagine the Great Oswegatchie

Thursday, May 22, 7 P.M.
Colonie Community Center
1653 Central Avenue
(3/4 mile West of Northway entrance)

The new Sierra Club Adirondack Committee video "Imagine the Great Oswegatchie Canoe Wilderness" is ready for prime time! Join us for a screening of this video promoting the creation of a 500,000 acre canoe wilderness in the western Adirondack Park.

Conservation Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 28, 7 P.M.
St. Pauls Episcopal Church
21 Hackett Blvd., Albany

All members welcome. Please let Roger Gray, John VanDeloo, or Susan Lawrence know that you plan to attend. (Contact info on page 2).

The Great Oswegatchie Canoe Wilderness

By Roger Gray

The Great Oswegatchie Canoe Wilderness doesn't exist. But it could - with help from open space activists like you.

In the main area north of the Fulton Lake chain, stretching west from Blue Mountain Lake on the south and Tupper Lake on the north, all the way to the Adirondack Park Blue Line boundary, lies the potential for a wilderness area of world-class ecological value, and world class canoe routes. Here, several state-owned parcels (including the Five Ponds Wilderness, the Pepperbox Wilderness, and the Pidgeon Lakes Wilderness) could be combined with acquisitions from willing sellers to form the second largest wilderness area in the eastern United States. All it takes is vision, and imagination.

Imagine a wilderness area spanning a half million acres of remote Adirondack forest. Now, add in seven of the Adirondack's wild and scenic rivers and more than 400 lakes and ponds. Imagine putting in your canoe at the foot of Little Tupper and taking it out 50 miles later on the Beaver River. Imagine loons, osprey, spruce grouse, beaver, otter and moose.

The Great Oswegatchie Canoe Wilderness would contain all or parts of the watersheds of the Oswegatchie, Bog, Grass, Beaver, Moose, Independence and Raquette Rivers. It would contain 50,000 acres of old-growth forest, the largest amount of old growth in the eastern United States. It would provide a secure ecosystem for the reintroduction of lynx, cougar, and timber wolf. And, it would provide unlimited opportunities for human solitude, quiet reflection and spiritual renewal.

In the early part of this century Sierra Club volunteers helped ensure the creation of Yosemite and Glacier National Parks; they worked for years to get the 1964 Wilderness Act passed by Congress, then later they helped save the Grand Canyon, protect the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, and create the Utah Redrock Wilderness. Now you can help make the vision of the Adirondack Great Oswegatchie Canoe Wilderness a reality.

Inside the proposed Great Oswegatchie Canoe Wilderness boundary are two parcels which are owned by International Paper and are up for sale: the 9900 acre Round Lake parcel, and the 1100 acre Bog Lake/Clear Pond parcel. Acquisition of these two parcels would re-establish historic canoe routes and make it possible to canoe from Big Tupper Lake all the way to the Stillwater Reservoir. **What can you do?** Call or write: Governor George Pataki, Executive Chamber State Capitol, Albany, New York 12224 (518) 474-1041. Thank him for all he's done to protect open space in the Adirondack Park; ask him to complete the acquisition of these two important parcels ASAP to make the Great Oswegatchie Canoe Wilderness a reality. Be sure to tell him you want the State to classify the parcels as 'wilderness', the highest land classification under the State Land Master Plan, which prohibits motorized use. CC your State Senator & Assembly member.

Hudson-Mohawk Group

Chair	Pete Sheehan, 489-5803 psheeha5@nycap.rr.com
Vice-Chair	Susan Lawrence, 489-5721 shlawr2@aol.com
Treasurer/ Membership	Clarence Gregory, 393-7100 clarence.gregory@alum.mit.edu
Secretary	Maureen Ferraro-Davis, 235-0728 maureenfd@aol.com
Conservation Chair	Roger Gray, 434-8681 rtg50@aol.com
Environmental Justice	Aaron Mair, 465-8523 aaronmair@ajej.org
Newsletter	Janet Given 346-5439 jgiven@nycap.rr.com
Outings	Bill Koebbeman, 399-5027 WKEBB@juno.com
Political Chair	Jim Malatras, 459-6952 greek45@yahoo.com
Fundraising/ Programs/ Social Chair/ Volunteers	John Nemjo, 279-4777 Johnnemjo@aol.com

Issue Gurus

Hudson River	Aaron Mair, 465-8523 aaronmair@ajej.org
Cascade Lakes	Roger Gray, 434-8681 rtg50@aol.com
Solid Waste/ Recycling	Clarence Gregory, 393-7100 clarence.gregory@alum.mit.edu
Energy	Jim Malatras, 459-6952 greek45@yahoo.com
Pesticides/ Clean Water	John Van Deloo, 370-4932 JVDMD@aol.com
Clean Air	Susan Lawrence, 489-5721 shlawr2@aol.com
ANWR/ World Trade	Paul Caver, 686-7290 paulscaver@aol.com

The Hudson-Mohawk Group Executive Committee meets the first Monday evening of every month (except July). Members are encouraged to attend! Please call Pete Sheehan 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 to the editor to: Hudson-Mohawk Group, Capitol Station, Box 7194, Albany, NY 12224. Include your name and phone number. 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. Contact John Nemjo for advertising rates.

Outings

May 3, Saturday: Cascade Lakes Stewardship Project

Twice each year, in the Spring and Fall, we try to give a little back by conducting a clean-up of the shores of our adopted lakes, The Upper and Lower Cascades, along Route 73 in the Town of Keene. The day will continue with a picnic lunch and an afternoon hike. This event is a great time for the whole family in one of the most scenic spots in the Adirondacks.

Last spring we were joined by a group of Girl Scouts who helped lighten the clean up chore. If you would like to join us this year, contact Roger Gray (434-8681) or Ralph and Doreen May (346-2818) for details.

May 4, Sunday: Hoosic River Canoe Trip

We will canoe the scenic Hoosic River for 7 miles between Hoosic Falls and Buskirk. This will involve mostly Class I water (one short rapid is Class II at high water levels only.) The landscape is very attractive. We will put in at the new launch site at the Hoosic Falls Hydro plant and take out at the historic Buskirk covered bridge. This is a joint outing with the Mohawk-Hudson Chapter, AMC. For details contact leader Warren Broderick (235-4041) or co-leader Bill Koebbeman (399-5027).

May 18, Sunday: Batten Kill Canoe Triip

We will canoe the scenic Batten Kill for 9 miles between Route 22 and Center Falls. We may canoe an additional 5 miles upstream depending on the water level. This will involve entirely Class I water. The landscape is pastoral, passing between a series of large forested islands, and this stretch of the river is not often canoed. Great horned owl, osprey and great blue heron are seen in this stretch of river. This is a joint outing with the Mohawk-Hudson Chapter, AMC.



For details contact leader Warren Broderick (235-4041) or co-leader Lorraine Plauth (765-4937).

May 31, Saturday: Joralemon Park, Coeymans

A botanical walk, flat, easy walking. Focus is on the spring wildflowers and ferns of this rich, sugar maple dominated forest. Call Ted for details at 452-5526.

June 7, Saturday: Moreau Lake State Park

Sierra Club Outing 'Welcome to the Summer'. Hike the new Hudson Scenic Trail, explore around the Lake, or paddle on the Lake. Covered pavillion has been reserved in case of rain. Food arranged by a sponser, but please let us know 1 week ahead to arrange for quantity and preferences. Contact John at 370-4932.

June 12, Thursday: Sunset Photography Hike on Pebbles Island.

Just 12 miles north of Albany on the confluence of the Hudson & Mohawk Rivers. Offers river and rapids views, miles of trails through gently rolling, wooded landscape, a railway bridge, waterfowl sightings, and historic buildings. Meet at 6pm in the parking lot of the State Park at the end of Delaware Ave in Waterford. The leisurely 2 mile hike will be geared to beginner and intermediate photographers. Our leader is a professional photographer. Bring your camera! Contact N. Sukamar (238-6958) or Bill Koebbeman (399-5027).

June 29, Sunday: Kenrose Preserve Nature Walk.

This Nature Conservancy land has had many owners and uses over time. This area is part of the region written about in Henry Christman's 'Tin Horns & Calico' (1945). Our primary interest will be the identification of some of the more than 250 species of plants found along the trail. Call Pete Sheehan (489-5803)

An 'Assumption of Risk and Release of Liability' sheet will be signed by outing members prior to all outings.

THIS NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOUR HELP

Your local Sierra Club has recently doubled the number of issues you receive per year. Increasing our publications from five to ten times per year has been costly. We want to continue to reach out to the over 3,200 members like you in our local area and need your help.

Please send whatever you can (\$5, \$10, \$25 or more) to help support the continued publication of the Sierra Club Hudson-Mohawk Group Newsletter to:
Sierra Club Newsletter Appeal
c/o John Nemjo
3695 Rt. 2
Cropseyville, NY 12052

Make checks payable to the Sierra Club. Thank you for your support.

"Every good thing, great and small, needs defense."—John Muir

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 **SIERRA CLUB**
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Endorse check and mail to:
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Conservation Committee Update

The following highlights some of the active projects underway for the Hudson-Mohawk Group. You can contact the lead persons identified (see the masthead on page two for phone numbers and email addresses) to volunteer, or for more information.

Sprawl (Pete Sheehan, Susan Lawrence) - Many issues and projects about how the Capital District can combat sprawl and plan effectively for growth while protecting the environment. Issues include open space protection, quality community planning, revitalization of cities and older suburbs, infrastructure planning and funding, attending and serving on planning boards, and smart growth legislation. Contact Bill Koebbeman about a proposed microchip plant to be constructed on 1350 acres of forest and wetlands on **Luther Forest Technology Campus** in Malta. (See many articles on sprawl related subjects in previous Hudson-Mohawk newsletters.)

Strip Mine, Greenfield County (John VanDeloo) - Attend a meeting May 17th at 1pm with John and the Greenfield Concerned Citizens regarding this project that will blast the top off a mountain, creating many environmental problems and other negative impacts for the local community. (See Feb. 2003 newsletter).

Asphalt Plant, Port of Albany (Pete Sheehan) - We have asked the State Department of Environmental Conservation to conduct a public hearing before considering approval of an air permit application to build an asphalt plant near the residential area of the South End of Albany.

Pedone Dump, Glenville (John VanDeloo) - State & local actions have been dismissed concerning storage of containers on this site, as the containers have been removed. The DEC has promised to continue to work on the clean up of this site, and we will keep you informed.

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Volunteer Corner

The Hudson - Mohawk Group of the Sierra Club wants you! Help us with our exciting work in protecting our local environment by becoming a volunteer, and make new friends along the way. Positions available in the following areas:

- Programs
- Fundraising
- Membership
- Volunteer Recruitment
- Outings
- Environmental Education
- Publicity
- Newsletter Activities
- and more

If you would like to volunteer please call John Nemjo (279-4777) or email at johnnemjo@aol.com

"None of Nature's landscapes are ugly, so long as they are wild."

-John Muir, 1901

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Sierra Club Outing!

June 7, 2003

See page 2 for details

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