



The TRAILBLAZER

January 2006

Niagara Group of the Sierra Club

Vol. XXXVII, No.4

Jamestown Coal Plant Opposed

The Atlantic Chapter of the Sierra Club was one of the environmental groups which signed a letter opposing a coal fired power plant in Jamestown. The letter can be viewed on our website at <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/niagara>

For more information, including information about how to express your opposition to this project, contact Walter Simpson, enconser@acsu.buffalo.edu (preferred) or 716-839-0062.

Success Stories

The Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund has published an attractive book of "Success Stories." One of them is a report of our work, and that of Residents for Responsible Government, in opposing expansion of Chemical Waste Management. Although that struggle is far from over, the article does point out increased public awareness and recent legislation passed by the New York Legislature forbidding new permits for toxic waste disposal until the Department of Environmental Conservation produces a new geographically equitable siting plan.

The Success Story can be read through a link on our Niagara Group website at newyork.sierraclub.org/niagara/ or by writing to the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund at 426 Bay Street, Petoskey, MI 49770.

Pollution Trading

The national Sierra Club policy regarding pollution trading can be found at <http://www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/trading.asp>.

The Sierra Club opposes use of pollution trading. In all cases, if a program is initiated, there must be full public notice, disclosure, participation, oversight, accountability, verification, and effective enforcement, with rights of appeal for affected citizens and administrative and judicial remedies.

Forests Get New Rules for Off-Road Vehicles

On November 3 the Bush Administration changed rules for forest management, giving local managers authority to decide where off-road vehicles can be used. This may open up previously prohibited areas for degradation. We all have a right to protect our nation's 155 national forests. Sound the alarm, and influence forest managers to keep protection of our forests as a priority over destructive recreational use that is desired only by a few.

NEW MEETING LOCATION

We will now be meeting in room 684 (*not 306*) OF THE NATURAL SCIENCES COMPLEX of the State University of New York from 7pm - 9pm on 4th Tuesdays. We are grateful to the Methodist Church of Williamsville for providing us space in the past. The Natural Sciences Complex is near the Govenors complex, just off of Sweethome at the Rensch entrance. This is just north of Maple. For a map, go to <http://www.buffalo.edu/buildings/building?id=nsc>

Members and non-members are invited. Come learn about environmental issues and the importance of conserving our environment.

DIRECTIONS: To reach the north campus, I suggest finding the intersection of Maple Road and Sweet Home Rd, and heading north to the Rensch entrance to UB. Turn east into the Rensch entrance, and you'll find yourself at the points on the map. Take the Rensch entrance past one light, to a stop sign, turn left at the stop sign and continue to the next stop sign, turn right and then turn right again into the parking lot. Look for the booths (they will be empty after 3pm, and go into the paid parking lot (which is free after 3pm) to get as close to the NSC as possible. NSC is a brown/tan building 8 stories) with exhaust pipes that look like a pipe organ from the top.

Elevators are at east and west ends of the building. 306 NSC is at the southeast corner on the third floor.

To get to Maple Road and Sweet Home, Sweet Home is east of Niagara Falls Blvd and West of Miller-sport Highway. Maple is one mile north of Sheridan.

If you would like more specific directions, just email me at gardella@buffalo.edu. - Joe Gardella

Global Warming

Prince Charles says that global warming is the greatest challenge facing mankind.

Prime Minister Tony Blair says acting to address temperature change is his number one priority.

What does President George Bush say???

Klydel Wetlands Saved *by Liz Kaszubski*

Many thanks to the packed house who attended the November 15th North Tonawanda Board of Education meeting. In a show of hands, everyone in attendance was FOR the school district giving its land to Buffalo Audubon Society instead of selling it to developers.

Liz Kaszubski of Buffalo Audubon and NTHS Earth Science teacher, Paul Swisher, presented the case for preservation to the board.

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Victories and Defeats

The Niagara Group launched a vigorous educational campaign in Amherst to help voters understand the issues at stake in the November election. The election of candidates that seemed pro-environment indicated that voters had taken note of the positions the candidates held, and let their environmental records and statements influence the choices voters made. We believe that we are in a position now to be in dialogue with Town leaders and discuss with them environmental issues of importance.

In the Town of Porter, we join with Residents for Responsible Government in thanking Councilman Bill Choboy for his time of service there. Bill has been a tireless advocate for the environment, not only in opposing expansion of Chemical Waste Management but also on other issues as well. He was a leader in the drafting

"Klydel Wetlands" con't from pg. 1

The school board unanimously reversed their unanimous vote of last month to sell their Klydel Wetland nature preserve property through Hunt Realty. The school district attorney will now research selling the 9.2-acre district property located at 1014 Raymond St. to Audubon for \$1. Under state law, that sale to Audubon must be approved by North Tonawanda taxpayers.

In attendance were Larry Beahan and Art Klein of Sierra Club, many Adirondack Mtn. Club members, students and a science

teacher from North Tonawanda High School, members of the City of North Tonawanda Environmental Committee, and a Western New York Land Conservancy board member, Paul Lehman. There were also quite a few residents, including those living in the neighborhood adjacent to the nature preserve present.

Extra copies of the Trailblazer are usually available after each mailing, and left for others to see in libraries, restaurants, display racks, etc. If you want to help, please ask for extras at our regular meetings.

It's a great victory and a credit to all who attended in support. Thanks again! We couldn't have done it without you!

Honoring Genevieve Robins at February Meeting

Gen Robins, long time member of the Sierra Club and faithful worker, is resigning from our Executive Committee because she will be spending more time in North Carolina. Steve Burns, our treasurer, is being appointed to finish her term on the Executive Committee.

In honor of Gen, a special dinner will be held at the Eagle House Restaurant in Williamsville at 5:30 p.m. on February 28. This will take the place of our regular meeting. There will not be a speaker; regular meeting agenda will be followed, plus time spent honoring Gen. She is donating another water color for us to sell or auction to help support our efforts.

Reservations are necessary: phone Jane Jontz at 628-6934 or send her an e-mail at jontzja@hotmail.com. For more information about the dinner, check our web-site at <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/niagara>.

OUTINGS CALENDAR

Saturday, January 7, 2006 - Perrysburg snowshoe/boot outing.

Meet at Tim Hortens in the Williamsville Walker center at 9am. Bring water and lunch. The trip will include a walk in boots

looking at buildings and botany and a walk in boots and/or snowshoes for an overview. Distance 3-4 miles.

Saturday January 14, 2006 - Ski Amherst 1200 acre Natureview Park

We will meet at 10 am in the Natureview Parking lot off Tonawanda Creek Road between Sweethome and Bear Ridge Road. Bring water and a lunch. In Natureview you can get into areas where you would swear you were 300 miles away in the deepest Adirondacks and in fact you are 10 min. from downtown

Williamsville.

Natureview is a suburban wetland wilderness that Sierra has worked to protect from development for the last 8 yrs. A great way to increase your education and understanding of the environment! Call Jane Jontz with questions at 839-3112.

Saturday, February 25th at 10:00AM - Snowshoeing at Hunters Creek

Discover the joys of winter hiking while exploring one of Western New York's less traveled winter wonderlands. We'll discuss how to be prepared and safe when hiking in wintry weather while we enjoy this secluded area. This will be a moderate hike of 2-3 hrs.

Dress in layers and bring snowshoes, snacks and water.

Please contact Mike Stroh (stroh78@adelphia.net) if you plan to attend. Driving directions will be provided, as well as info on where to rent snowshoes if you need them.

April 14th-16th - Weekend in the Adirondack High Peaks

Learn about the history of the Adirondacks while climbing to the highest point in New York State - the 5,344 ft. summit of Mt. Marcy. We'll discuss how, despite being protected, this wilderness continues to be negatively affected by human impacts ranging from erosion to acid rain.

heading back to Buffalo. This will be a strenuous trip and required gear will depend on the unpredictable Adirondack spring weather. We ask that you RSVP by February 15th so we can reserve the bunks. Note that this outing is during the Passover/Easter holiday weekend.

We will leave Buffalo Friday afternoon for the Adirondack Loj where we'll stay in the bunkroom for \$36 per person per night. Weather permitting, we will spend all of Saturday hiking Marcy, and we will take a shorter hike Sunday morning before

Please contact Jane Jontz by phone (628-6934) or Mike Stroh by email (stroh78@adelphia.net) to reserve your spot, or if you have any questions.

Water Quality Gets Boost From Great Lakes Fund

(Press release from Residents for Responsible Government) The environment around the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works (LOOW) got a boost when Residents for Responsible Government, Inc. received grant support from the Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund (GLAHNF) recently.

“This generous funding will help RRG with its stream sampling and other water contamination concerns surrounding Chemical Waste Management (CWM) and the LOOW site,” explained Charles Lamb, a grant coordinator for RRG.

In addition, RRG recently announced that the organization is helping the Niagara County Health department to identify all wells around the area, so thorough testing of ground water for radioactive and chemical contaminants can be conducted.

The GLAHNF is coordinated by the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council located in Petoskey, Michigan. They provide financial and informational support to citizen efforts to protect wetlands, lakes, and rivers across the Great Lakes Basin. Grassroots organizations in both the U.S. and Canada are eligible for their “Special Opportunity Grants” and “Communications Assistance Grants.”

“Of the 33 applications, Residents for Responsible Government, Inc. was one of just 16 that received funding this fall,” said Jill Ryan, Director of GLAHNF. “We are thrilled to award a grant to RRG to support their excellent work to protect local resources, which in addition will ultimately benefit the health of the Great Lakes Basin as a whole,” added Ryan.

“RRG has been instrumental in sampling some local streams

and getting the school to more fully examine contaminated areas, including around the drainage ditch which comes from the CWM direction,” according to RRG President Vince Agnello. “With the plutonium, strontium, and other radioactive materials that were recently discovered on the CWM property, and the elevated PCB contamination in a stream from CWM’s site, it’s vital that residents be supported in the effort to assure good water quality and the community’s health.”

Lamb pointed out that all water from CWM flows into Lake Ontario, including over 20,000,000 gallons a year that is monitored and released by CWM into the Niagara River; “this GLAHNF assistance is an important part of our work to guard community health.” If residents have a concern, or know of a well that should be tested by the county health department, call Judi Mokhiber, coordinator of RRG’s well testing effort, at 745-1480.

RRG is a non-partisan organization which formed three years ago to help inform residents on the hazards of toxic waste in the region, especially the chemical and radiological materials in and around CWM which sits in the middle of the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works, a major WW II munitions production and radioactive handling and disposal site.

Congratulations Joe Gardella

Joe Gardella was recently awarded an NSF Presidential Award for his activities in mentoring and science education. Congratulations Joe!

Environmental Resources at Your Fingertips *by Erin Cala, UB Green Office*

For many of us, winter presents an excellent opportunity to curl up with a good book or relax with a video. Whether you’re going to do your reading seated next to a roaring fire or zipped into your mummy bag with a headlamp- the place to find great environmental information is the UB Green Office’s Environmental Library. The Library is located on the University at Buffalo’s South/Main Street Campus, next to the MacKay Heating Plant at 220 Winspear Avenue and is free and open to the public. We are the only place in Western New York dedicated to providing the community with a wide variety of environmental resources.

UB Green, the environmental stewardship office at UB, promotes environmental awareness, energy conservation, green building design, recycling, and green purchasing on campus and in the community. Our Environmental Library allows us to spread the environmental message and provide independent-learning opportunities for students and community members.

Since opening its doors in 2000 the Environmental Library has provided information on topics such as: home energy conservation; solar homes; green building design; climate change; pollution; renewable energy; the environmental movement; sustainable communities; activism, leadership and organizing; recycling; animal rights and vegetarianism; vegetarian cookbooks; simple living; peace and war; environmental classics and fiction; and environmental spirituality. We also have subscriptions to a number of magazines dedicated to environmental topics including E the Environmental Magazine, Eco-Structure, The Center for a New American Dream’s Enough, Green @ Work, Natural Home & Garden, Ode, Orion, Solar Today, Spirituality & Health, and Utne Reader.

If you’re in the mood for a movie, we’ve got you covered! Environmental documentaries on simple living, global warm-

ing, activism, forest and parks issues and foreign policy abound. For the do-it-yourselfers our series of “how-to” videos on residential solar electricity, solar pumping, wind power, straw bale construction, rainwater collection, and home energy conservation is also top notch. The size and scope of our collection can only be appreciated by stopping by! We invite you to come in, read and relax.

The UB Green Library is generally open 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, though later hours may also be available. Please call 829-3535 before visiting for directions and in order to confirm open times, since library hours depend on daily staffing of the UB Green Office. Our goal for the UB Green Library is to have it become a focal point of environmental education and advocacy, and sustainable energy within Western New York. Please help us spread the word and be sure to take advantage of the environmental resources we have to offer.

Thank You Matt Taylor!

For many years, 17 or so, Matt Taylor and XOAR Printing have printed our Trailblazer free of charge. Although Matt can no longer do this, we can’t thank him enough for the service he has rendered. He has saved us thousands of dollars to be used for other pro-environment efforts. By his contribution many people have had the opportunity to learn of environmental concerns and receive education about outings and other events to increase public awareness of the importance of preserving our air, water, and land. Thank you, Environmentalist Matt Taylor!

DEC Announces Draft Regulations for Brownfield and Superfund Programs

(taken from NYSDEC Press Release)

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Acting Commissioner Denise M. Sheehan today announced that DEC has issued draft regulations to implement the State's Superfund and Brownfield Programs. The draft regulations, related Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement, and Technical Support Document (TSD) for the Development of the Soil Cleanup Objectives will be available for public comment until March 27, 2006.

"DEC has drafted the regulation in response to the historic legislation adopted by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Pataki in October 2003. The law refinanced and reformed the State Superfund and Brownfield Programs, greatly accelerating the redevelopment of contaminated sites across the State," Commissioner Sheehan said.

"DEC understands that these regulations will affect communities across the State and has worked to ensure that everyone who would like to get involved in the public review process is able and encouraged to do so, scheduling

seven public information meetings and three public hearings across the State."

The draft regulations reflect statutory revisions to the Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Site Remedial Program (Superfund Program) and the Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) and incorporate new provisions to implement the new Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP). These changes are necessary to fully implement the comprehensive legislation enacted in 2003 to refinance and reform the State's Brownfield and Superfund programs. DEC has been administering and implementing the new and amended programs since the legislation's passage under guidance documents. The complete text of the draft regulation, the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the regulation, the TSD, as well as all studies and documents referenced by the TSD, may be viewed at DEC Central Office in Albany and each DEC regional office.

For more information on the State's environmental remediation programs, go to DEC's website at www.dec.state.ny.us/website/der/.

If you have information you wish to share or copy for use in the Trailblazer, please send it to Charles Lamb at 335 Walnut Lane, Youngstown, NY 14174 or clamb0@prodigy.net or at 716-745-7037. Deadlines for the year are as follows: March 10, June 10, September 10, and December 10. The Niagara Group of the Sierra Club meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 7p.m. at The Natural Sciences Complex at UB's North (Amherst) Campus, room 684. This is near the Govenors complex off of Sweethome Road at the Rensch entrance, north of Maple. All Sierrans are invited!

WHAT'S INSIDE . . .

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Jamestown Coal Plant Opposed ◆ Success Stories ◆ Pollution Trading ◆ Forests Get New Rules for ◆ Off-Road Vehicles ◆ New Meeting Location ◆ Global Warming ◆ Klydel Wetlands Saved
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Victories and Defeats ◆ Honoring Genevieve Robins ◆ at February Meeting ◆ Outings Calendar
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Water Quality Gets Boost ◆ From Great Lakes Fund ◆ Congratulations Joe Gardella ◆ Environmental Resources at Your Fingertips ◆ Thank You Matt Taylor

Sierra Club
Niagara Group
25 S. Lincoln Ave. #307
Orchard Park, NY 14127



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