

# TheMackinac

PUBLICATION OF THE SIERRA CLUB'S MICHIGAN CHAPTER • AUTUMN/WINTER 2015-16

## Sierra Club's #1 Job: Climate Change

by Gail Philbin, Chapter Director

**F**atih Birol, chief economist for the International Energy Agency, predicted in 2011 that 2017 would be the point of no return for keeping global warming under control. By his calculations, there are just two years left to make the carbon reductions necessary to avoid a future of weather extremes and climate catastrophes.<sup>1</sup>

Sierra Club acknowledges this sense of urgency and is working hard to combat this fundamental threat to our quality of life. Every issue we work on, from fossil fuels to environmental justice to factory farms, impacts climate change.

Since our last issue, the number of coal plants we've helped shutter over the last seven years has reached nine in Michigan and 201 nationwide. We called for Gov. Snyder to shut down Enbridge Line 5, a pair of leak-prone, 62-year-old pipelines under the Straits of Mackinac and Huron-Manistee National Forest, and we actively supported a state fracking ban. The Oct. 3 Detroit March for Justice spotlighted climate change's lopsided impact on low-income residents and communities of color.

Climate change is the top priority for the Michigan Chapter, and our ability to address climate-related issues comes from thousands of concerned citizens like you who give time and financial support to our work. Climate warriors like:

- **Dr. Dolores Leonard**, a Detroit community activist fighting to clean up air



Grand Rapids resident Rachel Hood-Petroelje and daughters at the West Michigan People's Climate March on Sep. 19.

GAIL PHILBIN

and water in Michigan's most polluted zip code, 48217 — an area surrounded by coal burning, tar sands, crude oil refining and other industry (p.8).


- **Pam Taylor**, a former farmer who documents factory farm pollution as part of Environmentally Concerned Citizens of South Central Michigan. Animal factories are a sizable source of greenhouse gases. Read about Pam and our Less=More campaign on p.10.
- **Michigan State University's Spartan Sierra Club**, students that envision a campus without dirty energy (p.9).

Climate warriors are needed to prevail over the premier environmental problem of our time. Learn more on pages 6-7 and at [www.sierraclub.org/michigan](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan).


## VOTE!

... for 2015 Michigan Chapter Executive Committee Members — find the candidates and ballot on pp.12-13

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 Sign up for our bimonthly Chapter email update at [action.sierraclub.org/MI-newsletter](http://action.sierraclub.org/MI-newsletter)

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/nov/09/fossil-fuel-infrastructure-climate-change>



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.

# TheMackinac

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WINTER 2015-16

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# In the Spotlight



## With Our Great Lakes in the Balance, Which Course Will Michigan Chart?

by David Holtz, Michigan Sierra Club Chair

Taking on the oil industry is a daunting challenge. Just ask California Gov. Jerry Brown, who recently was forced to scrap the goal of a fifty percent reduction in petroleum use by vehicles as part of a climate plan.

While the parts of the California climate bill affecting coal and other emissions headed for victory, lobbying from the oil industry blocked cutting petroleum use in vehicles by half. According to the Sacramento Bee, the industry spent \$24.5 million to defeat the measure, securing enough political support to smother Brown's initiative.

Oil money is targeting Michigan in a high-profile battle between its residents and Canada's largest transporter of crude oil, Enbridge Inc., parent company of Enbridge Energy Partners, which operates two dangerous, 1950s-era oil pipelines running through the Straits of Mackinac.

More than 155 Michigan businesses, thousands of citizens and the conservation community are demanding that Line 5 through the Straits be shut down.

Enbridge, despite having experienced the largest land-based oil spill in U.S. history five years ago near Battle Creek, insists the pipelines are safe and refuses to consider shutting them down.

The outcome of this debate has far-reaching implications for the Great Lakes. The results will tell us something important about our ability to challenge the oil industry in Michigan at a time when climate change demands solutions beyond oil and other fossil fuels.

With earnings last year of \$1.1 billion, Enbridge has staked out Lansing with an army of lobbyists and public relations professionals while spending lavishly on

statewide paid media in order to stop the momentum toward shutting down Line 5 through the Straits.

The Straits pipeline battle has national attention. In contrast, Sierra Club and other citizens groups are David to the Goliath Enbridge. Even the release of a damning state pipeline task force report in July has failed to get Gov. Rick Snyder and Attorney General Bill Schuette to follow through with concrete steps toward decommissioning the Straits pipelines. Their only move being to appoint another committee, one that includes Enbridge and other industry heavyweights.

So while California's governor hasn't given up in the face of oil industry pressure, strongly recommitting to climate solutions for his state, our elected leaders may be charting a different course that steers us away from protecting the Great Lakes. That's a journey that could turn Pure Michigan from blue to a black oil slick.

You can learn more about the issues involving Line 5 through the Straits by going to [oilandwaterdontmix.org](http://oilandwaterdontmix.org).

David Holtz at the Mackinac Bridge: Keep Michigan Blue



### SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Enclosed is my/our gift to the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter:  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other

**Give online at [www.tinyurl.com/supportMISC](http://www.tinyurl.com/supportMISC)**

Your donation helps provide the flexible funding Sierra Club needs to successfully advocate for Michigan's Great Lakes, wild heritage, and clean energy future.

Your contribution to Sierra Club is not tax-deductible; it supports our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. If you prefer to make a tax-deductible gift to support our work, call Development Director Jan O'Connell at 616-956-6646 to learn how.

**Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter,  
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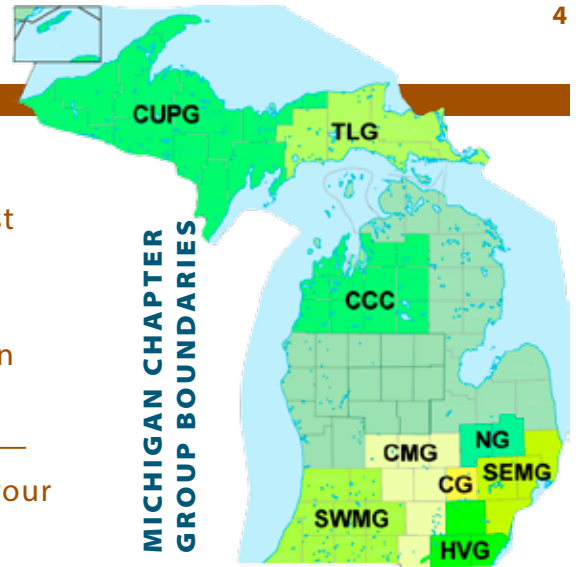
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**THINK GLOBALLY, AND GET ACTIVE WITH YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB GROUP!** Sierra Club is the largest grassroots environmental organization in the country, and the Michigan Chapter's eight regional Groups and one Committee host outings, political and conservation activities, and informational programs. Members and supporters are invited to attend outings and meetings—everyone is welcome! For inquiries about activities in your area, you can also contact [gail.philbin@sierraclub.org](mailto:gail.philbin@sierraclub.org).



## Clearwater Conservation Committee/CCC

**COUNTIES:** Antrim, Benzie, Crawford, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Otsego, Roscommon and Wexford  
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**TWITTER:** @NCMIClearwater  
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## Central Michigan Group / CMG

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**MEETS:** in Lansing area and Jackson  
**WEBSITE:** [michigan.sierraclub.org/cmig](http://michigan.sierraclub.org/cmig)  
**FACEBOOK:** Sierra Club Central Michigan Group  
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## Central Upper Peninsula Group / CUPG

**COUNTIES:** Alger, Delta, Menominee, Marquette, Dickinson, Baraga, Iron, Keweenaw, Iron, Gogebic and Ontonagon  
**MEETS:** in Marquette  
**FACEBOOK:** Central Upper Peninsula Club  
**GROUP & OUTINGS CHAIR:** John Rebers, 906-228-3617 or [jrebers@gmail.com](mailto:jrebers@gmail.com)

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**MEETS:** at group leader homes in Livingston County  
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**FACEBOOK:** Crossroads Group Sierra Club  
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## Nepessing Group / NG

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## Southeast Michigan Group / SEMG

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**FACEBOOK:** Three Lakes Group of Sierra Club  
**CHAIR:** Roger Blanchard, [blanchardrd@yahoo.com](mailto:blanchardrd@yahoo.com)

**VISIT ONLINE AT [MICHIGAN.SIERRACLUB.ORG/GROUPS](http://MICHIGAN.SIERRACLUB.ORG/GROUPS)**



# GetInvolved!

**AT THE CORE OF SIERRA CLUB IS OUR MISSION TO EXPLORE, ENJOY AND PROTECT THE WILD PLACES OF THE EARTH.** Here's how we do it and how you can join in the fun!

## Support

- **PARTICIPATE IN YOUR LOCAL GROUP.** Volunteers are always needed for all aspects of being a Sierra Club member.
- **VOTE IN THE MICHIGAN CHAPTER ELECTION.** This year's candidates and ballot are on pages 12-13.
- **SUPPORT THE IMPORTANT WORK THAT WE DO BY GIVING.** There are many ways to contribute to our work, and your dollars will be well spent here in Michigan. Become a Climate Warrior like the members profiled in this newsletter!

**p.3:** Make a non-deductible, year-end gift directly to the Chapter to keep the lights on.

**p.5:** Give your family and friends the sustainable gift of Sierra Club this holiday season. **p.9:** Donate to our Political Action Committee.

**p.15:** Create a Memorial/ Commemorative Gift. **and:** Make that last-minute tax deductible donation — contact Jan O’Connell at 616-956-6646 or jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org, or go online at [www.sierraclub.org/michigan/7-ways-support-our-work](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/7-ways-support-our-work).

## Explore and Enjoy

- **GET OUTSIDE THIS WINTER AND ENJOY THE EARTH.** Embrace the beauty of our winters by taking a brisk walk, going on a nature outing, snowshoeing or attending an educational program. Check in

with your local group or visit [www.sierraclub.org/michigan](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan) (scroll down the page for outings).

- **JOIN YOUR LOCAL GROUP OR BECOME AN OUTINGS LEADER.** See page 4 for a listing of locations and contact information, or visit [www.sierraclub.org/michigan/michigan-groups](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/michigan-groups).

## Protect

- **EDUCATION:** The chapter works hard to educate Michigan citizens about issues that affect their health and welfare. See our website at [www.sierraclub.org/michigan](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan) to take part in issue alerts and to sign up for our email information so you can always be informed.

## LEAVE NO CHILD INSIDE!

Grand Rapids ICO is looking for 3-4 adult leaders to organize youth outings. This group takes Clancy Street Ministries youth groups on outdoor hikes, kayak trips, beach trips, and camping trips. ICO stands for Inspiring Connections Outdoors and was formerly Inner City Outings. Please contact Craig Ressler at (616) 891-9055.



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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.

**Enclose a check and mail to** Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 **or visit our website** [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)

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# Beyond Climate Change

## Public Needs to Demand a Clean Energy Future

by Anne Woiwode

Today it is political will, not technology, that's holding back Michigan's clean energy future. Michigan's current renewable power standards and reductions in energy waste by electric and natural gas utilities have hit their mark, but key legislators and the Governor want to eliminate these requirements. The Attorney General refuses to act to force removal of crude oil pipelines across the Straits of Mackinac despite admitting the urgent threat they pose to the Great Lakes.

Energy and climate change surged to the top of Michigan's policy agenda as two of the world's top leaders highlighted the urgency for action. Sierra Club members are actively investing in clean energy solutions in their homes and communities. They are joining the broad-based movement to restore Michigan's leadership in renewables and energy efficiency. We believe that Michiganders are ready to move forward with a clean energy future.

In the meantime, natural gas proponents are lobbying to convince decision makers that this polluting fossil fuel is a "clean" alternative to coal, as they seek to build new natural gas power plants and proposed massive pipelines from the Appalachians into Michigan. Failing nuclear power plants and a proposed nuclear waste dump near Lake Huron in Canada, along with DTE's proposed new Fermi 3 nuclear plant highlight the expensive failure of this dirty fuel, which nonetheless continues to be promoted by utilities as a "clean" alternative.

The success of clean electric power policies during the last decade has led to innovation, Michigan jobs, cheaper power, and has challenged the business model for electric utilities. With the Obama Administration's regulations on emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants, the phase out of coal burning power plants is now a question of "when" not "if."

Strong public demand for a true,

**"Climate change is not a problem for another generation — not anymore." — President Obama**

**"We are not faced with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis which is both social and environmental." — Pope Francis**

clean energy future will be required to overcome the corporate dirty fuel interests. In Lansing splits over energy policy have occurred within conservative ranks and unusual alliances have arisen to push back on utilities and energy corporations which have run roughshod over the environment, residential consumers and private property interests

for decades.

Sierra Club members are playing a critical role in shaping Michigan's policy choices, and you are invited to join this effort. Find out how you can add your voice to the fight against climate disruption and for Michigan's future at [www.sierraclub.org/michigan/michigans-clean-energy-future](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/michigans-clean-energy-future).



Twenty-five Michigan citizens took time out of a beautiful Saturday to sit inside for a workshop on deep well injection by Chris Grobbel of Grobbel Environmental & Planning Associates held at Alma College on Sep. 26.

Presented by Sierra Club's Beyond Natural Gas and Oil Committee, the workshop covered the geology, history and regulatory framework of injection wells, which are used to dispose of hazardous waste from fracking and other activities, as well as the technology and dangers such as spills and seismic activity.

The event was the latest in a series of opportunities the BNGO Committee has offered Sierra Club members and supporters to learn more about the environmental impacts of oil and natural gas activity in Michigan and what they can do about it.



## Sierra Club Solar Partnership

**T**he Michigan Sierra Club's Solar Partnership allows you to put your money where your mouth is in two ways: We are partnering with Michigan solar panel installers and suppliers to help get solar on your house, and bring donations to the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter!

Sign up today to connect with one of our two well-vetted solar installers, Michigan Solar Solutions and Solar Winds Power Systems. They'll evaluate your potential for home-based solar power, and work with you to fit your budget and personal criteria. Materials, including solar panels built right here in Michigan, are provided by our third partner, McNaughton McKay Electric Supplies & Services.

Do more than support clean energy policies — make it a reality. Visit [www.sierraclub.org/michigan/sierra-club-solar-partnership](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/sierra-club-solar-partnership) to sign up today!

### CLIMATE WARRIOR: EBONY ELMORE

**E**bony Elmore didn't intend to become a leading advocate for clean energy and shut down the DTE coal burning power plant in River Rouge, her hometown. Growing up, her father worked at the coal plant on Zug Island, and came home each day covered in black dust to his family of seven children. "We would hug him and it would be on our clothes and skin.... we didn't know it was bad," she recalls.

Today, Ebony no longer simply accepts the pollution that contributed to both her parents suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and half of her siblings living with asthma. She is fighting to clean the air in the close-knit community she loves, and to educate her neighbors to question the ongoing health impacts on their children and themselves.

A year and a half ago, Ebony traveled 1,000 miles round trip to attend the annual meeting of the DTE Board of Directors, held in an exclusive resort in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. She spoke directly to the CEO about the impact of the River Rouge plant on her community and her family. Ebony testifies repeatedly

at hearings throughout the Detroit area pushing for DTE to get off coal and onto clean, non-polluting power sources. She encourages others to join her as well.

Ebony sums up her reasons for taking action in just a few words. "We have the right to breathe clean air and our children have the right to a better air quality than we have now."



### CLIMATE WARRIOR: FRANK ZASKI

**A**s a retired auto company executive, Frank Zaski could easily have tuned out the challenges Michigan faces from climate change and dirty energy. Instead, over the past decade Frank has become one of the most effective analysts and advocates for clean energy sources in Michigan.

Frank brings his penchant for research and exceptional analytical skills to bear on coal burning power plants and natural gas drilling. He has concentrated on our pipeline issues in particular, Frank skillfully coalesces the facts and information critical to supporting strong policies to fight climate change.

As a participant in Michigan's 21st Century Energy Planning process in the mid-2000's, Frank became familiar with both the policies and the facts behind Michigan's electric utility laws

and requirements. He joined Sierra Club members across Michigan in advocating for the renewable energy and energy efficiency standards enacted in 2008.

But that process just whetted Frank's appetite for bringing more effective tools to bear to fight climate change. From arcane processes at federal agencies regulating pipelines, to quarterly economic reports from Michigan's investor-owned utilities, Frank dissects, connects and explains in clear language what clean energy advocates, investors and policy makers need to know.

In one shining example, Frank's research exposed that new natural gas pipeline proposals are driven not by any need for additional natural gas in Michigan, but instead by excessive supplies created by too much drilling in other parts of the country. Michiganders owe Frank a debt of gratitude for his perseverance and skill in the fight for the future of our state.



# Environmental Justice For All

## Detroit March for Justice

Nearly 1,000 people turned out Oct. 3 in Detroit to join Sierra Club and a diverse coalition of groups in showing their support for environmental and social justice. Undaunted by winds, cold temps and eventual rain, the marchers started out at Roosevelt Park and headed down Michigan Blvd. for a two-mile trek ending at Hart Plaza along the river.

*Top right:* This youngster's sign refers to 48217, the zip code for an area of southwest Detroit plagued with health problems due to its close proximity to a coal-fired power plant and other industry. *Bottom right:* Sierra Club President Aaron Mair flew in from upstate New York to participate. He spoke passionately about the need for environmental, economic and social justice for all. *Bottom left:* The diverse participants included young and old marchers alike.



### CLIMATE WARRIOR: DR. DOLORES LEONARD

The area of Detroit that Dr. Dolores Leonard grew up and still lives in is as infamous as she is distinguished, and for the same reason. Over the last dozen years or so, Dr. Leonard, a retired economics professor, has emerged as an important leader in the fight to clean up the air and water in 48217, Michigan's most polluted zip code.

This low-income, largely African-American community bordered by I-75 is surrounded by industry, including coal-fired power plants and a tar sands crude oil refinery that suffered an explosion in 2010. Decades of hazardous activity in the area has generated pollution causing serious health issues in local residents such as asthma, cancer and cardiovascular disease.

The dire situation in her hometown drove Dolores to action. In 2003, she



began volunteering as a community activist with Rhonda Anderson of Sierra Club's Environmental Justice Program to try to address the health problems plaguing 48217. She has since become a real Climate Warrior, serving as an outstanding advocate for moving Michigan beyond dirty fossil fuels to clean energy and keeping attention focused on the needs of a community under assault and often overlooked.

"Dr. Leonard is the reason for most of the work that is going on in the Tri-Cities," says Anderson. "She contacted the Sierra Club first and just kept calling back until she got our attention. She is the sole reason why there is an air monitor at Mark Twain/Boynton School."

To learn more about this amazing woman, read the ThinkProgress.org story at [tinyurl.com/doloresleonard](http://tinyurl.com/doloresleonard).



# Strengthening Our Democracy

## Gearing Up for the 2016 Elections

Your Michigan Sierra Club Political Committee is preparing for the pivotal 2016 election. The Chapter Political Committee works hard to elect pro-environment candidates at the local, state and federal level throughout Michigan. There are things you can do now to help assure environmentally favorable results in those elections:

1. Make sure you and your family members are registered to vote. Go to [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) to see if you are already registered or to get registered. Remember that you need to re-register every time you move.
2. Participate in our Legislative and Political Program. Do you want to help elect environmentally friendly legislators? Do you want to persuade lawmakers to support clean energy? Go to [www.action.sierraclub.org/milegactivists](http://www.action.sierraclub.org/milegactivists) to find out how you can help.
3. Donate to our Political Action Committee. Our committee does many things to help pro-environment candidates get elected such as recruiting volunteers for their campaigns, running a nationally-renowned intern training program, and mailing members with information on candidates Sierra Club supports. We need your financial support. To become a contributor to our political program, go to [tinyurl.com/q42nfob](http://tinyurl.com/q42nfob) or use the convenient coupon below.



**GO GREEN FOR  
SIERRA CLUB!**

The Spartan Sierra Club is Michigan State University's newest environmental group. It was founded by a passionate group of students and former Sierra Club interns and will focus on moving the campus to renewable energy sources. It is also planning outings to explore and enjoy nature around East Lansing.

For more information about the Spartan Sierra Club, "Like" their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/SpartanSierraClub](http://www.facebook.com/SpartanSierraClub).

**There are things you can do now to help assure environmentally favorable results in the 2016 elections!**

### HOW TO DONATE TO THE MICHIGAN SIERRA CLUB'S PAC



- 1) Write a check for any amount
- 2) Make it out to "Michigan Sierra PAC"
- 3) Fill out this form (*required by the Secretary of State*)
- 4) Mail your check and this form to Michigan Sierra PAC, 109 E. Grand River Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

or simply visit [tinyurl.com/q42nfob](http://tinyurl.com/q42nfob)

**Corporate checks are not permitted. Contributions to Michigan Sierra PAC are not tax-deductible. Paid for by Michigan Sierra PAC, 517-484-2372, ext 13.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

# Protect & Restore Our Great Lakes Ecosystem

## Farewell and Best Wishes to Melissa Damaschke, former Great Lakes Program Director

by Anne Woiwode, Conservation Director



Eleven years ago the Sierra Club hit the jackpot by recruiting an enthusiastic, smart and energetic young woman to become part of our organizing efforts in southeastern Michigan. While Melissa Damaschke is still tied to her native Wisconsin through a love of good beer and a passion for the Green Bay Packers (Go PACK Go!), we in Michigan are incredibly grateful that she has made her home here.

Melissa's exceptional skill and love

for the people and places of Detroit has built an amazing Sierra Club Great Lakes Program that brings a hands-on emphasis to understanding what we must do to protect our water and our communities.

While Sierra Club members throughout Michigan are heartbroken to see her leave, it is exciting that Melissa will continue to be actively engaged in Detroit, working with the Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation as the new Great Lakes Program Officer.



What kind of farm practices are your tax dollars funding? Current Farm Bill subsidies largely benefit industrial agriculture operations. Giving less taxpayer money to these big polluters could mean more to the entire state of Michigan.

Read Less=More's report on factory farm pollution and subsidies in the Lake Erie watershed at [www.MoreforMichigan.org](http://www.MoreforMichigan.org).

### CLIMATE WARRIOR: PAM TAYLOR

When you think of climate change, you probably don't think of the milk in your cereal or that steak dinner, but they're part of the equation. Livestock emit methane, a gas 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide, and the industrial agriculture system that warehouses animals and ships products long distances depends heavily on fossil fuels. Estimates for animal agriculture's greenhouse gas contribution range from 10% of the total in the United States to 51% worldwide.

Pam Taylor, a descendent of 19th century Lenawee County settlers, has seen first-hand the environmental effect of factory farms, a.k.a. concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). She's been monitoring the water quality impact of waste generated by dairy CAFOs where she lives for years as a volunteer with Environmentally Concerned Citizens of



South Central Michigan ([www.nocafos.org](http://www.nocafos.org)).

The data indicates that "best management practices" like grass filter strips and cover crops do nothing to stop dissolved phosphorus in animal waste from getting into local streams and rivers. It ends up in Lake Erie where it fosters the growth of the toxic algae bloom that poisoned drinking water for 400,000 people in 2014 and appeared again in 2015.

As a member of Less=More, the Sierra Club-led coalition that seeks to end taxpayer subsidies to factory farms, Pam contributed to a recent report and documentary on the role of subsidies and CAFOs in Lake Erie's algae problem. She also helped compile public comments on the shortcomings of the Snyder Administration's Water Strategy to achieve a 40% phosphorus reduction in the western Lake Erie watershed. We're lucky to have this CAFO crusader and true Climate Warrior working with us.

# Protect & Restore Michigan's Biodiversity

## Sierra Club Works to Save Our Wild Trout

by Marvin Roberson, Chapter Forest Ecologist

For over a century, the Grayling Fish Hatchery has sat in the East Branch of the Au Sable River, just upstream from the confluence with the “Holy Waters” section of the Main Branch. It was built in about 1915, and operated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources as a hatchery for stocking trout in Michigan rivers until it closed in the middle of the 20th century. From that point, it was operated as a tourist attraction, with minimal fish numbers, where kids could buy “fish pellets” and feed the fish.

In 2014, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) received an application to operate the old hatchery as an industrial-sized fish farm, upping production over 15-fold from current levels. The facility would stock Rainbow Trout, the primary carrier of Whirling Disease, a pathogen which is fatal to trout. Since the old hatchery is in the actual river, it would be extremely difficult to keep diseases like Whirling Disease from getting out of the hatchery and into the wild trout population in the Au Sable.

Predictably, Sierra Club objected to this idea.

Surprisingly, not only did the DEQ grant the permit, they

granted a permit which places no limits on discharge of live fish, dead fish, or disease-carrying dead fish parts from the facility into the Au Sable River.



Grayling Fish Hatchery

Our contention is that any discharge of disease into the river is unacceptable. This is nearly impossible in a facility like this one, which sits within the river itself. Given the location, we believe industrial fish production at this facility is simply a poor idea. It cannot be “done right” in this location. So we oppose commercial use of this hatchery. Period.

Given this fact, Sierra Club filed an appeal of this permit. This prompted almost a year of informal talks with the DEQ to see if we could reach a resolution. It recently became clear to all parties that this would not

occur. Consequently, we are in the process of scheduling formal administrative hearings to challenge this permit in front of an administrative law judge. Check the chapter website for updates.

One of the major issues in this fight is the possible discharge of non-native (exotic) organisms (like Whirling Disease) into the river. For more information about whirling disease go to [www.protectyourwaters.net/hitchhikers/others\\_whirling\\_disease.php](http://www.protectyourwaters.net/hitchhikers/others_whirling_disease.php).



### SPACE INVADERS

There are invasive species that we see every day without realizing the impact they have.

For more information on exotic and invasive species — including some in your backyard! — read this excellent article by Michigan State University's Leslie Kuhn at [tinyurl.com/gardenknowhow](http://tinyurl.com/gardenknowhow).

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Learn more at  
[tinyurl.com/SupportMisc](http://tinyurl.com/SupportMisc)



# Chapter Elections 2015

## VOTE FOR MICHIGAN CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**E**xCom members set Chapter priorities and policies, ensure financial stability and solvency, and monitor and evaluate Chapter and Club activities. The seven Michigan Chapter Sierra Club members listed on these two pages are running for five at-large spots on the Michigan Chapter Executive Committee. Their willingness to serve illustrates the strong commitment to grassroots activism that makes Sierra Club the most effective environmental group in the country. Please note that due to space constraints, we asked the candidates to limit their statements to 100 words or less. (If a statement runs longer than 100 words, the full statement can be found on the election web page at [tinyurl.com/ExComBallot2015](http://tinyurl.com/ExComBallot2015). Two lines on the ballot are provided for write-in candidates as well.

**Vote for no more than five candidates.** You can cast your vote in one of two ways: Go online to our election web page and ballot at [tinyurl.com/ExComBallot2015](http://tinyurl.com/ExComBallot2015) or mail in the ballot in this newsletter on p.13. If you're voting by snail mail, you must write your Sierra Club membership number on the outside of the envelope in which you return your ballot or your vote will be disqualified (your membership number is above your address on the back cover of this newsletter). This information will also be required for online voting. **Paper ballots must be returned to the Michigan Chapter office by December 8, 2015 (online voting deadline is the same).**

### Richard Morley Barron

**I** am running for another term on the Chapter Executive Committee because I believe that my age, legal experience, political work and knowledge of Sierra Club give me skills to help sustain and improve our Michigan Chapter. I have served our Chapter as chairperson of the nominating, legal and political committees, as well as serving as Chapter Secretary. Because I know how talented and dedicated our staff is, I feel compelled to add my efforts. I am particularly invested in highlighting awareness of the imminence of dramatic climate change.



### Deitra Covington

**I** am Deitra Covington, and I would be honored to serve on the Executive Committee for a second term. Serving as Conservation Committee co-chair/chairperson, for the last couple of years, I have broadened my knowledge of our states' issues and triumphs and been afforded the opportunity to give my time, energy and resources to better our state. As a sustainability educator and community activist, it is my desire to continue to serve on the Executive Committee to help ensure that communities around the state are educated and made aware of their right to clean air, water and land.



### Craig Brainard

**S**ierra Club member for several decades; volunteer activist 12 years. First elected to Chapter ExCom in 2011. Currently serve on Beyond Natural Gas, Conservation, Communications, Group Support, and Chapter Anniversary Committees. State co-coordinator for the Ban Fracking Ballot Initiative. Publish weekly newsletter on fracking and energy issues called The Fracking Linkletter ©. Created educational program "Don't Frack Up Our Future," which I have presented around the state at least 20 times to nearly 1,000 people, in total. I'm very pleased with the way I see our Chapter moving ahead these days. I'd like to continue to contribute to the work we've begun.



### Lacy Dawson

**T**he Sierra Club's mission is one that I value because of its focus on educating and involving everyday citizens in being a part of the solution to protect our planet.

As the field director of a local civic engagement table, I believe citizen participation is key to eliminating all social and environmental injustices.

As a steward of this great planet, and a believer in the Sierra Club, one of my dreams is to assist in efforts to increase citizen participation in supporting the mission of the Sierra Club and to leave a healthy, whole and vibrant planet for generations to come.



## Pat Egan

The past few years have been tough for the environmental movement in Michigan. The legislature, led by U.P. based representatives has challenged decades of forestry, land use, and wildlife practices. Still Sierra staff and volunteers show courage and conviction. The executive committee has set a strong tone, and created respect for a group that can't match the resources of those it takes on. I'm grateful to have learned from my Sierra experience. I will ultimately give more than I get back, and I look forward to serving two more years in order to do that.



## Nancy Shiffler

I currently chair the Huron Valley Group, and I serve on the Michigan Chapter Executive Committee. I serve as chair of the chapter's Beyond Natural Gas and Oil committee, working extensively on issues around oil and gas drilling, fracking, and pipelines. I also work on a variety of local issues, particularly those related to protection of parks and open space. In today's political and economic climate we have to fight just to get our voices heard. We must marshal our greatest strengths, our grassroots volunteer base and our excellent staff, to protect the Great Lakes resources that we all value... read more at [tinyurl.com/ExcomBallot](http://tinyurl.com/ExcomBallot).



## Dorthea E. Thomas

As a young progressive, my extensive background in environmental justice shows that I am actively becoming the change I wish to see in the world. While working in my hometown as a Green Schools Coordinator with Detroit Public Schools, I've helped develop world-class energy efficiency projects and managed utility bills to help lower district cost and improve overall health. In the past, I've worked as an Environmental and Climate Justice Leadership Fellow with the NAACP to help create the 1st Climate Justice initiative. As an NOI Fellow for WE ACT, I assisted in drafting the first Environmental Justice Resolution... read more at [tinyurl.com/ExcomBallot](http://tinyurl.com/ExcomBallot).



### SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN CHAPTER 2015 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BALLOT

Vote for no more than five (5) candidates. The second column of boxes is for the second member of a joint membership only.

<b>RICHARD MORLEY BARRON</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CRAIG BRAINARD</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>DEITRA COVINGTON</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>LACY DAWSON</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>PAT EGAN</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>NANCY SHIFFLER</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>DORTHEA E. THOMAS</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WRITE-IN CANDIDATE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WRITE-IN CANDIDATE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Clip out and mail your ballot to:

Michigan Chapter Sierra Club  
 attn: Chapter Elections  
 109 East Grand River Avenue  
 Lansing, MI 48906

Write your Sierra Club membership number on the outside of your envelope to validate your ballot (membership number is above address on the back cover of newsletter).

**Your ballot must be received on or before December 8, 2015.**

# 2015 Chapter Award Winners

## Honoring Those Who Make a Difference Every Day

**Anna Holden** received the *Bunyan Bryant Environmental Justice Award* for taking on Michigan's worst polluters who harm low income and minority communities in southeastern Michigan. Anna helped lead the successful campaign to end medical waste incineration in Michigan, and spearheaded the closing of the Henry Ford Hospital Incinerator, located in the middle of a predominantly African American community.

Oakland Water Resources

Commissioner **Jim Nash** was named the *Environmentalist of the Year* for his strong advocacy for implementing the sustainability triple bottom line — economic development, environmental stewardship and social equity — in Michigan's second largest county.

The *Cougar Award* goes to **Tim Minotas**, who represented Sierra Club on campaigns for two environmental candidates in 2014 and interned with the Michigan Chapter's legislative program in 2015. Tim also leads the Student Environmental Alliance at Central Michigan University, where he is a senior.

**Marianne Dugan** is one of the country's top environmental attorneys, and has skillfully represented Sierra Club in Michigan in litigation to protect forests and rivers from destruction and pollution. She is the recipient of the *Virginia Prentice Award*.

**Craig Brainard's** dedication to fighting fracking in Michigan led him to create the Fracking Linkletter®, a digest of research and reporting on the issue from around



JAN O'CONNELL



JAN O'CONNELL

Top: Craig Ressler received the *Marlene Fluharty Award*. Above: Linda Berker was honored with the 2015 *Chair's Award*.

the country. He received the *Environmental Journalism Online Award* this year.

As the fight over fracking came to the Nepessing Group area, **Linda Berker** has worked to educate township and community leaders about the opportunities to protect their communities from the development of oil and gas wells. She was recognized with the *Chair's Award*.

**Craig Ressler** serves as a Political Committee member and Chapter Awards Chair, and is a past chair and leader of the West Michigan Group. The Chapter leadership approved Craig as the *Marlene Fluharty Award* recipient as a surprise to recognize his many years of dedicated work.

**Robert Victor** has brought his extraordinary knowledge of the stars and planets to the Michigan Chapter Annual Retreat for years, allowing us to "explore and enjoy" beyond Earth's boundaries. For his contribution, Robert was awarded the *Vince Smith Award* to recognize leadership in outings.

**Dr. Bradley Cardinale**, a University of Michigan School of Natural Resources professor, brought together scientists to oppose legislation to prohibit the Department of Natural Resources from managing the state's lands based on biodiversity. The bill was vetoed by the Governor. Brad was recognized with the *Burton V. Barnes Award* for his leadership.

**Ron Kardos** of the Crossroads Group quickly got up to speed on fighting proposed natural gas pipelines in southeastern Michigan, and has been a key part of the Beyond Natural Gas and Oil Committee of the Chapter. The *Sylvania Award* was given to Ron for his work as an emerging Michigan Sierra Club leader.

**Tom Turner** received the *Theodore Roosevelt Political Leadership Award* for his exceptional contribution to the Michigan Chapter and Southeast Michigan Group Political Committees.

Please see the complete awards list on the Michigan Chapter website.

### GIVE AT THE OFFICE

**E**arthShare at Work makes it easy for employers to give back to communities while helping charities like the Sierra Club develop a stable, regular funding source with little or no administrative costs. Employees simply pledge a small amount of each paycheck or make a one-time gift. You can designate your contribution for the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter. If you'd like to create a giving program at your workplace, contact Jan O'Connell at 616-956-6646 or [jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org](mailto:jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org). For more information, visit [www.earthsharemichigan.org](http://www.earthsharemichigan.org).



# Supporting Your Chapter

## Giving is Contagious

by Jan O'Connell, Chapter Development Director

**H**ave you ever been compelled to give because of the influence of another? When we give, we don't just help the recipient of our gift, it also ignites a ripple effect of generosity and giving throughout your organization, church, or community.

Whether you volunteer your time, make, buy and give gifts, donate money to a charity, your giving is so much more than a benefit to only one individual or organization.

James Fowler of the University of California in San Diego and Nicholas Christakis of Harvard did a study that shows that when one person behaves generously, it motivates observers to behave generously as well. The selflessness could spread by three degrees — from person, to person, to person, to person. So each person

in a network can literally influence dozens or even hundreds of people... even people they have not met.

Quite a few years back I was listening with interest to our Pastor's sermon as he was talking about GIVING. He mentioned Bill Gates stepping down from Microsoft to devote his energy to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Gates' powerful action caught the attention of Warren Buffett, who got in the mood himself to give away 85% of his wealth. Then Buffett convinced Oracle founder Larry Ellison — a silent philanthropist for many years — to go public. The reason Ellison went public is because he learned that one person's giving, especially when recognized and noticed, can excite others to give as well.

Your greatness is not what you HAVE... it's what you GIVE! We extend a big thank you to all Michigan Chapter Sierra Club GIVERS, whether recognized or anonymous.

THANK YOU!



## In Memoriam: Rita M. Burke

A free bird leaps on the back of the wind  
and floats downstream till the current ends  
and dips his wing in the orange sun rays  
and dares to claim the sky...

– Excerpt from *Caged Bird*, a Poem by Maya Angelou



**T**here is no greater commitment to nature than to ensure its care after you're gone, and that is exactly what Rita M. Burke did by placing the things she loved in life in her will.

Rita loved to scuba dive and bird-watch. She traveled extensively, taking in some wild and exotic places like the Galapagos and Machu Picchu.

She truly loved the scenic and natural wonders of Michigan and was a member of both the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club.

The Michigan Sierra Club is honored to have been entrusted to fulfill Rita's legacy of preserving and protecting the wilds in our great state.

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

## Create an Environmental Legacy.



Bequests have played a key role in Sierra Club's environmental successes over the years.

Planning now may make your gift more meaningful and reduce taxes on your estate. We have many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter.

For confidential assistance, contact:

**Sierra Club**

**Gift Planning Program**

85 Second Street, Second Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94105

[gift.planning@sierraclub.org](mailto:gift.planning@sierraclub.org) • (800) 932-4270



The Sierra Club's members and supporters are 2.4 million of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we

work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

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# Supporting Your Chapter

## Sierra Club's Michigan Legacy Council

Sierra Club established its Michigan Legacy Council to honor individuals, groups and organizations making significant gifts to the Michigan Chapter. Their partnership and commitment to our work leaves a lasting legacy. Please join us in thanking the current Michigan Legacy Council members:

### FENS & SAPLINGS

\$500-\$999

- Ms. Mary Anne Beltzman
- Martin & Brenda Berkowitz
- Mike Berkowitz
- Amanda Carlson
- Ms. Lorraine D'Angelo
- Kathleen & William Davis
- Jonathan Cohn
- Estate of Esther M. Dean
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- Linda Woodworth
- Anonymous Donor

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- Lydia Fischer
- Helen & Al LeBlanc
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- Stanley & Connie Rajnak
- Nancy Shiffler
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### DUNES & SHORELINES

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- Carol Graham
- Jean Gramlich
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### MARSHES & PRAIRIES

\$7,500-\$14,999

- Ceci Bauer & Tim Flynn
- Pierce Family Foundation
- Anne & Tom Woiwode

### GREAT LAKES & GREAT FORESTS

\$15,000+

- Americana Foundation
- Thomas Buhr
- Estate of Rita M. Burke
- Patrick Egan
- Irwin Andrew Porter Foundation
- Wege Foundation

## SUPPORT THE SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN CHAPTER!

Go to [www.tinyurl.com/donateSCMC](http://www.tinyurl.com/donateSCMC) to make your donation and to join the EVERGREEN sustaining program that allows you to give throughout the year with monthly, quarterly or other gift options.