

TheMackinac

PUBLICATION OF THE SIERRA CLUB'S MICHIGAN CHAPTER • FALL/WINTER 2020-21

Racial and Climate Justice Go Hand in Hand

By Gail Philbin, Chapter Director

You can't have climate change without sacrifice zones, and you can't have sacrifice zones without disposable people, and you can't have disposable people without racism. -- Hop Hopkins, Director of Strategic Partnerships

With the help of folks like you, the Sierra Club has fought to protect the planet for more than a century, but before climate change, PFAS, toxic algae or any other environmental ill, there was racism. This reality underlies everything in this country including how we approach the environment.

The same system that fosters a disproportionate impact on communities of color from police violence and Covid-19 also empowers polluters to create environmental throw-away zones in those same communities, which suffer greater consequences from industrial pollution and lax enforcement of laws and regulations. Sierra Club is committed to fighting for an end to the institutional racism that has allowed environmental injustice to thrive and caused the death of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, while addressing our own complicated history. (See *Pulling Down Our Monuments* by Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune at tinyurl.com/y5eqafzo.)

Sierra Club's Rhonda Anderson has been a leader in teaching us about the intersection of environmental activism and racial justice. Her two decades of work with the predominantly black and low-income community members of 48217, considered the most polluted zip code in Michigan, has revealed the enormous health impacts and unequal enforcement of environmental protections inflicted on that community. In 2019, Sierra Club organizer Justin Onwenu joined her in the fight. (p. 9)

This year, the Michigan Chapter has taken several steps to move us toward a



In 2016, EJ activists at the Detroit Marathon Refinery stood in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe to protest construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline on the reservation (now shut down pending a review) because of the threat to water quality.

(PHOTO CREDIT: RITA MITCHELL)

future where the planet and its people are not disposable:

- Established a Race & Privilege Workgroup led by Chapter Co-Chair Deitra Covington (p. 3).
- Prioritized political power for EJ champions in Detroit and committed to long-term education and recruitment of candidates about environmental justice issues (p. 8).
- Aligned Chapter policy priorities with EJ community demands around polluter accountability, affordable water and electricity rates and water access.
- Launched a paid, annual EJ and Political Internship funded by individual donations to help expand our effectiveness in Detroit communities facing environmental injustice and build a black political power base.

Our efforts to center racial justice will strengthen all aspects of what we do and are as important as any environmental campaign we've ever waged. To succeed, we'll need the grassroots engagement that has powered our every victory for 128 years. I look forward to traveling this journey with you.

Check Us Out !



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sierraclub.org/michigan

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.

TheMackinac

FALL/WINTER
2020-21

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SIERRA CLUB CONTACT DIRECTORY

MICHIGAN CHAPTER STAFF

109 E César E. Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906
Phone: 517-484-2372 • Website: sierraclub.org/michigan

State Director

Gail Philbin616-805-3063, gail.philbin@sierraclub.org

Development Director and Energy Issues Organizer

Jan O'Connell616-956-6646, jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org

Forest Ecologist

Marvin Roberson906-360-0288, marvin.roberson@sierraclub.org

Political and Legislative Director

Christy McGillivray808-726-5325, christy.mcgillivray@sierraclub.org

Healing Our Waters Coalition Michigan Co-Lead

Erma Leaphart313-475-7057, erma.leaphart@sierraclub.org

Administrative Assistant

Cecilia Garcia-Linz517-484-2372, cecilia.garcia@sierraclub.org

Legislative and Political Coordinator

Tim Minotas808-726-5325, tim.minotas@sierraclub.org

West Michigan Clean Energy Organizer

Sophie Stoepker616-843-1660, sophie.stoepker@sierraclub.org

Political Organizer

Sarah Tresedder906-869-4167, sarah.tresedder@sierraclub.org

Line 5 Organizer

Gabbie Buendia321-368-1678, gabbie.buendia@sierraclub.org

Green Stormwater Infrastructure Organizer, SC Great Lakes Program

Erma Leaphart313-475-7057, erma.leaphart@sierraclub.org

NATIONAL SIERRA CLUB STAFF

2727 Second Avenue Suite 112, Detroit, MI 48201

Regional Organizing Manager

Rhonda Anderson313-965-0052, rhonda.anderson@sierraclub.org

Beyond Coal Representative

Mike Berkowitz248-345-9808, mike.berkowitz@sierraclub.org

Organizing Representative, Beyond Coal Campaign

Andrew Sarpolis248-924-4857, andrew.sarpolis@sierraclub.org

Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice Organizer

Justin Onwenu313-405-5900, justin.onwenu@sierraclub.org

Inspiring Connections Outdoors, Detroit

Garrett Dempseygarrett.dempsey@sierraclub.org

THE MACKINAC

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter
109 E César E. Chavez Avenue
Lansing MI 48906
Phone: 517-484-2372
Email: michigan.chapter@sierraclub.org
sierraclub.org/michigan

EDITORS

Michael Thomas
m.john.thomas@gmail.com
Gail Philbin
gail.philbin@sierraclub.org
DESIGN
John Klein
john@winpublishing.com

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SIERRA CLUB NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

2101 Webster Street Suite 1300, Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: 415-977-5500

Member Change of Addressaddress.changes@sierraclub.org

MICHIGAN CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Anne Woiwode, At Large, Co-Chair anne.woiwode@michigan.sierraclub.org

Deitra Covington, At Large, Co-Chairdlcporter09@gmail.com

Dr. Mai Datta, Treasurermaidatta@gmail.com

Helen LeBlanc, Emeritus, Asst. Treasurerhelen.leblanc@michigan.sierraclub.org

Erica Ackerman, Secretary, HVG Reperica.ackerman@gmail.com

Craig Brainard, At Large, Fifth Officerboomerbob1@gmail.com

David Holtz, At Large, Council of Leaders Delegatedavid@davidholtz.org

Chris Back, At Largechrisback@gmail.com

Vicki Dobbins, At Largevdobbins29@gmail.com

Kate Madigan At Largemadigank8@gmail.com

Abby Clark, At Largeabcc Clark@gmail.com

Marty Habalewsky, At Largemhabalewsky@yahoo.com

Jean Gramlich, SEMG Repjeangramlich@msn.com

Kathleen English, TLG Repenglishka4169@gmail.com

Sarah Keith, CG Repsmosskeith@gmail.com

Lorne Beatty, CG Co-Replabeatty@comcast.net

Erica Ackerman, HVG Reperica.ackerman@gmail.com

Carol Graham-Banes, NG Repcmgt2010@gmail.com

David Benac, SWMG Repdbenac24@gmail.com

Emeritus ExCom Members (Non-Voting):

Pat Eganpegan@up.net

Helen LeBlanchelen.leblanc@michigan.sierraclub.org

Nancy Shifflernshiffler@comcast.net

ExOfficio ExCom Members (Non-Voting):

Mona Munroe-Younis, MI Environmental Justice Action Group

.....mona.munroe.younis@gmail.com

Lynne Van Ness, Clearwater Conservation Committeeartist342@gmail.com

Dottie Hawthorne, South of the StraitsSouthoftheStraits@sierraclub.org

John Mitchell, Mid-Michigan Networkmitch1jb11@gmail.com

“The REVOLUTION Will Not Be Televised”

By Deitra Covington, Co-Chair, Michigan Chapter Executive Committee

Hearing this phrase again a couple of weeks ago, I reflected on the world today. Gil Scott-Heron wrote it in his 1970 poem and song “Televised.” My reflection centered on the Covid-19 virus, protests and the Sierra Club.

In the song, Scott-Heron is saying that the first change you can make in your life is the revolution in your mind. You must change your mind before you can change the way you live and the way you move. Covid-19 made me realize that it was necessary for me to change how I moved about my daily life for my health and that of friends and family. The protests across the country made me hopeful that as a country we wanted to change. Being the first Black elected to the Michigan Sierra Club Executive Committee seven years ago and serving as the co-chair for the last year, I considered my unique position at this critical time in our history.

My personal challenge as a leader in the Sierra Club is to help raise the awareness of biases that exist around Michigan so that our state can be more of a beacon when it comes to diversity, equity and justice. Last winter and spring, a group of staff and volunteers accepted my invitation to participate in a nine-week online Equity course offered by Sierra Club, which opened the conversation with those around Michigan. Once participants completed the course, they wanted more conversations around diversity, equality and justice. Thus, Michigan Sierra Club

initiated the Race & Privilege Workgroup with a stated resolution to continue the conversation:

“Resolved to identify and eliminate barriers that exist in the outreach, recruitment and retaining of volunteers and staff that identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous or People of Color), LBGTQIA+ and people with disabilities. Resolved to build and maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment where volunteers and staff can actively utilize their talents and contribute to the success of the Michigan Sierra Club.”

“The Revolution will put you in the driver’s seat,” as Gil Scott-Heron said. “The Revolution will be LIVE.”



Deitra Covington
Co-Chair, Michigan
Chapter Executive Committee

**EVERY YEAR
IS AN ELECTION YEAR AT THE SIERRA CLUB!
CHAPTER EXCOM AND THIS YEAR’S BALLOT ARE ON PAGES 12-13
PLEASE VOTE!**

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 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,
109 E. Cesar Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

Instead of a check, please charge my credit card (VISA or MC) \$_____.

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Address: _____

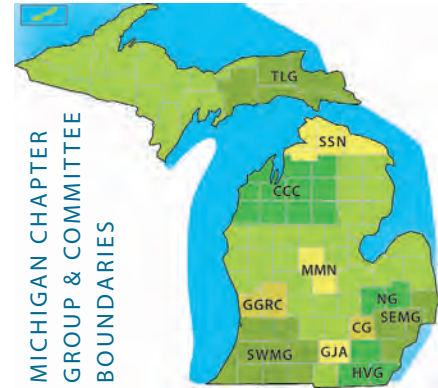
Phone: _____

Email: _____

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 11 regional Groups and Committees 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.

Sometimes people participate in a Chapter Group other than the one serving the county in which they live. If this is true for you, it's important we have this information because 1) Groups get funds based on their member numbers, and 2) Groups send info to their members through lists based on their member home addresses. To change your designated Group, please contact Sierra Club National's Member Care 415.977.5653 or member.care@sierraclub.org



Clearwater Conservation Committee / CCC

COUNTIES: Antrim, Benzie, Crawford, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Otsego, Roscommon and Wexford
FACEBOOK: Clearwater Conservation Committee
TWITTER: @NCMIClearwater
EMAIL: rlenz2url@gmail.com
CHAIR: Lynne Van Ness • artist342@gmail.com

Greater Jackson Area Committee / GJA

COUNTIES: Jackson
EMAIL: SierraClubJackson@gmail.com
WANTED: Local folks interested in helping us build our outings and membership. If you're interested, email us at: sierraclubjackson@gmail.com

Crossroads Group / CG

COUNTIES: Livingston and western Oakland
MEETS: at group leader homes in Livingston County or West Oakland Counties (first Thurs of the month)
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads
FACEBOOK: Crossroads Group Sierra Club
CHAIR: Lee Burton, 810-231-9045 or lee.burton@michigan.sierraclub.org
VICE CHAIR: Sue Kelly • sue.kelly@michigan.sierraclub.org

Greater Grand Rapids Committee / GGRC

COUNTIES: Kent and Ottawa
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Greater Grand Rapids
EMAIL: ggrcom@michigan.sierraclub.org
CHAIR: Marialyce Zeerip • zeeripmaz@yahoo.com

Huron Valley Group / HVG

COUNTIES: Washtenaw, Lenawee and Monroe
MEETS: in Ann Arbor
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/huron
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Huron Valley Group
EMAIL: HVGSierraClub@gmail.com
CHAIR: Dan Ezekiel • dan.ezekiel24@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR: Amanda Sweetman • acsweetman@gmail.com
OUTINGS CHAIR: Anya Dale • anyaaudubon@gmail.com

Mid-Michigan Network / MMN

COUNTIES: Isabella and Gratiot
CHAIR: John Mitchell • mitch1jb11@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR: Virginia Haight • gaight1497@gmail.com

Meetup With the Sierra Club

Meetup is a great way to check on the latest events sponsored by your local Sierra Club entity. Find the meetup page for your local group or committee below:

- www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Southwest-Michigan/
- www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-South-of-the-Straits/
- www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Three-Lakes-Group/
- www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Huron-Valley/
- www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Greater-Grand-Rapids-Committee-Meetup/

Nepessing Group / NG

COUNTIES: Genesee, Lapeer, Northern Saginaw and Oakland
MEETS: at Mott Community College in Flint
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/nepessing
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Nepessing Group - MI
CHAIR: Mike Buza • theoriginalzuba@yahoo.com
VICE CHAIR: Suzanne Lossing • slossing@hotmail.com

South of the Straits Network / SSN

COUNTIES: Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet and Presque Isle
MEETS: Third Wednesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 at EMS Station 1 1201 Eppler Rd, Petoskey
FACEBOOK: South of the Straits Sierra Club
CHAIR: Dottie Hawthorne, SouthofStraits@michigan.sierraclub.org

Southeast Michigan Group / SEMG

COUNTIES: Wayne, St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland
MEETS: Elks Club, 2401 E. Fourth, Royal Oak
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/semg
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Southeast Michigan Group
CO-CHAIR: Garrett Dempsey • garrett.dempsey@sierraclub.org
CO-CHAIR: Jerry Hasspacher • jhasspac@gmail.com
 The Southeast Michigan group is holding an election for the Executive Committee. Elected candidates will take office in January 2021. Go to our website (sierraclub.org/michigan/semg) for candidate statements and the ballot. Voting deadline is December 4, 2020.

Southwest Michigan Group / SWMG

COUNTIES: Berrien, Branch, Cass, St. Joseph, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Van Buren, Allegan and Barry
MEETS: in Kalamazoo
WEBSITE: <https://swmgsierra.org>
FACEBOOK: SWMG Sierra Club
TWITTER: SierraSwMiGroup
CHAIR: Kristi Lloyd • auntkiki@yahoo.com
VICE CHAIR: David Benac • dbenac24@gmail.com
 STOP EXCESSIVE EXPENSE for the SWMG and LESSEN YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT by letting us know that you'd like to eliminate all notifications and ballots for elections via US Postal Service. All you need to do is notify us through our website at www.swmgsierra.org and click on the contact us tab or email_admin@swmgsierra.org

Three Lakes Group / TLG

COUNTIES: Chippewa, Mackinac, Luce and Schoolcraft
MEETS: in Sault Ste. Marie
WEBSITE: tlgsierraclub.org
FACEBOOK: Three Lakes Group of Sierra Club
CHAIR: Roger Blanchard • blanchardclimate@gmail.com

- www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Nepessing-Group-Michigan/
- www.meetup.com/Metro-Detroit-Outdoors-Hiking/ (SEM Group)
- www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group/
- www.meetup.com/SierraClubClearwaterGroup/

Fight Against Line 5 Reaches a Crossroads

By Gabbie Buendia, Line 5 Organizer

The struggle to shut down Enbridge's aging Line 5 pipeline has reached a tipping point. With Enbridge facing a mixture of setbacks and progressions in their tunnel project, the urgency and opportunity to stop the flow of oil through the Great Lakes has intensified. Sierra Club members and other activists continue to highlight the danger the pipeline poses to the Great Lakes and fight to prevent compounding crises in the face of the pandemic.

On behalf of the people of Michigan, a lawsuit filed by Attorney General Dana Nessel seeks to shut down Line 5 as a matter of upholding the public trust protections that the State of Michigan holds to protect the Great Lakes. Although courts have upheld Enbridge's authority to operate the pipeline, the courts have also refused to grant the company the latitude to build the tunnel. Sierra Club members made their voices heard online through Zoom hearings, email comments, phone calls and webinars. A team of Sierra Club volunteers sent out over 14,000 texts in recent months to update members and connect them to these opportunities for engagement. The texts helped generate 1,782 comments submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers; 3,000 emails sent asking Governor Whitmer to revoke the pipeline's easement, and over 683 streamed Oil & Water Don't Mix webinars. Sierra Club's efforts pressured regulatory agencies

and the governor's office to fully evaluate the tunnel project's environmental impacts.

In June, Line 5 operations were temporarily suspended after Enbridge discovered damage to the dual pipelines. They resumed operations before fully disclosing the extent and cause of the damage, prompting Attorney General Dana Nessel to seek a temporary restraining order from the courts and order an immediate shutdown. While this stopped the oil flow for a few days, Enbridge has permission to continue opening one of the two pipelines while the court case goes forward. This is not the first time that Enbridge has failed to properly disclose dangerous damage to Line 5, but it must be the last time. We need Governor Whitmer to act on her campaign promise to shut down Line 5.

The pandemic has emphasized the interconnectedness of people, our communities and the environment. The current historical moment demands that officials address long-term consequences of investing in more fossil fuel infrastructure instead of prioritizing short-term political fixes to placate oil companies. Thoughts of facing a future marked by climate change and diminishing access to fresh water should motivate Michigan to fight for a future free from the threat of Enbridge and its aging pipeline.

Solar Can Power the Great Lakes State

How is Michigan one of the Best States for Solar Power?

Did you know that...

- 1) Michigan has some of the most expensive, fossil-fuel-driven electric rates in the country.
- 2) Solar works better in cold weather than hot weather.
- 3) Solar costs have dropped and efficiencies have gone up.

These are just a few of the reasons our state is now one of the best solar markets in the country. It's also a good time because of the federal credit for home solar installations, which phases out next year. If you've been considering solar, explore your options today through Sierra Club's Solar Partnership. Our partners-- McNaughton-McKay, Michigan Solar Solutions and Solar Winds Power Systems-- provide a discount to Sierra Club members, and the Michigan Chapter receives a donation for every project!

For More Details

sierraclub.org/michigan/sierra-club-solar-partnership



Affordable Quality Solar Electric Provided by Local Firms Vetted by Sierra Club Michigan.

Go to the link below to find out how you can join the many SC Members and Supporters with solar installed through our program.
<https://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/sierra-club-solar-partnership>

Carbon Offsets of Sierra Club Michigan's Solar Partnership Since 2015:

- 227,000 lbs of Coal Burned
- 76 Tons of Landfill Waste
- 504,000 Miles Driven by Average Vehicle
- 5400 Tree Seedlings Grown for 10 Years

Oakland County Campaign Spurs Climate Action

By Fred Miller, Oakland County Sierra Club Leader

Initiated by the Sierra Club at the beginning of 2020, the Oakland County Climate Campaign has made significant headway toward its ambitious goal: making Oakland County a leader in addressing climate change.

In the campaign's most significant success so far, County Executive David Coulter's July 1 budget proposal included a pledge and planning money to reach two key campaign



objectives: a goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions for county operations by 2030 and net-zero emissions by all sources in the county by 2050.

The Climate Campaign now includes the Michigan League of Conservation Voters, the NAACP of North Oakland County, Clean Water Action and the Sunrise Movement Oakland County.

The campaign issued its 2020 Platform for Climate, Jobs and

Justice early in the year. In addition to proposing a vigorous climate action plan and green jobs goals, the platform called for action on water and sanitation to protect vulnerable and poor communities from pollution and the effects of climate change, energy justice, transit policy change, and efforts to bolster democracy.

In recent months, the new county leadership has taken several actions in line with the Climate Campaign's goals beyond the emissions goals, including:

- A resolution declaring a climate emergency,
- A county tree-planting plan, reflecting the importance of trees in the effort to curb climate change,
- A county native plants program, proposed in the Climate Campaign platform, highlighting the climate change benefits of reviving local ecosystems.

To get involved in the Oakland County Climate Campaign, sign up as a volunteer at the campaign's website, turnoaklandcountygreen.com.

Controversy Continues in Grand Haven

By Jan O'Connell, Chapter Energy Issues Organizer

After closing the J.B.Sims Plant in February, the Grand Haven Board of Light & Power (BLP) planned to start their remediation work on Grand Haven's Harbor Island. Those plans were derailed when record-breaking high water levels flooded two of the three coal ash ponds. By late May and June, these two ponds were actually connected to the Grand River. The water table at the island rose to within two feet of the surface because of these high water levels.

Due to the water levels not receding, the clean-up project was postponed for this summer. The postponement raises a potential threat to the community because the groundwater and Harbor Island itself shows the presence of boron, cobalt and sulfate contamination.

Following the remediation work on the island, BLP plans to build a costly gas plant to replace the decommissioned Sims Plant, which was made under advisement from the Grand Haven City Council. Before it's too late, residents should consider if it's in their best interest for the city of Grand Haven to build a new power plant on Harbor Island, especially as excessive flooding continues to threaten the island. According to the BLP's own website, purchasing the power and extra capacity (which is getting cleaner and greener every day) would be a cheaper and more sustainable option compared to building a new gas plant.

Contact Jan at jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org or call 616-956-6646 for information or to become involved in moving Grand Haven beyond fossil fuels.



Remediation plans at the J.B. Sims Plant were postponed for the summer.

Moving Michigan Beyond Coal to Clean Energy

By Mike Berkowitz, Beyond Coal Campaign Representative

In the first half of 2020, the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign focused on holding DTE accountable, and boy, did we deliver! Through a combination of regulatory proceedings and a groundbreaking legal settlement we:

- Secured \$7.5 million for environmental justice mitigation projects in Michigan's largest sacrifice zone (River Rouge, Ecorse, and 48217),
- Secured retirement of the River Rouge coal plant in May 2021 and the Trenton Channel and St. Clair coal plants by 2022,
- Forced DTE to adopt more wind, solar, and storage for both types of energy and establish a groundbreaking low-income energy efficiency program,
- Stopped DTE from building a second fracked gas plant and burning industrial waste gas at the River Rouge plant,
- Forced DTE to reduce their 2020 rate increase by \$163 million and freeze rates until 2022,
- And required DTE to perform a new cost-benefit analysis for retiring the Belle River coal plant earlier than 2029-30.

While this represents significant progress, DTE has barely made a dent on solar and deeply lags behind their counterparts at Consumers Energy who have already committed to building



The Turn Oakland County Green coalition met with Oakland County Executive David Coulter.

6,000 MW of solar and to not building any new gas plants. DTE is also standing in the way of distributed generation and specifically community owned clean energy, crucial components of climate justice. We'll continue holding DTE accountable on these points and making sure they implement a just transition for the workers and communities connected to their retiring coal fleet. Want to join our DTE campaign? Email: mike.berkowitz@sierraclub.org.

Consumers Energy Seeks Public Input to Develop a Strong Clean Energy Plan!

By Sophie Stoepker, West Michigan Clean Energy Organizer, and Jan O'Connell, Chapter Energy Issues Organizer

Over the summer, Consumers Energy began a series of four virtual open houses on topics like wind, solar power, protecting our environment and building a smarter power grid that will continue through Nov. 10. Comments are being collected online before, during and after the open houses. The final two open houses are Oct. 13 and Nov. 10.

The decisions that Consumers Energy makes will affect many citizens in Michigan. Consumers Energy serves two-thirds of Michigan's residents, providing electricity and/or natural gas to homes and businesses in every Lower Peninsula county, with their largest service area being Grand Rapids.

Consumers Energy needs to be the leader in Michigan with a clean energy plan that doesn't negatively affect air and water

quality. The utility will decide whether to continue burning coal until 2040 or make the transition to clean energy a decade sooner without making investments in new fossil fuels. So it's important to have good participation in their open houses and comments submitted from all over the state.

Please share this invitation with others in your community, group or organization. These upcoming events will give community members an opportunity to provide input on how to meet future energy needs. To find out more info, please email jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org or call 616-956-6646, or email sophie.stoepker@sierraclub.org.

Vote for a Green Legislature

By Christy McGillivray, Political and Legislative Director

How Green is Your State Legislator?

2020 is a key election year with an opportunity to make real change and bring a “green wave” to Michigan. We’ve put together a new and improved environmental scorecard so you can find out if your current state legislator is an environmental champion or a pollution promoter here: tinyurl.com/qsjk8wp.

Now’s Your Chance to Make a Real Difference: Vote on Nov. 3!

Voting in the election and volunteering to turn out as many voters as possible are the most important things you can do for the environment in 2020. Under the current leadership of Senate Majority Leader Shirkey and Speaker Chatfield, the Michigan Legislature keeps passing bills that directly attack the environment, threaten our water and air quality and endanger our forests and wildlife. Our State Legislature is also stonewalling numerous bills that will protect our environment and create a clean energy economy. The election results will determine how well our legislature safeguards the state’s natural resources and environmental health. Make sure to check out our Election Guide (included in this newsletter) or visit tinyurl.com/MISCEndorsed to see all of our endorsed candidates online.

Interview with Political Coordinator Tim Minotas

Chapter Political Organizer Sarah Tresedder recently sat down with Political Coordinator Tim Minotas to ask a few questions about Michigan politics and the environment as we near November.

How are the 2020 elections looking in general?

Because of all the hard work that Sierra Club members did back in 2018, we elected Governor Whitmer, who made cleaning up our water and protecting our environment a top priority during her term. However, we still have a Michigan Legislature that prioritizes corporate polluters and tearing down our environmental regulations. This is why we are working tirelessly in 2020 to elect an environmental majority in the State House. This year represents perhaps the starkest choice between two competing visions on environmental protection. Michigan is ground zero, and the decisions voters make in November will have a lasting impact for a generation to come.

Our Political Committee is working hard to elect strong environmentalists to our legislature. We are putting all our resources to work, including our robust political internship program, our Michigan Sierra PAC program and the amazing volunteer efforts of our local groups. I predict that once this

election is over we will have more environmental leaders at all levels of government.

How is the Michigan Chapter Political Program doing this year?

I’m happy to report that we are stronger and more determined than ever! We have raised more funds to use in this election than any previous election cycle. This year due to Covid-19, we are doing our political roadshow presentations throughout the state virtually, and we are running the Michigan Chapter’s first-ever youth voter engagement program effort to target and mobilize young voters in Michigan through digital means. Our nationally-renowned Political Internship program continues to be a huge success. We virtually

Continued on Page 9



SUPPORT THE WORK OF SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGN

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

Give online at bit.ly/SCMILegFund

Your donation helps support our Legislative work at the Capitol and across the state.

Your contribution to Sierra Club is not tax-deductible; it supports our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter, 109 E. Cesar Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

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Coalition Fights Detroit River Contamination

By Justin Onwenu, Healthy Communities and Environmental Justice Organizer

In response to the collapse of a heavily contaminated site into the Detroit River, the Sierra Club has worked in collaboration with community stakeholders to ensure that the site is remediated properly and promptly while also pushing for long-term systematic solutions that will prevent incidents like this from happening in the future.

The coalition attacked the issue with a number of rapid response calls, a widely attended community town hall meeting in December, meetings with City of Detroit elected officials following the town hall, and public pressure. The result: several positive developments. On the state level, State Senator Stephanie Chang led the way by convening a legislation workgroup comprised of the Sierra Club, Friends of the Detroit River, Great Lakes Environmental Law Center and others. She is working with collaborators to draft and introduce legislation that would address immediate state-level gaps. On the city level, following our broad coalition's presentation of policy demands to Mayor Duggan, his office has agreed to address

a number of apparent gaps. These include: requiring regular inspections of properties on the shoreline, maintaining a publicly available list of contaminated parcels along the Detroit River, and taking into account past conduct of repeat corporate offenders in their future city permit requests.

While these developments certainly speak to the power of organizing to address policy gaps, residents remain concerned by EPA testing results that show elevated levels of contamination and the lack of an acceptable remediation plan by the company responsible. Over the coming weeks the Sierra Club will be working in collaboration with community stakeholders to introduce and pass a city ordinance that would protect the Detroit waterways from irresponsible polluters who put our Great Lakes and communities at risk.

If you're interested in getting involved in this campaign, please contact Healthy Communities Organizer Justin Onwenu at justin.onwenu@sierraclub.org.

Continued from Page 8

Vote for a Green Legislature

trained over 30 interns to work on races all over our state, focusing on key races for Congress and the Michigan Legislature. Our political interns help prioritize environmental issues within their assigned campaigns and mobilize the thousands of voters that we need to turn out this year in order to mitigate the worst effects of climate change.

What are the biggest environmental issues candidates are talking about this election cycle?

Our endorsed candidates understand that human-caused climate change is the biggest challenge facing our state, country and world. They also understand that protecting the environment and supporting the economy are not mutually exclusive. The green energy market is one of the fastest-growing sectors in our economy, and investment in renewable energy technologies will bring new, good-paying jobs to Michigan. Our candidates are fighting Enbridge's Line 5 pipeline and Nestle's egregious water withdrawals, holding corporate polluters accountable for their contamination and working for the cleanup of the widespread PFAS contamination. Most importantly, our candidates make the link between social justice and environmental justice. The disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on low-income communities of color proves that we cannot go back to normal because normal was not working. Our Sierra Club endorsed candidates are ready to chart a new path towards a more sustainable, equitable and just future.

What can Sierra Club members do to make a difference?

The most important thing every person can and should do is vote in November. Being actively involved in our democracy is the best way to have your voice heard. Also, I encourage all of our members to get involved in our endorsed candidates' campaigns.

The other thing you can do is donate to the Michigan Sierra Club Political Committee (donation info is in the election guide.) Every dollar donated helps us contact more voters, train interns and elect environmental champions. For details or to get involved or support our program, email tim.minotas@sierraclub.org or call (248) 961-9610.

Fighting for our Democracy

Sierra Club members worked hard to elect Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson and pass Prop 3 in 2018. Thanks to those victories, we have a strong voting rights advocate at the helm as we prepare for what may be one of the most contested elections in history. Michiganders now have same-day voter registration, we've restored straight-ticket voting and we have no-reason absentee voter registration. Secretary Benson demonstrated her commitment to easy ballot access during the height of the pandemic by expanding mail-in voting to all registered voters in the May 5 local elections. These efforts paid off; and in spite of the shelter-in-place order we saw the highest rates of voter participation in the history of these local elections.

This November, in case there is a delay in the postal system, most local clerks have drop-off stations for ballots, the best way to ensure ballots are delivered in time. Michigan is one of the country's top battleground states this year, and we stand a fighting chance of securing a fair election outcome with Secretary of State Benson's leadership.

As we prepare for November, we work to uphold the integrity of our democratic institutions by turning out the largest pro-environment vote possible. You can get involved with our efforts here: sierraclubindependentaction.org/2020-plan-to-win

Farm Bureau Appeals New Factory Farm Permit; Environmentalists Push Back

By Gail Philbin, Chapter Director

Michigan's new state permit for how factory farms handle animal waste went into effect last April and reflected a year of hard work on the part of the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter and its partners in the Great Farms Great Lakes coalition. In a series of stakeholder sessions and a public comment process in 2019, we successfully advocated for key changes that make the permit stronger and more effective at preventing the nutrient runoff feeding toxic algae blooms in inland bodies of water and the Great Lakes.

The Michigan Farm Bureau and other industry groups fought these improvements and, after the new permit was unveiled last spring, they filed an administrative appeal to the Michigan Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules to have the approved permit thrown out. In particular, they are contesting the January-March ban on the spreading of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) waste on frozen and snow-covered ground; limits on the amount of phosphorus in the soil where manure is applied and restrictions based on a facility's location within an impaired watershed.

The Michigan Environmental Council is heading up a legal response by a coalition of organizations intervening in the appeal process. The Sierra Club is exploring options for a legal response including the possibility of intervening with several other groups in the appeal process.



The agriculture industry opposes the new state ban on the application of animal waste on frozen and snow-covered ground from January-March, even though the practice leads to toxic runoff that feeds algae blooms.

Healing the Great Lakes

By Erma Leaphart, Healing Our Waters Coalition, MI Co-Lead

Lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie and Ontario: these national treasures comprise 20% of the world's fresh surface water and 84% of the fresh surface water in North America! They provide drinking water for 40 million people and are significant to our culture, public well-being, the Great Lakes region and the United States economy. Though they look amazing and beautiful, threats lurk not too far beneath the surface.

Fortunately, for over 15 years the Healing Our Waters – Great Lakes Coalition, which is a coalition of more than 160 non-governmental partners and allies, has been diligently working for federal policies and funds to restore and protect the health of the Great Lakes. The Coalition's member organizations are focused on the most pressing issues, including:

- contaminants (e.g. toxic algae blooms, PFAS, lead, microplastics...)
- invasive species
- sewage overflows

- polluted stormwater and agricultural runoff
- wetlands restoration and protection
- and importantly, water accessibility, especially in view of Covid-19.

Recognizing the essential need for federal policies and funds that support these efforts, every four years the Coalition encourages presidential candidates to embrace our Great Lakes and clean water priorities. Federal spending on water infrastructure projects dropped sharply over the past 40 years, causing major hikes in water bills and making water unaffordable for far too many people. Everywhere, these critical issues are on the line. Federal support is vital to protecting water resources, which are essential to life.

Join the Coalition as we seek to secure bipartisan support for our 2020 Great Lakes Platform and foster a conversation and a sense of urgency around Great Lakes restoration and protection. To learn more, visit [healthylakes.org](https://www.healthylakes.org).

New PFAS Drinking Water Standard Needs Work to Fully Protect Health

By Christy McGillivray, Political and Legislative Director

On August 3rd, Michigan adopted the proposed PFAS Maximum Contaminant Load (MCL), which will help limit toxic PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) chemicals in the state's drinking water. More than two million Michiganders currently access a drinking water supply with detectable PFAS chemicals, which are found in products such as flame retardant, nonstick pans and waterproof jackets. The Sierra Club Michigan Chapter worked hard to involve as many impacted community members as possible in the drafting of these important drinking water standards. In January 2020, Sierra Club members Steve Colby-Brown and Charles Carpenter spoke at official public comment hearings in support of the strongest possible public health protections when regulating PFAS. Hundreds of members submitted comments in support of stronger drinking water standards, and the vigorous public support for immediate action helped ensure that the state took relatively swift action to put these protections in place.

In June, the Centers for Disease Controls's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry released a report showing that

exposure to PFAS suppresses the immune system and could increase the risk of contracting Covid-19 as well as the severity of the symptoms. As Covid-19 persists in Michigan, the state did the right thing by acting to reduce public exposure to factors like PFAS pollution that may increase health risks. This information makes our work to get this toxin off the market more important than ever.

In response, the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter released the following statement:

"Sierra Club applauds the State of Michigan for taking this long-overdue step forward to address the toxic drinking water contamination threatening the health of millions of Michiganders. However, this standard must be the beginning of a process to clean up our drinking water - the work is not done. We must fully implement the new standards while expanding protections to eliminate the entire class of PFAS chemicals still threatening our drinking water. The health and safety of all Michiganders depends on it."

Green Space in an Urban Landscape

By Quentin Turner, Green Stormwater Infrastructure Organizer, Great Lakes Program

The Rouge and the Detroit Rivers are both vital to the city of Detroit. They provide avenues of commerce, recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat, and in the Detroit River's case, drinking water to the city. Unfortunately, the outfalls along these bodies of water can release a polluting mixture of stormwater and wastewater during significant rain events. Despite important work already done, Detroit still hasn't completely eliminated combined sewage overflow events.

For almost a decade, Sierra Club, in partnership with the Friends of the Rouge and our funders at the Erb Family Foundation, has encouraged Detroiters to adopt green

stormwater infrastructure practices in the form of rain gardens to help remedy the overflow problem. Rain gardens prevent much of the stormwater that would enter the sewer system

and cause the polluting combined sewage overflows. Instead, the water infiltrates harmlessly into the ground. In addition, these gardens filled with native plants and flowers provide food and habitat for our native pollinators.

Research from the University of Washington has shown that green space in urban landscapes can play a significant factor in addressing mental fatigue, cognitive function and stress relief. As we make our way through the Covid-19 pandemic with sometimes little else to do except take a walk through our neighborhood, having these small pockets of native plants and flowers can provide a little relief and shift our focus away from our current stressors.

If you're interested in learning more about our green stormwater infrastructure work in Detroit or installing your own rain garden, please visit our website at sierraclub.org/michigan/great-lakes-great-communities-campaign or reach out to erma.leaphart@sierraclub.org



River Rouge children live in the state's most polluted zip code.

VOTE FOR MICHIGAN CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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. ExCom members set Chapter priorities and policies, ensure financial stability and solvency, and monitor and evaluate Chapter and Club activities. 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 sierraclub.org/michigan/executive-committee-elections)

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 sierraclub.org/michigan/executive-committee-elections

-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 Dec. 1, 2020 (online voting deadline is the same).

Androni Henry

As an Emergency Physician during the Covid-19 pandemic, I am continually astounded by the earth's self-healing abilities while we shelter in place. With decreased air pollution and wildlife emerging in even our most urban areas, I am both humbled and motivated to advocate for cleaner, more responsible uses of our wild places. With a degree in environmental geosciences from the University of Michigan, I have continuously supported environmental education and safe opportunities to explore the natural world for young people in Michigan. I hope to continue supporting the Sierra Club's mission as a member of the Michigan Chapter Executive Committee.



Jeff Burtka

I am a writer and attorney who loves exploring both Michigan peninsulas. From volunteering with Detroit Inspiring Connections Outdoors to participating in the Michigan Chapter's newly created Race & Privilege Workgroup, it has been an honor serving the Sierra Club. I hope to continue my service as a member of the Executive Committee.

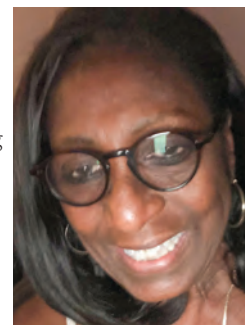


If elected, I will work with the Michigan Chapter to fight for every Michigander's clean air and water rights and equitable access to outdoor spaces. I will strive to increase membership and volunteer engagement by working to make the Michigan Chapter more inclusive and welcoming to all.

Vicki Dobbins

Activist Vicki Dobbins, elected River Rouge School Board, River Rouge Planning commissioner and Sierra Club member, is proud to express the excitement of enjoying, exploring and serving the Downriver community.

A Sierra Club member since 2015, I have enjoyed being on the ExCom board, traveling to several cities for hearings, classes and conferences. As an at-large-member, I've had a great experience lobbying in Lansing, at the state capitol and meeting and talking to our state representatives, senators and other Michigan leaders requesting their support on issues relating to Sierra Club values.



Aghogho Edevbie

I am running for the Executive Committee because I want to ensure our beautiful state is protected for future generations. From planting seedlings as a cub scout, to kayaking in the Detroit River, to climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro, I have developed a lifelong passion for the environment. This passion was instilled in me by my father, who worked for the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department for 35 years protecting our water. As a lawyer who has argued before the Michigan Public Service Commission and led a statewide non-profit, I believe I can bring a unique perspective to the Executive Board.



Marty Habalewsky

Marty Habalewsky is a current at-large executive committee member. A former journalist, he worked in public relations as a consultant for more than 30 years and in sales and marketing for 10 years. Four Michigan governors have been his clients. Marty has served leading national and international automotive, technology, professional, higher education, government and nonprofit organizations in Detroit. He has been a citizen lobbyist for five years and has been chair of Sierra Club's Blue Water Committee in Port Huron since 2016. Marty and his wife, Ruth, have supported the Beyond Coal Campaign as witnesses or plaintiffs in lawsuits.



Mike Buza

For years I have been very active with environmental causes. Recently, I have been involved in promoting renewable energy. I have attended dozens of township meetings throughout the state to promote renewable energy. I maintain a Facebook site entitled "Michigan Windmill Advocacy." My efforts have earned me the Chapter's Service Award. I currently serve as the chair of the Nepessing Group. I am also very active in the Michigan Democratic Party-Environmental Caucus. I try to live my values. I have had solar panels on my home for 10 years. I plan to bring my commitment to the environment to this post.



Cha'Ris Lee

Hello! I'm Cha'Ris Lee. I'm an attorney and advocate for our Great Lakes and the environment! It would be an honor to serve on the Michigan Chapter Executive Committee and contribute to maintaining a strong chapter. I'm a huge fan of the outdoors and keeping the earth beautiful for everyone to enjoy. I am concerned about the quality of our environment and how that merges with our quality of life, infrastructure and environmental justice issues. I would be honored to serve on the board and grateful for your vote. Thank you.



SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN CHAPTER 2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BALLOT

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

MARTY HABALEWSKY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VICKI DOBBINS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ANDRONI HENRY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AGHOGHO EDEVBIE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JEFF BURTKA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CHA'RIS LEE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MIKE BUZA	<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 E Cesar Chavez 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 1, 2020.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



With your help we can clean up our water

Sierra Club Water Sentinels are the first line of defense of America's waters. We live on the water planet. However, water is a finite resource with only about 1 % of the world's water actually being available for human consumption. Water pollution & over-use are threatening both the quality & quantity of our water resources at an alarming rate. **Keep our water safe. Join Sierra Club.**

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Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15	N/A
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy & lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine & \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to:
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or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org



(PHOTO OF WHITE PINE REGENERATION BY MARVIN ROBBERSON)

Forest Management Aims for Long-Term Success

By Marvin Roberson, Forest Policy Specialist

“Whether or not a forest management decision is a good one frequently is not clear until long after the lifetime of the person who makes it.”

Gordon Robinson, the first professional forester hired by the Sierra Club

The Sierra Club works on a whole range of issues and in a whole host of ways. Some of those efforts show immediate results. When my colleagues in the Beyond Coal program got coal plants shut down, the result was immediate - greenhouse gases simply stopped coming out of the smokestacks.

The same is true with other issues. Success on the Line 5 tunnel will be immediately obvious; it will either be built or it will not.

However, I work on forests, and trees grow very slowly. So if I have success in convincing a public land management agency to make a particular decision, the effects of that decision will not be clear for a long time.

But I've been doing this for decades. For 30 years, I have been going out into the field every year, examining forest areas and advocating for bigger, older forests with less roads. Sometimes I've been successful, sometimes not so much.

I have done this alongside a committed cadre of volunteers, pioneered by folks like Nancy Shiffler and Tim Flynn.

But we don't see results immediately. If there is a proposal to cut a stand of aspen, and that stand has the potential to regenerate white pine, we might advocate for leaving the stand to grow white pine, which is underrepresented in Michigan's forests.

While this will help in our efforts to restore Michigan's majestic white pine forests, as mentioned above, it will not be immediately obvious.

This is why it is so gratifying to go back over the decades to see the places I and others have worked so hard to restore. I examined stands this past spring which I had convinced the agency to allow to regenerate to white pine, rather than clear for more aspen.

That was over 20 years ago. Last spring was the first time I had gone back and discovered white pine coming up in the understory, which will convert the stand to white pine over more decades.

The white pine (and cedar, and hemlock and other species) we are trying to restore will not mature until long after we are gone. But if we don't start now, they never will.



In Memoriam
M. Jim 'Jimmy' Williams
Dec 29, 1929 - March 4, 2020

Jim Williams served as a medic in Korea and taught science and math to kids and fellow servicemen/women. Jim joined the Sierra Club in 1983 and devoted nearly the last two decades to hands-on volunteering for water and wildlife protection and other environmental causes. Jim was a world

traveler and a geek of all things rocks/minerals, meteorites, fossils and astronomy. As a volunteer and activist, he was passionate and dedicated, a true fireball.

The Sierra Club Rochester ECOS Team is deeply saddened by the loss of our longest group member and dear friend Jimmy Williams. He inspired our team to work hard while having fun and creating life-long friendships.

In Memory
Charles Taylor Tassinare
1949 – 2020

In memory of Charlie who was always seeking and speaking truth for change – 'Kathie'

That gallant eccentric, who passed into the ethereal realms on April 9, 2020. A man of unquestioned integrity, he was an activist for peace.

Charlie was an avid book collector leaving behind 20,000 volumes and a gardener with his wildflower garden filled with beautiful Michigan native species.

"We may think we are nurturing our garden, but of course It's our garden that is really nurturing us." ~ Jenny Uglow ~



Create an Environmental Legacy

When author Rachel Carson died in 1964 at age 56, she left a substantial bequest to the Sierra Club, including royalties from future sales of her classic work, *Silent Spring*. By doing so, she ensured that her concern for the environment would continue to grow into the future. Her legacy led the Sierra Club to create the Rachel Carson Society, designed to honor and recognize individuals who name the Sierra Club Foundation or the Sierra Club in their estate plans.

Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during his or her lifetime, but you can preserve the environment for generations to come by remembering the Michigan Sierra Club and/or National Sierra Club in your estate plans or will.

Bequests to the Michigan Chapter support the conservation work here in Michigan. This funding enables the Chapter to continue protecting the natural splendor of Michigan for years to come. Planned gifts are particularly important to the Chapter as they can provide significant resources to allow continued conservation activities over an extended period of time.

For more information, contact Jan O'Connell: (616) 956-6646 jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org



Giving is Contagious

By Jan O'Connell, Chapter Development Director

Have 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 and 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 or know.

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 Buffet 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 you are recognized or anonymous! See the back page of this issue for a listing of our Michigan Legacy Council members who receive special acknowledgement based on their giving level starting at \$500/year. THANK YOU!



The Sierra Club's members and supporters are 3.8 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. This list is current as of our publication date. Please join us in thanking the current listing of Michigan Legacy Council members:

FENS & SAPLINGS **\$500-\$999**

- Patrice Aaron
- Gail Barber
- David Bolig
- Lee Ann Brunetz
- Karl Butterer & Delanie Pope
- Joanne M Cantoni
- Kate & Rick Dahlstrom
- Damro Foundation
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- Rita Vadasz
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- Oliver & Joan Warner
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- Tim & Jane Stoecker
- Timon P Tesar
- Carol E Ward (posthumously)
- Henry M Wellman
- Todd S Wilkinson
- Anonymous Donors (1)

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- Mary Anne & David Beltzman
- Estate of Esther Dean
- Jeff Miller
- Henry (Hal) Newnan III
- Gwen & John Nystuen
- Gail & John Philbin
- Nancy Shiffler

MARSHES & PRAIRIES **\$5,000-\$7,499**

- Mike Keeler & Sherry Hayden
- Jean Gramlich
- Greenwald Family Foundation
- Helen & Al LeBlanc

MARSHES & PRAIRIES **\$7,500-\$14,999**

- Patagonia
- Anne & Tom Woiwode

GREAT LAKES & GREAT FORESTS **\$15,000+**

- Thomas Buhr
- Ceci Bauer & Tim Flynn
- Erb Foundation
Detroit Future City
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- Mr. John R Hunting
- Wege Foundation