



**SIERRA
CLUB**
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Moshannon Group News



SIERRA CLUB MOSHANNON GROUP

February 2009

Issue 1

HELP STOP THE DUMP!

By—Michele Barbin

The Surface Transportation Board (STB), the federal regulatory agency that oversees railroads, has scheduled a public meeting regarding reactivation of the rail line for the proposed Resource Recovery landfill site.

This meeting is scheduled to discuss the scope of the environmental review that will be conducted by the STB with regards to the R.J. Corman Rail Company and Resource Recovery, LLC rail reactivation request. STB representatives will be available to answer your questions and receive comments/concerns about this rail reactivation proposal.

DATE AND LOCATION

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Philipsburg-Osceola Area Senior High School

502 Philips Street, Philipsburg, PA 16866

Resource Recovery NEEDS this rail line reactivated in order to move their stalled landfill permit application forward. Although their landfill permit application is on hold (primarily due to lack of access to the site), the application remains active. It has not been rejected by the Department of Environmental Protection nor withdrawn by Resource Recovery. If this rail reactivation is approved, it would give Resource Recovery access to the landfill site, significantly increasing their chance for landfill permit approval.

We need to show this agency, as we have shown others in the past, that there is still overwhelming opposition to this entire proposal—particularly the landfill and the rail reactivation to serve it.

People Protecting Communities (PPC) has been leading a campaign to stop the railroad reactivation because it is critical in stopping the landfill, and there is no other significant need for rail service to this site.

When PPC filed a [Petition to Hold Proceedings in Abeyance](#) in June 2008, they requested that no decision be made on reactivating this 20-mile stretch of railroad line until after a comprehensive environmental review was conducted. This is exactly what the STB decided to do. Not only is the STB requiring the most thorough environmental review, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), they will also be considering the *cumulative* effects of the railroad, pro-

(Continued on page 5)

EVENTS CALENDAR

ALL ARE INVITED

Friday, February 13, 6:30PM: PA SIERRA CLUB COOL CITIES Energy Efficiency Project: Energy Policy and Best Practices for both your Home and Community. Ahimsa Village, Julian Woods Community, Julian, PA.. Contact: Laura Piraino.

Wednesday, February 18, 7PM: SIERRA CLUB FILM AND GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING. Film at 7pm at the Schlow Public Library Community Room. **Fighting Goliath: The Texas Coal Wars**, a 30 minute Sundance film narrated by Robert Redford, follows the story of Texans fighting a high-stakes battle for clean air. The film introduces the unlikely partners—mayors, ranchers, CEOs, community groups, legislators, lawyers, and citizens—that came together to oppose the construction of 19 conventional coal-fired power plants that were slated to be built in Eastern and Central Texas and that were being fast-tracked by the Governor. <http://www.fightinggoliathfilm.com/>

Did you know we have a coal fired power plant in the middle of State College, or that over 90% of our electricity comes from coal? More new coal plants are being proposed right here in our state.

Come meet local Sierra Club members, and join in the discussion about this incredible film and how it relates to us here in Central PA. Learn about opportunities to get involved with your local Sierra Club group in the general membership meeting after the film.

SAVE THESE DATES!

Spring General Membership Meetings and Film Schedule, all held 7PM at the Schlow Public Library: **Wednesday March 25, April 15, and May 27.**

(Continued on page 2)

MOSHANNON MUSINGS

Gary Thornbloom

Be with us at our February 28th Winter Party. Come and celebrate—a new year, a new occupant of the White House, good food, exceptional music, find out about Moshannon Group accomplishments, and about what we can do.

Moshannon Group leadership for the coming year includes the following Executive Committee members: Michelle Barbin, Ronn Brouman, Ben Cramer, Stan Kotala, Steve Lachman, Judy Tanner, and Gary Thornbloom. 2009 officers are Ben Cramer, Ron Johnson, Judy Tanner, and Gary Thornbloom. There are some new faces here, come out and meet them.

We continue to find new ways to work throughout the community: co-sponsoring candidates forums, working with Friends of Allegheny Wilderness, bringing a wilderness message—Walkin' Jim—to almost 2,000 elementary school students. We also continue with long standing efforts: “fighting the dump” with strong support for People Protecting Communities, providing a clear voice for “what is best for the canyon”—Spring Creek Canyon, a strong four seasons outing program.

Moshannon Group has once again added one of “our own” to Chapter leadership—Laura Piraino.

Ben, Stan, and I are beginning our 8th year of writing **On The Trail**, an outdoor column in the Centre Daily Times on the first Sunday of the month, Sports Section, Woods & Waters page. All of these columns are archived at our website.

In April we host the 6th Annual Banff Film Festival World Tour—State College. Two evenings of fantastic films capturing the spirit of mountain culture and adventure. Two evenings where we invite organizations from throughout our community to join us in the lobby with exhibits and information.

Moshannon Group has tradition. Moshannon Group constantly strives to expand our efforts and activities.

Join us at the events listed in our Events Calendar! Celebrate the Moshannon Group! Join us in exploring, protecting and preserving our world! Help us to make it a better world. With you we can!

HELP PRESERVE & PROTECT SPRING CREEK CANYON

If you know organizations or groups—civic, church, social, conservation, or others—that would be interested in a power point presentation about the ecological benefits of placing Spring Creek Canyon under permanent protection, or if you would like email updates on what you can do to help, please contact Ed Perry at 814-880-9593 or paglobalwarmingoutreach@gmail.com

VISIT OUR WEBSITE WHICH WAS RECENTLY
REDESIGNED BY MICHELE BARBIN!

WWW.SIERRAMSH.ORG

EVENTS CALENDAR (Continued from page 1)

WINTER PARTY!

Saturday, February 28th Moshannon Group WINTER PARTY!
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 780 Waupelani Drive Extension, State College, PA .

6PM Potluck

Bring your favorite dish to share; BYO beer or wine. The Sierra Club supports local and sustainable agriculture. Share recipes, stories and sources of your favorite PA or organic fare, and your garden adventures! Foodies and green thumbs welcome!

8PM Sierra Club Excom Shares Favorite Local Outings

Presentation of pictures of beautiful vistas and streamside adventures—learn where the Sierra Club goes to have fun! Bring your own photos and tips to share about your favorite spots to ski, hike, canoe, bicycle and kayak. The Sierra Club supports getting outside—to enjoy, preserve and protect!

Information available on all Moshannon group campaigns and program initiatives. Learn about ways you can get involved.

9PM—11PM Live music with the Chris Byrne Fusion Band

Chris Byrne blends elements of jazz, blues, rock, Latin, funk, and soul into musical jambalaya that inspires both dancing and soulful reflection. Repertoire includes many originals plus songs from a wide variety of artists such as Grover Washington, Jr., Carlos Santana, John Lee Hooker, and Herbie Hancock. The band showcases a diversity of talent as well, featuring established recording artists along with young talented players from the State College area. Check out Chris on myspace:

<http://www.myspace.com/DrChrisByrne>

Free to Sierra Club members- suggested donation for the public- \$5.
Bring your friends!

6TH ANNUAL BANFF FILM FESTIVAL WORLD TOUR—STATE COLLEGE, PA

Sunday and Monday April 26 & 27. Put it on your calendar!
Check out our website for updates!

OUTINGS

Contact information in the directory on last page.

Sunday February 22, easy HIKE at Bald Eagle State Park, Centre County, 2-3 hours. Contact: Ben Cramer.

(Continued on page 4)

LAKESIDE COTTAGE FOR RENT OFF-SEASON DISCOUNT!

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GLOBAL WARMING—IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE

HERE AND NOW

By—Ed Perry

Although scientists have known for over 100 years that adding more carbon dioxide to the atmosphere from burning fossil fuels would increase the earth's temperature, it has only been in the last 40 years that they have been increasingly sounding the alarm about what they see as the threat to our planet. And it's only been in the past few years that those of us who fish, hunt or recreate outdoors have really begun to notice the climate is changing.

For example, in 2005 I was on our annual canoe-camping trip on the Susquehanna River with my two sons, like we've been doing for the past 25 years. We spend the weekend camping on the islands and wade-fishing the Susquehanna in search of smallmouth bass. Up to that point, 2005 was the hottest year on record. That weekend, the water was so warm it was uncomfortable. My thermometer read 90° F downstream from the Clarks Ferry Bridge, 6 miles north of Harrisburg. That weekend, we saw hundreds of fingerling smallmouth floating past us, killed by a bacterial infection brought on by high water temperatures.

At that point, our changing climate became a personal issue for me.

Scientists say that unless we take action, it may be trouble for trout and salmon. The Environmental Protection Agency predicts that the some states will lose over 50% of their salmonid habitat if temperatures increase by the expected 4-11° F. This does not bode well for the world-class trout fisheries on Penns Creek and Spring Creek in Centre County. Although these two streams are partially protected because groundwater provides so much of their flow, changing rainfall patterns and increased temperatures are sure to stress these fisheries which are already stressed by urbanization. Our native brook streams will be especially endangered. Most are freestone streams highly susceptible to drought and increased temperatures.

Anglers who fished some of the storied Montana trout streams the past few years have glimpsed what the future holds. For the past few years, high water temperatures have forced fishery managers to close the fishery during the day. Guides who keep yearly records claim water temperatures in some streams are the highest they have ever seen. But it's

not only high temperatures that are affecting trout. Higher temperatures and altered moisture patterns are also having an effect by reducing the size of the snow pack. Instead of late winter snow storms, western states are often getting torrential downpours, which melts the snow pack, reducing the amount of clean, cold water feeding the streams during the summer.

Pennsylvania is also predicted to have similar changes in rainfall patterns, with more frequent torrential downpours in late winter and early spring devastating stream banks. For example, streams in northeast Pennsylvania have been



—Photo by Alan Gregory

devastated by repeated high rainfall events. The Adams County and York County Conservation Districts report 100-year storms occurring 3 to 5 times in the same year with increasing frequency, and with similar impacts to their streams.

So is there any hope?

Fortunately, climate change is no different than any other conservation issue we

have worked on and solved. However, unlike past issues, this one will decide the fate of our natural resources unless those of us who fish, hunt and recreate outdoors become more involved. Climate scientists state that we have five years at most to begin reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 2% per year in order to avoid the worst of the predicted temperature increase.

So, although our country is starting to act, there is great urgency. While we walk from our air conditioned homes to our air conditioned cars and drive to our air conditioned work places, we will be better equipped to tolerate the predicted temperature increases. But the Nation's natural resources are already being affected and unless we act quickly, we will be passing on an impaired natural resource base to future generations.

During the presidential race, we heard the solution to our energy problems was "drill baby, drill." For nearly 40 years, every president has declared that we need to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Many of us remember the long lines at the gas pump brought on by the 1970's Arab oil embargo, which triggered President Nixon's "Project Independence." Nixon declared "Let this be our national

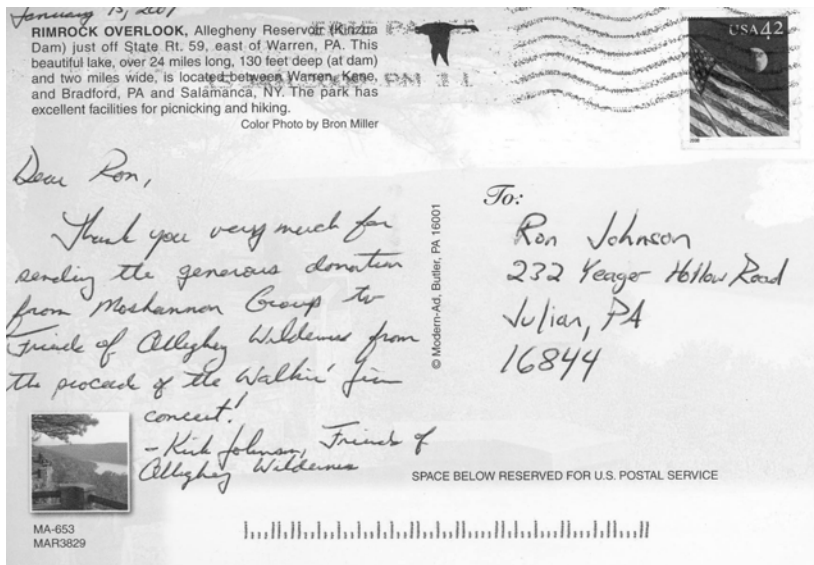
(Continued on page 4)

GLOBAL WARMING (Continued from page 3)

goal: At the end of this decade, in the year 1980, the United States will not be dependent on any other country for the energy we need to provide our jobs, to heat our homes, and to keep our transportation moving." At that time, we imported 1/3 of our oil. Unfortunately, we all have short memories because today we import almost 2/3 of our oil. Once gas prices decline, or the lines disappear, we go back to the gas guzzlers. This time it may be different.

In 2009, we will have a new congress and administration that seems committed to tackling our addiction to oil and reducing global warming pollution. As it turns out, solving global warming will benefit all of us. By reducing fossil fuel emissions, we will reduce our dependence on foreign oil, improve our national security, clean our air, and improve our economy by creating millions of new jobs in the renewable energy sector.

If you would like to join the campaign to get meaningful legislation passed, or would like a presentation to your group on the effects of global warming on Pennsylvania's fish and wildlife, please contact Ed Perry at pajglobalwarmingoutreach@gmail.com or at 814-880-9593.



Go to www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-and-you/how-clean.html to find out how the utility serving your zip code generates your electricity.

EVENTS CALENDAR

(Continued from page 2)

Sunday March 22, Hike Off-Trail, somewhat strenuous, with a 15 foot waterfall as our destination. Contact: Gary Thornbloom.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING AND SNOW SHOEING. Join a contact list for outings to be scheduled as snow conditions allow. Contact: Gary Thornbloom.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All members are welcome. Held on the **first Tuesday** of the month, 7PM at ClearWater Conservancy. Call an Excom Member to confirm the next meeting location and date.



11-20-2008

Dear Moshannon Chapter of the Sierra Club, thank you so much for bringing Walkin' Jim to our school. He gave a powerful performance and the children were very attentive to his message. I personally feel that this was a positive way to use your funds! in peace, Teacher Dorothy

1900 University Drive ■ State College, PA 16801 ■ (814) 237-8386

DETERMINE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Every household can be part of the solution to global warming. Begin by calculating your household carbon footprint to learn exactly how many pounds of carbon dioxide you are responsible for emitting.

Learn many practical steps and the

reduction in CO2 each offers. By using these easy tools, your concern for the environment can make a real difference.

Contact Lynne Heritage and she will email you a Household Carbon Calculator—a spreadsheet that lets you enter

information that reflects your lifestyle and then calculates your carbon footprint. Lynne will also email you steps you can take to reduce your carbon footprint.

LLHeritage@comcast.net

STOP THE DUMP! *(Continued from page 1)*

posed quarry, landfill, and industrial park as part of it.

An overview of the detailed STB Notice follows (the complete STB Notice is available at www.stoplandfill.com). There are numerous opportunities for public comment!

PPC (as well as the STB) NEEDS YOUR EXPERTISE!

Highlights of the 13 impact categories on which the STB has specifically requested comment include

Item 1. Transportation and Safety—Do you live in close proximity to the railroad track or one of the 16 public and private crossings that will be required? Are you concerned about how this will affect your travel and the safety of your children?

Item 5. Noise—Do you have a camp near the landfill site that you visit to enjoy the peace and serenity of the wilderness? Will the noise of carloads of trash and train whistles blowing disrupt your wilderness experience? How about the nuisance of trains traveling close to or through your backyard?

Item 8. Socioeconomic—Are you a small business owner that relies on outdoor recreation and tourism customers who visit the targeted area?

Item 9. Recreation—Do you hunt, fish Black Moshannon Creek, paddle the Red Mo, or camp near the affected area? Do you use the Snow Shoe Rail Trail? Do you hike the Allegheny Front Trail? Do you want to share your experience with trash trains and the commotion of a huge landfill operation? Do you want to lose 9.3 miles of the Snow Shoe Rail Trail to trash trains? Will trash trains travel through or next to a local park or school grounds?

Item 10. Environmental Justice—Do you think it is fair that the landfill and its negative impacts will more directly affect Snow Shoe Township, a community that rejected the landfill proposal from the beginning, than the host community?

Item 13. Cumulative and Indirect Impacts—Cumulative impacts on the environment result from the incremental effects of actions when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such actions (for example, Resource Recovery, LLC's proposed new quarry, landfill and industrial park). [Note: This example is the STB's, not PPC's!]

That is, if the rail reactivation enables the proposed landfill, the impacts of the proposed landfill (and other associated proposals—I-80 interchange, industrial park, gas well development, quarry, waste water treatment plant—have also been proposed for this site) should be addressed in the EIS.

Other items in the STB Notice that the EIS needs to address include:

Land Use (e.g., existing land use that will be impacted by the project, consistent with land use planning),

Energy Resources (e.g., Does it make sense to ship waste

hundreds of miles from its source?),

Air Quality (e.g., Centre County is a maintenance area under the Clean Air Act, how will the trains and other heavy traffic affect local air quality?),

Biological Resources (e.g., vegetative communities, terrestrial and aquatic habitats, known wildlife species, threatened and endangered species; impact on wildlife sanctuaries, refuges, state parks/forests/game lands),

Water Resources (e.g., surface water resources including wetlands and watercourses and their floodplains),

Geology and Soils (e.g., geologic and soil conditions within the project area including pyrite which can affect water resources), and

Cultural/Historic Resources (e.g., Peale Tunnel and Viaduct Bridge—historical highlights of the Snow Shoe Rail Trail).

Fighting this railroad proposal is a complex, expensive, and ongoing issue. PPC is fortunate to have retained the services of an excellent attorney and is grateful that you, as supporters, have been generous with donations, supporting their fundraisers, and helping them get the word out. This decision by the STB is a result of your continued support of PPC as well as support by the Moshannon Group.

Providing proof of a large PPC membership goes a long way in helping to secure grant funds as well as political support. If you have never officially joined PPC, please consider doing so. There is no obligation and they do not share your personal information with anyone. PPC just keeps a list so they can provide the membership numbers when asked. It is an easy way for you to show your desire to "Stop the Landfill." Their website www.stoplandfill.com is a clearinghouse of information about this issue and includes a membership form (or send your name, address, phone and e-mail, suggested membership donation is \$5).

PPC knows times are tough economically, but donations to their Legal Defense Fund will be well invested in fighting this railroad reactivation. Donations may be sent to: PPC, PO Box 38, Clarence, PA 16829.

Comments submitted by mail should be addressed to:

Danielle Gosselin, Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20423 Attention: Environmental Filing STB Finance Docket No. 35116

Comments may also be filed electronically:

go to the STB's web site, www.stb.dot.gov, click on the "E-FILING" link. Please refer to STB Finance Docket No. 35116 in all correspondence, including e-filings, addressed to the Board.

All comments must be postmarked by February 24, 2009.

WWW.SIERRAMSH.ORG



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Moshannon Group Directory

*members of the Executive Committee

Chair , Newsletter	*Gary Thornbloom	353-3466	bearknob@verizon.net
Vice Chair, Chapter Delegate, Outings	*Ben Cramer	404-1120	doomsdayer520@gmail.com
Treasurer, Conservation,	Ron Johnson	355-5434	greenbowl@verizon.net
Secretary, Political	*Judy Tanner	542-8519	billtann@verizon.net
Banff Coordinator	*Ronn Brouman	867-0624	ronnb@comcast.net
Website	*Michele Barbin	387-4509	mlb10@verizon.net
Endangered Species/Wildlife	*Stan Kotala	946-8840	ccwiba@keyconn.net
Fundraising (Calendars)	Paula Thornbloom	353-3466	pthornbloom@cdfc.org
Membership	*Steve Lachman		stevlachman@gmail.com
Programs	Laura Piraino	880-8478	laurapiraino@yahoo.com
Publicity	Dee Vogelsong		Vogelsong100@yahoo.com
Tabling Coordinator			

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Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$190	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

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 52968, Boulder, CO 80522-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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APRIL 26 & 27, 2009
STATE COLLEGE, PA
TWO NIGHTS
DIFFERENT FILMS EACH NIGHT
6th ANNUAL!!!!!!