



Baltimore Sierran

Serving Nearly 3,500 Members in Baltimore City, Baltimore County & Harford County • Winter 2004

Preserving Loch Raven, Liberty, Prettyboy Forests

By Richard Klein, Group Chair

In early 2003, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) drafted *A Comprehensive Forest Conservation Plan for Long-Term Watershed Protection on the City of Baltimore's Reservoirs*. The DNR plan identified a number of issues that could affect the numerous benefits provided by the 17,580 acres of city-owned forests adjoining the three principle water-supply reservoirs — Liberty, Loch Raven and Prettyboy.

The most pressing issue identified in the plan was the paucity of seedlings, shrubs and young trees in many forest stands. As part of the planning process, forest structure was analyzed at 2,500 plots (sampling sites). The data gathered through these

analyses showed that seedlings and young trees were missing on 75% of the forest plots! The lack of understory vegetation was attributed to browsing by large deer populations.

Without seedlings and young trees the ability of the forest to perform vital functions, such as water quality protection and provision of wildlife habitat, is severely compromised. The plan calls for managing the deer herd so forest recovery may begin.

Some concern has been expressed that the plan may open the door to extensive logging of the city's reservoir forests. However, this concern appears unfounded.

The plan does identify tree removal as one of a number of management practices which may be appropriate for 92% of the forest. Tree removal is specifically excluded on 1,400 acres of "natural areas." The natural areas consist of: 1) a hundred-foot buffer along streams; 2) steep slopes; and 3) areas set aside for native plant seed banks and long-term monitoring. In reality, implementation of the plan would require tree removal on, at most, 88 acres of forest in any given year. The exception would be the Prettyboy reservoir pine stand described below. Tree removal in a specific forest stand would occur no more frequently than once every 90 years.

In the 1980s, extensive timber removal did occur on reservoir forest lands. But the areas logged in the 80s had been ravaged by gypsy moths. A large percentage of the trees died as a result of the infestation. This was a unique set of circumstances that does not exist today.

Selective tree removal can be the most prudent approach for resolving some forest management issues. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this point is to look at a 1,330-acre area of pine identified in the plan as an issue. The pine stand is located along the southwest shore of Prettyboy reservoir. The

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Opportunity to Protect Waters of Baltimore & Harford Counties

By Richard Klein, Group Chair

If you'd like to help preserve some of our most important waters with just a few minutes of your time, then two great opportunities are on the horizon. This spring, the Baltimore County Planning Board will be considering actions to reduce sprawl and other inappropriate forms of rural development. Harford County may require clustering to preserve open space and water quality. We'll explain in this article why both actions are vitally important and how you can help bring about these much needed changes.

The Greater Baltimore Sierra Club launched the *Sensitive Waters Project* last year to preserve our numerous sensitive streams, wetlands and other waters from the impact of sprawl and other inappropriate forms of development. At risk are more than 200 miles of trout streams, dozens of wetlands supporting threatened-endangered species, and many other sensitive aquatic resources.

Greater Baltimore Sierra Club members met in October with officials in Baltimore and

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shallow-rooted pines in this area are very susceptible to blow-down during high winds. The nightmare scenario could unfold like this. A tornado or hurricane passes through the area and knocks down hundreds of acres of pine. All fire roads into the area become impassable. A drought follows, such as that of 1999-2002, and fire sweeps through the felled pines. Imagine the damage done to reservoir water quality by ash- and sediment-laden runoff from hundreds of acres of burned-over forestland. Recreational use within the hundreds of acres of downed trees would be minimal even if fire did not occur, though the snags and blow-downs would make great wildlife habitat.

In the plan, DNR recommends a management practice known as an *irregular strip shelterwood system* for the 1,330-acre pine stand. The practice entails tree removal. Unfortunately, the plan does not describe the probability of occurrence for this and other possible worse case scenarios. Nor does the plan present other possible options for managing the pine stand, such as allowing natural succession to replace pines with more wind-resistant species. Of course, for the plan to be credible, it must not only present all reasonable options, but then set forth the relative merits and shortcomings of each option, then clearly explain why the selected option — strip shelterwood in this case — is the most desirable. A similar approach should be used for the other issues identified in the plan.

Previously, it was stated in this article that tree removal would occur on no more than 88 acres of forest a year and that tree removal within a given stand would occur no more frequently than once every 90 years. These figures are implied, but not clearly stated, in the plan. This is worrisome. It is imperative that the city and DNR clearly state how much tree removal may occur, where the removal will take place, and how frequently. As suggested above, this information must be provided in the context of discussing the pros and cons of various options, including tree removal, for addressing specific forest management issues. Furthermore, the plan must clearly demonstrate why tree removal (or other options) are the most effective in achieving

the primary goal of the plan — preserving water quality. Nowhere in the plan does one find a side-by-side comparison of the water quality benefits of tree removal and other options. This is a critical deficiency.

These shortcomings aside, DNR and the City of Baltimore are to be commended for their efforts to preserve and enhance the reservoir forests. In addition, DNR has preserved another 32,000 acres along the two rivers on which the reservoirs are located - the Gunpowder and Patapsco. Much of the DNR land is in forest. Combined, the City and DNR have preserved nearly 50,000 acres of forest. These forestlands provide tremendous benefits to all of us. The benefits go beyond water-quality protection and include habitat for wildlife, countless recreational opportunities, and much more. But maintaining these benefits requires careful forest management. The 2003 DNR plan was a great first step towards clearly defining how to manage reservoir forests to preserve water quality. The Greater Baltimore Sierra Club applauds the city and DNR for taking the initiative by drafting this plan. But DNR and the city now need to take the next step and amend the plan as suggested above.

The Greater Baltimore Sierra Club has about a thousand members in Baltimore City and two thousand in Baltimore County.

If you are one of these members and you would like to help us support the city and DNR in preserving forests, then contact Richard Klein at GBSierra@ceds.org or 410-654-3021. We are forming a Forest Stewardship Committee and we're looking for a few good Sierrans to serve.

On Saturday, March 13th we will hike a portion of the Prettyboy forest to discuss management needs and options. The hike is open to anyone interested in learning more about the plan, the issues presented in the plan, options for addressing these issues as well as the pros and cons of each option. In attendance will be DNR watershed torestor Rob Northrop, the author of the plan, Maryland Sierra Club conservation chair Dan Boone, who is a widely respected forest biologist, and city watershed manager Gene Scarpulla. We'll meet on March 13th at 11:00 a.m. in the parking area located on the north side of Prettyboy Reservoir at the Beckleysville Road bridge. To reach our meeting place, take the Baltimore Beltway to Exit 23 - Falls Road (MD 25). Go north on Falls Road for 18 miles and turn right onto Beckleysville Road. Go east on Beckleysville Road for 2.9 miles and cross Prettyboy reservoir. To the left, after passing over the reservoir, you'll see the parking area where we'll meet. For further details contact Richard at 410-654-3021 or GBSierra@ceds.org.

To obtain a copy of the plan call the city's Reservoir Natural Resources Section at 410-795-6151.



Congressman Ruppertsberger Supports Sierra Priorities

by Cliff Terry, Group Political Chair and Patrick McMahon, Group Transportation Chair

A Sierra Club delegation met on December 15th with some of Congressman C.A. "Dutch" Ruppertsberger's top staff to convey the Club's thanks for his pro-environment record in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Congressman took office a year ago and was elected with the Club's support. His Sierra Club score was eight pro-environment votes out of the eight votes the Club tallied.

The Sierrans also sought Ruppertsberger's support for the Club's positions on several issues expected to arise this year and were generally encouraged by his staffers' responses.

Members of our delegation were Greater Baltimore Group Transportation Chair Patrick McMahon, Greater Baltimore Group Political Chair Cliff Terry, and Anne Arundel Group Political Chair Mary Marsh. Ruppertsberger's District 2 falls in Baltimore

City and Harford, Baltimore, and Anne Arundel Counties, areas served by the two Groups.

Delegation members met with Steve Jost (Chief of Staff), Tara Linnehan Oursler (District Coordinator), and Chonya Davis-Johnson (Legislative Assistant) for more than an hour. We spent most of the meeting discussing transportation issues, with an initial focus on the Sierra Club's top three priorities regarding the reauthorization of the comprehensive transportation bill (known as "TEA-21") when the short-term extension expires in February. Those priorities are 1) preserving the environmental and public review process, 2) maintaining strong clean air protections, and 3) protecting and expanding the transit program.

Patrick mentioned our concerns with the fast tracking of the Inter-County Connector (ICC), the controversial proposed su-

perhighway to connect I-270 with I-95. With limited public meetings and little notice before those meetings, the proposed "streamlining" of the review process could undermine public input in the transportation planning process. Noting that the ICC has twice come up for federal review and been turned down, Patrick expressed our fear that streamlining will not mean just simplifying or speeding up the review process but lowering the bar so projects like the ICC can get approved.

We also expressed our concern that the Bush administration's current proposal reduces the federal share for transit projects to 50 percent while maintaining it at 80 percent for highway projects and also dramatically under funds transit needs. Implementation of the Baltimore Region Transit System Plan in our lifetimes will require a continued federal commitment to transit funding equivalent to that for highway funding.

Steve Jost noted the Congressman's long-standing support of NEPA, public involvement early on in the planning process, the regional transportation planning process, and the air quality requirements currently in place. He also expressed his strong support for transit improvements in the Baltimore region, as well as support for maintaining comparable funding amounts and the federal share for transit and highway projects.

As Chapter population chair, Cliff made a pitch for Dutch to cosponsor HR 2727, a bill to require health insurance plans that cover prescriptions to cover contraceptive services and materials. Steve Jost said he didn't think that would be a problem.

Congressman Ruppertsberger's staff expressed hope to work with us on other upcoming environmental issues, to help find creative solutions.

Harford Counties to discuss various options for achieving the goals of the Sensitive Waters Project. We also spoke with the leaders of many citizen groups who share our desire to preserve farms, forests and water quality. A clear strategy has emerged from these discussions.

Baltimore County

In Baltimore County, the strategy focuses on the once-every-three-year rezoning process now underway. Hundreds of acres of farm and forestland in Baltimore County are presently zoned for development at a density of one house for every 1.5- to 5-acres. Sensitive aquatic resources suffer when development intensity exceeds one house per six- to eight-acres. Several citizen groups have proposed changing large areas of sprawl-zoned rural land so no more than one house can be built for every 25- to 50-acres. The owners of the affected properties may be eligible for compensation through programs such as Rural Legacy and the Maryland Agri-

Opportunity to Protect Water (continued from p. 1)

Harford County

cultural Land Preservation Fund. In fact, more than 40,000 acres of Baltimore County rural lands have been preserved through these programs.

In March, the Baltimore County Planning Board will hold public hearings on the proposed zoning changes. To learn more about this process visit the following website:

<http://www.co.ba.md.us/agencies/planning/zoning/index.html>

Sierra Club volunteers are going through the numerous proposals to identify those which would be most effective in preserving open space and sensitive waters. We will then ask our members to voice their support for the proposals through either e-mail, letter or by attending a Planning Board hearing. If you would like to participate or simply learn more, contact Group Chair Richard Klein at either 410-654-3021 or GBSierra@ceds.org.

The 1996 Harford County Master Plan and Land Use Element is now being updated. Included in the update is a proposal to make clustering mandatory for rural development projects. With clustering, development is concentrated on a portion of a site. For example, let's say a hundred-acre farm is proposed for conversion to single family homes at a density of one house for every ten acres. Under conventional development the ten houses would be spread over the entire hundred acres. With clustering, the ten homes might be concentrated on just 20 acres and leave the remaining 80 acres in forest and crop fields.

Further detail on the master plan update can be obtained at the following website:

<http://www.co.ha.md.us/planningzoning/LandUsePlan/>

At this website you will also find a tab for commenting on the draft update.

What About Baltimore City?

While Baltimore City may not have any trout streams or wetlands supporting endangered species, its waters are still important. In fact, restoring the city's waterways would benefit more people than anywhere else in our service area.

A large part of the pollution washed from city streets, and degrading the city's waters, originates as vehicle exhaust. Improving buses, metro and other transit services is our most viable option for reducing vehicle exhaust and water pollution. For example, commuting to work by bus generates one-tenth the pollution of driving alone in a car. Taking the metro to work might generate 1/200th the pollution! Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find information on upcoming opportunities to learn more about this issue and to show your support for improving transportation in the region.

Introduction – The Important

By Patrick McMahon, Group Transportation Chair

As most of you know, the patterns of development in our region and throughout the country are largely shaped by our transportation infrastructure. Major roads built into rural areas not only take land from farms, forests, and wetlands, but they also provide an incentive for development along that roadway, serving as a precursor to our sprawling urban areas. As such, the expansion of congested routes often serves to encourage further use of those routes. The “induced traffic” from these new drivers immediately fills up the newly opened lanes resulting in the same congested conditions, but with more pavement and development. The alternative is to fund improvements to our existing infrastructure such as bridge repairs and street resurfacing, or to make new investments in and modifications to our transit, greenway, bike path, and sidewalk systems, allowing us to better utilize the already developed portions of our region. The following four articles touch on changes that are happening in transportation for the Baltimore region, on a local, regional, state, and national level. While it may seem overwhelming, see if you can attend one of the meetings listed or write a letter to your elected representatives about the issue. For more information about any of these issues please contact Patrick McMahon at 410-235-1512 or patrick@mcmahon.com.

Bike Lanes in North Baltimore

The section of Charles Street next to the Johns Hopkins Homewood Campus in Baltimore City has long been notorious for its confusing and unsafe traffic patterns. So, almost two years ago the City began a collaborative process to redesign Charles St. between 25th and University Parkway, working to ensure that the roadway was safer

for the numerous pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders that travel along or across the street while maintaining the capacity for cars to pass through the area.

Most of the decisions have been made and the roadway will generally be the better for the work. However, the final decision on whether or not to add bicycle lanes has not yet been made, despite the area’s proximity to both the Johns Hopkins and Loyola campuses, its role as a central artery feeding neighborhoods and commercial districts on the east and west, and the newly constructed portions of the Jones Falls Greenway.

While some expert riders, who are quite comfortable riding along with traffic in wider lanes, do not consider bike lanes necessary, they are essential for making new riders feel safe when riding on the road. Given the significant, and positive, investment being made in the Jones Falls and Gwynns Falls trails made by the city, state, and federal governments, we need to do everything that we can to ensure that residents of the surrounding communities have opportunities to ride their bikes to these new facilities. If we fail to add bike lanes on Charles and other major streets connecting neighborhoods to our greenways then we have eliminated their opportunity to be used as a true part of the transportation network.

We have asked the Mayor to show his commitment to biking in Baltimore by including bicycle lanes as part of the Charles Street reconstruction project between 25th Street and University Parkway and accommodate bicycles in all street reconstructions or new street projects. To contact the Mayor and Director of the Transportation, Al Foxx, on these issues you can write them at:

Baltimore City Dept. of Transportation
417 E. Fayette Street, Room 500
Baltimore, MD 21202

On a larger level, the Baltimore City Planning Department has developed a proposal

to introduce bicycle lanes striping and signage on a number of other streets in the same general vicinity. Implementation of the improvements proposed would create a 14-mile network of demonstration bike routes that would connect university campuses, parks, commercial districts, transit stops, and sites throughout North Baltimore. The Greater Baltimore Group has written a letter to Maryland Transportation Secretary Flanagan and others expressing our support for this project. We will work to keep you up to date as these two projects progress over the next year.

For further information about how you can work with other Sierrans and bicycle advocates to increase the bike facilities in the Baltimore region contact Patrick McMahon at patrick@mcmahon.com or 410-235-1512.

Preparing for Transportation 2030

The Baltimore Regional Transportation board is in the process of developing Transportation 2030 — the plan that will guide transportation investments in the Baltimore Region over the next 25 years. As you read this, local jurisdictions and the state of Maryland are submitting their wish list of projects to the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) to be analyzed. Over the next several months each project will be evaluated to determine if it fits with the region’s transportation goals (which can be found at <http://www.baltometro.org/pdfs/T2030goals.pdf>) and how it scores on basic safety, cost effectiveness, connectivity, and other technical criteria (<http://www.baltometro.org/pdfs/T2030pripol.pdf> and <http://www.baltometro.org/pdfs/T2030pritech.pdf>).

Late next spring and early next summer, there will be a variety of opportunities for the public to see the results of these evaluations and to comment on whether attendees feel that the ratings accurately reflect the projects. This is a complicated process and some meetings are being held this winter to introduce the region to the planning process and explain how this prioritization process fits within the development of Transportation 2030, the area’s Long Range Plan.

The informative meetings currently planned are:

February 23, 2004 – 7:00 p.m. at the Catonsville Library – Sponsored by the Sierra Club

Al Foxx, the Director of the Baltimore City Department of Transportation and Emery Hines, Senior Transportation Planner, Baltimore County Department of Public Works will attend the presentation and answer questions along with Baltimore Metropolitan Council staff.

March 24, 2004 - 10:00 am at the Charlestown Retirement Community in Catonsville – Sponsored by the League of Women Voters, Baltimore County and Howard County

Emery Hines, Senior Transportation Planner, Baltimore County Department of Public Works and Carl Balsler, Chief, Division of Transportation, Howard County Dept. Planning and Zoning will attend the presentation and answer questions along with Baltimore Metropolitan Council staff.

While these meetings won’t provide an opportunity for you to weigh in on the issues, they will give you the background you need to provide informed and effective input next spring and summer when the important decisions are being made. I hope that you will come to one of these two meetings and learn more about the process. You

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can find more information about the Transportation 2030 process at: <http://www.baltometro.org/content.asp?id=47>. To R.S.V.P. or if you have any questions about regional transportation planning issues feel free to contact Patrick McMahon at patrick@mcmahon.com or 410-235-1512 or Susan Aceti at saceti@baltometro.org or 410-732-0500 x1047.

Statewide Transportation Issues As The Legislative Session Opens

A number of major transportation issues are occurring on the state level, most notably the notorious ICC, a study of how all transportation projects are funded in Maryland, and the formation of a statewide transit coalition. The following is an overview of each of these issues and how you can provide your input to the decision makers at the state level.

First and foremost is the Inter County Connector, an ill-conceived plan for a new highway through Montgomery and Prince George's County that has twice been determined to not meet the relevant environmental regulations. Governor Ehrlich has placed its construction as his top priority and has fast-tracked its review process; some might say to make it easier for this boondoggle to squeak by on the third review. Among the disturbing developments in this latest proposal was that the hearings on alternatives to the ICC were held within three weeks of their announced dates and the fact that, as expected, the ICC promises to suck transportation funds away from other, more worthy projects throughout the state. Al-

though the three alternative meetings have already taken place, you can also provide your support for an alternative to improve existing roads and increase transit alternatives on-line at <http://www.iccstudy.org>. For more information about the ICC and the impacts that it would have, you can go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/dc/sprawl/ICC.htm>

Looking at the long term for transportation issues was the Hellman Commission, a group convened by Gov. Ehrlich to look at how transportation projects in Maryland are funded. The group had little representation from advocates for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects but more egregious was the distorted basis from which they started their evaluation. MDOT Sec. Flanagan presented the Commission with "unfunded expansion needs" for roads and transit for FY 2005-2010. For roads, MDOT defined "needs" as building everything in their Design & Evaluation program as quickly as possible. This became moving 91 highway expansion projects into construction at a cost of \$6.2 billion. For transit, on the other hand, they proposed moving no major expansion projects into construction (just a few park-n-ride lots; some new WMATA Metro cars; Rail Plan & Purple Line got planning funds): Cost \$529 million. That's about a 12:1 disparity in projected needs between roads & transit and a 91:0 disparity in moving projects into construction.

The Commission ended up making no specific recommendations other than raising traffic tickets by \$20 each to replenish the funds removed from the Transportation Trust Fund by Ehrlich to balance the past two years' budgets. Instead, the Commission put forth a variety of options for possible gas taxes and where those could be directed. How the Governor and Legislature decide to move forward with these options will have a tremendous impact on the ability to fund

good transportation projects over the next several decades and a plan that limits funds for transit could ensure that the Baltimore Region Transit Plan does not get built. While a discussion of budgeting isn't the most interesting topic, it's one whose outcome will shape the future of Maryland. For more information about the Hellman Commission and to see the distorted basis from which they were working go to: http://www.md.state.md.us/News/Transportation_Task_Force/index.html

Working to influence the outcome of the Hellman Commission and the upcoming session in Annapolis is the newly formed Maryland Transit Coalition. The group's main goals are to ensure that at least half of any new transportation revenues go to fund transit projects. This would help ensure that the Baltimore Region Transit Plan, the Purple Line, and other transit projects get sufficient and timely funding. The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club has not joined the Transit Coalition but will be working with the MTC over the coming months to ensure that any new funding will include transit. For more information about the coalition you can contact Dan Pontious of the Citizens Planning & Housing Association at danp@cphabaltimore.org or 410-539-1369 x226.

TEA-21 Reauthorization Postponed Until Spring

The House and Senate were not able to agree on a new transportation bill after months of discussion, so each legislative body passed a short-term extension to TEA-21 last fall. The Bush Administration's proposal, SAFETEA, contains a number of disappointing aspects, including the

"streamlining" of review for projects such as the ICC, no proposals to increase the gas tax or CAFE standards, cuts in the amount guaranteed for transit, and a reduction in the federal share of transit projects from 80% to 50%. Our congressional delegation has been very vocal in the need to increase the funding for transit projects and to maintain a strong public role in the decision-making process, with Sen. Sarbanes and Cong. Cardin both publicly stating in September their strong support for the Baltimore Region Transit Plan.

Environmentalists won a major battle this fall when the House overwhelmingly voted to maintain funding for "enhancements," projects that include bicycle and pedestrian improvements along with other methods to reduce air pollution and reduce travel needs. While this was a big step, it will take even more work to convince our elected officials to stand strong and ensure adequate funding for non-roadway projects and a thorough environmental and public review of all projects.

There will be contentious debates on these issues during February and March, but it is unclear whether any of the current proposals will move forward before the presidential election in November. Right now there are proposals evolving in the House and Senate that would provide greater transit funding than the Administration proposal. For updates as this issue evolves go to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/wwatch/sprawl>

Searching for A Few Good Sierrans

If you'd like to make the Greater Baltimore Sierra Club even better, then please consider running for our Executive Committee (ExCom). Our nine-member ExCom meets quarterly and is responsible for running the group. To nominate yourself or someone else, send a one- to two-paragraph biography to Richard Klein, 8100 Greenspring Valley Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117 or GBSierra@ceds.org. The bio should describe why you want to run for election to the ExCom, what you'd like to accomplish, and any relevant experience, education, skills, training, etc. Your bio and that of other candidates will run in the next issue of the Baltimore Sierran along with a ballot.



Environmental Quality Commission Nominees Sought

Earlier this year the Baltimore County Council created an Advisory Commission on Environmental Quality. Former Greater Baltimore Group Conservation Chair and fifth district Councilman Vincent Gardina initiated the Commission. The Greater Baltimore Sierra Club is seeking someone to represent us on the Commission. If you are a Sierra Club member, a resident of Baltimore County, and interested in serving on the Commission, then send a message to Richard Klein, 8100 Greenspring Valley Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117 or GBSierra@ceds.org. The message should describe why you want to serve on the Commission, what you'd like to accomplish, and any relevant experience, education, skills, training, etc.



State of the Bay Report

by Jennifer Willigan

The 2003 Chesapeake Bay Foundation's (CBF) annual State of the Bay Report shows ominous findings that the Bay's health is at significant risk of continued decline. The title of this year's report, "The Bay's Health Remains Dangerously Out of Balance and is Getting Worse," summarizes what scientists fear: without stricter enforcement of laws to reduce nutrient pollution, the health of the Bay may continue to get worse.

According to the report, the score dropped 1 point to a 27. The score is based out of a possible 100 points, which would be the "pristine" Bay that Capt. John Smith discovered in the 1600's.

The CBF's efforts have proved helpful in restoration of and improvements in the Bay's health, which includes three categories: pollution, habitat, and fisheries. However, the CBF report stresses that their mission and goal of a healthy Bay with "clear water, underwater grasses, oyster reefs... and abundant fish life" will only be achieved by the help and support of activists and political leaders. The CBF's goal is to achieve a score of 40 by the year 2010 and 70 by 2050 through commitment to protect the Bay.

For more information and to read the full report, go to www.cbf.org. Help Save the Bay!



Political Junkies Needed

by Cliff Terry, Group Political Chair

Do you like politics? Or would you like to learn more about the nuts and bolts of it? Then become a player on the Sierra Club's political team.

The Sierra Club needs you now to help elect people (President, members of Congress, and members of the Baltimore City and Havre de Grace governments) friendly to the environment. Will we have a President and Congress who will allow drilling the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge, allow dirty power plants to expand without cleaning up, and increase logging of old-growth national forests? Will we have a president and Congress who will strengthen and enforce the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts and require better gas mileage for cars and trucks? Will Baltimore and Havre de Grace be governed by officials who promote mass transit, recycling, and purchase of recycled products?

If questions like these are important to you, join the Greater Baltimore Group's Political Committee, which is accepting new members. Its job is to help choose candidates for the Club to endorse and then help their campaigns.

Helping campaigns can mean planning, organizing, and recruiting volunteers for rallies and news conferences, writing press releases and letters to the editor, canvassing voters, distributing literature, phoning voters, putting up yard signs, stuffing envelopes, and greeting voters at the polls.

Besides working to help campaigns, we'll need to interview the municipal candidates and review their records, if any, to decide which ones deserve our endorsement and our help.

I'll be glad to talk with anyone who is even just maybe, possibly interested. Contact me at 410-944-9477 or ckerry@bcpl.net



Improving Transportation in the Baltimore Region

How Sierrans Can Get Involved

Monday, February 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

Baltimore County Public Library Woodlawn Branch, 1811 Woodlawn Drive

The purpose of this meeting is to provide an introduction to Sierra Club members and the general public on what the Baltimore Region Long Range Plan is, why it is needed, what the timeline is and how they can be involved. Information will also be provided on how potential transportation projects are evaluated and selected for the Long Range Plan.

Susan Aceti, Public Participation Coordinator at the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, will be presenting at the meeting. Al Foxx, the Director of the Baltimore City Department of Transportation and Emery Hines, Senior Transportation Planner, Baltimore County Department of Public Works will attend the presentation and answer questions along with Ms. Aceti. For further detail on the plan and the meeting go to:

<http://www.baltometro.org/T2030/T2030public.html>

Directions: Take the Baltimore Beltway (I-695) around to the west side. Take Exit 16 - Security Boulevard. Go east towards the city on Security Boulevard for 0.5 miles and turn left (north) onto Woodlawn Drive. Take Woodlawn Drive north for one mile and turn left onto Windsor Mill Road. After 0.3 miles the library is on the right, at the far corner of Woodlawn Senior High School grounds.



Outings (continued from p. 8)

Sun. Apr. 18 GB – Moderate. Kelly Run and Pinnacle Hike

7 to 8 miles with a good view of the river. Good chance of seeing bald eagles. Will talk about the eagles decline and recovery into this area. Meet at K-Mart on Belair Road at 10:00 a.m. Jack, 410-256-3963

May 2004

Sat. May 1 GB – Easy. Gunpowder Park Mingo Forks

6 mile hike through Hereford area of Gunpowder Park, including the Mingo Forks, Bunker Hill and Gunpowder River Trails. Meet at Mount Carmel Road Park & Ride off of I-83 at 8:30 AM. Ron 410-767-0106

Sat. May 22 GB – Easy. Gunpowder Park Sweet Air

6 mile hike through scenic section of Gunpowder Park, including a walk through a bucolic corn field, by a Waldenesque pond, along the Little Gunpowder River and through a pine forest. Meet in Safeway parking lot on south-east corner of Route 145 (Paper Mill/Sweet Air Road) and Route 146 (Jarrettsville Pike) at 8:30 AM. Ron 410-767-0106

Wed. May 26 GB – Moderate. Gunpowder River Hike.

2 – 3 miles along the Gunpowder River. Meet at Gunpowder Parking Lot on Belair Road at 7:00 PM. Jack: 410-256-3963.

Open Meetings

The following meetings are open to all.

Citizens Campaign for the Environment Maryland Legislative Issues Forum

Monday, February 9, 2004

7:00-8:30 PM

Bel Air Public Library, 100 E. Pennsylvania Avenue

For details, call Rich Norling at 410-734-7720

Improving Transit in Baltimore - Mobilizing Support

Monday, February 23, 2004

7:00-8:45 PM

Baltimore County Public Library – Woodlawn Branch, 1811 Woodlawn Drive, Woodlawn 21207

For details, call Patrick McMahon at 410-235-1512

Directions: Take Baltimore Beltway (I-695) to Security Boulevard east (Exit 16), toward the city. Proceed for 0.5 miles and turn left (north) onto Woodlawn Drive. Go for 1.0 miles and turn left onto Windsor Mill Road. After 0.3 miles the library is on the right, at the far corner of Woodlawn Senior High School grounds.

Greater Baltimore Group Executive Committee (ExCom) Meeting

Thursday, February 26, 2004

7:30-8:30 PM

Bob Burchard's home, 913 Rambling Drive, Catonsville 21228, 410-744-0510

Directions: Take Baltimore Beltway (I-695) to Wilkens Avenue (Exit 12c). Take Wilkens Avenue (MD 372) south for 0.95 miles and turn left onto Bob's street - Rambling Drive. Due to limited space we ask that you call in advance to let us know you're coming.

Greater Baltimore Group Executive Committee (ExCom) Meeting

Thursday, May 27, 2004

7:30-8:30 PM

Richard Klein's home, 8100 Greenspring Valley Road, Owings Mills 21117, 410-654-3021

Directions: Take Baltimore Beltway (I-695) to Reisterstown Road (Exit 20) north and go 1.8 miles. Turn left (west) onto Greenspring Valley Road. Continue west for 0.3 miles. Richard's place is at the corner of Wellspring Court and Greenspring Valley Road. His front door actually opens onto Wellspring Court. Look for the porch with white posts. Due to limited space we ask that you call in advance to let us know you're coming.

Sat.-Mon. May 29-31 GB – Moderate. Memorial Day Weekend Backpack- Dolly Sodds. West Virginia

We start off with a short backpack to our basecamp on Saturday followed by a long dayhike on Sunday where we will take time to explore this unique wilderness. Must have proper gear. Call Ted for details at 410 239-4590

June 2004

DATE NOT YET SET – Sunset Hike and Music 7:00 PM. Richard/Jack.

Sun. June 6 GB – Moderate. Fair Hills/Big Elk Creek Hike

7 miles through forests and fields, and along Big Elk Creek in the Fair Hills NRMA, near Elkton Md. This hike will visit a covered bridge and several ruins that may date to colonial times. As we ramble, we will talk about the history and ecology of the area. Depart the White Marsh Park & Ride on Honeygo Blvd. at 10:00 AM. John 410-752-0104

Sat. June 19 GB – Moderate. Susquehanna State Park

8 mile hike beginning at historic Rock Run Grist Mill, along hilly trail overlooking the Susquehanna River and through deciduous for-

est. Meet at the parking lot at K-Mart on Route 1 north of Belair Road exit from 695 at 8:30 AM. Ron 410-767-0106

Sun. June 27 GB – Gunpowder Tube Trip.

Wear old shoes or water shoes and have a way to keep keys from falling out of your pocket. Bring a tube or rent one at Monkton Bike Shop. Meet at Monkton Station at 1:00 PM. Jack: 410-256-3963

July 2004

Sun. July 3 GB – Gunpowder Tube Trip.

Wear old shoes or water shoes and have a way to keep keys from falling out of your pocket. Bring a tube or rent one at Monkton Bike Shop. Meet at Monkton Station at 1:00 PM. Jack: 410-256-3963

Sat. July 17 GB – Moderate. Caledonia/ Michaux Forest, PA

7.5 mile hike through a forest of towering hemlocks, a forest of deciduous trees and along free-flowing mountain streams bordered by rhododendron. Circuit hike will include parts of Locust Gap and Hosack Run Trails and Quarry Gap portion of Appalachian Trail with 800 foot change in elevation. Bring lunch and water. Meet at Park & Ride just north of I-70 on Route 32 at 8:30 AM. Ron 410-767-0106

Participating in Sierra Club Hikes & Other Outings

1. All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver before you chose to participate on an outing, please go to:

<http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>, or contact the Outings Department at (415) 977-5528 for a printed version.

2. In the interests of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.

3. You don't need to register in advance for most outings. If this is required then it will be stated in the outing announcement.

4. Beginners are welcome on most outings. If the outing requires experience or good conditioning, then this will be stated in the announcement.

5. Bring at least one quart of water with you for every five miles or two hours of hiking.

6. Bring a snack or lunch.

7. **Always** bring rain gear. In cold weather, dress in layers with synthetics or wool against your skin. Avoid cotton.

8. During the fall and winter, when hunters share the woods, wear an orange or red hat, bandana, etc. Avoid clothing colored tan, buff or brown. If you carry a handkerchief then bring a red one, not white which looks like deer tails when you pull them out.

9. Carry a first aid kit (including moleskin or firstskin), a map of the area where you'll be hiking and a compass.

10. Wear good hiking boots that support your ankles and you've broken in before the hike.

11. If you suffer from allergies, asthma, diabetes or other medical conditions then be certain to bring any necessary medication and inform the outing leader so they can help if an emergency arises.

12. Always practice low-impact hiking by walking on the most durable trail surface present. For example, if you have the choice of walking on vegetation or bare earth, walk on earth. Its better to walk on stony surfaces than bare earth. But safety is always paramount. Don't walk on larger stones or rocks that may roll under your boot.



February 2004

Anytime there is enough snow – Cross Country Sking

Local sking or possible trip to Western Maryland. Call Jack at 410-256-3963

Sat.Feb. 7 GB – Moderate. Loch Raven Hike

A 4 to 6 mile hike. Moderately hilly country adjoining Loch Raven. Will see and learn about artesian springs. Meet at noon at Willow Grove Farm off of Cromwell Bridge Road 1.5 miles NE of Loch Raven Boulevard. Call Ron at 443-854-6665 before the hike.

Sun.Feb. 8 GB – Moderate. The Great Baltimore Fire Walk

Join the Sierra Club for a moderate tour of the area of the Great Fire of 1904. We will walk around and through the burned district ending our walk near Little Italy. No lunch stop is planned but there are plenty of places to eat in the vicinity. The trip will last about 2 hours so please bring some water and wear comfortable walking shoes. We will discuss the cause of the fire, the physical and environmental factors which left such devastation in the commercial district of the old city, and the benefits of its aftermath (yes! benefits). We will also talk about the history and architecture of the area and maybe toss in some juicy gossip to keep things lively. The meeting place is yet to be determined. Meeting time is 10 AM. Snow/rain date Sat. Feb. 14th. Call Joyce@ (410)254-7240 for further information.

Sun. Feb. 15 GB – Moderate. Cedarville Forest Hike

Easy paced, 8 mile circuit through this Southern Maryland forest with 1 or 2 short steep hills.

Be prepared for ice/snow. As we walk, we will talk about wildlife conservation, hunting, greenways, and related subjects, as they apply to Maryland's forests. There is a nominal forest entrance fee. Depart Southwest Park & Ride, off Rolling Road, near UMBC, at 9:30 a.m. John, 410-752-0104.

Sat. Feb. 28. GB – Easy. Jerusalem Mill.

Approximately 4 miles along Little Gunpowder Falls. Easy-paced; good hike for beginners, but may be muddy. Bring water and lunch. Meet at Jerusalem Mill parking lot on Jerusalem Road at 10:00 a.m. For details, call Betsy at 410-569-5202.

March 2004

Sat. Mar. 6 GB – Moderate. Northern Central Railroad Trail Bike Trip

Approximately 30 miles round trip from Paper Mill Road to New Freedom PA. Bring lunch and water. Meet at parking lot on Paper Mill Road, 1 mile east of York Road, at 9:00 a.m. Call Ron at 443-854-6665

Sat. Mar. 13 GB - Moderate. Prettyboy Forest Stewardship Hike.

A leisurely hike with State Watershed Forester Rob Northrup and Sierra Club forest biologists to discuss options for managing nearly 18,000 acres of forests adjoining Liberty, Loch Raven and Prettyboy reservoirs. We'll meet 11:00 AM at the parking area on the north side of Prettyboy Reservoir at the Beckleysville Road bridge. From the Baltimore beltway take Exit 23 - Falls Road (MD 25). Go north on Falls Road for 18 miles and turn right onto Beckleysville Road. Go east on Beckleysville Road for 2.9 miles. After passing over Prettyboy reservoir you'll see the primitive parking area where we'll meet on your left. For further details contact Richard at 410-654-3021 or GBSierra@ceds.org.

Sun. Mar. 28 GB – Moderate. Gunpowder River Hike

Moderate 7 to 8 miles below Prettyboy Dam. Expect some hills and a rocky area. Meet at Mt. Carmel P&R at noon. Call Jack at 410-256-3963.

April 2004

Susquehanna River Clean Up.

Date not known at this time. Jack 410-256-3963

Wed. Apr. 7 GB – Outings Committee Meeting

Come plan new outings and meet other outings leaders. New and prospective outings leaders welcome. 6:30 PM. Bette: 410-666-2696.

Sat.Apr. 10. GB – Moderate. Harford Glen.

Approximately 8 miles around Atkinson Reservoir. Slow-paced enough to look at wildflowers and spring migrants. Bring binoculars if you like, also water and lunch. Expect mud. Meet at Harford Glen (first lot on right, by pond) at the west end of Wheel Road at 10:00 a.m. For details, call Betsy at 410-569-5202.

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