



# Riverlovers Currents

Volume 24, Number 4, April 2011

## Message From The President

Ah the early spring. Snow melting and heavy rains brings a swollen Croton river, and a spectacular falls at the Croton Dam, Wow! Also, water in the basements (four houses in my neighborhood including mine).

The House and the Senate are voting or have voted to eliminate funding for the regulators in the E.P.A. and the financial watchdogs too. We need oversight now more than ever. The price of not having it is far higher than the few pennies claimed to be saved.

On the home front, there has still been no answer from our Westchester County Executive to our request (with signed petitions) on restoring funds for our ShadFest. Let's not forget this.

The showing of the "11<sup>th</sup> Hour" was well received. One point in the film was that the resources of the earth, such as the minerals, fuel, land, air, and water are just property with no rights. We need a change of attitude to be better stewards of the earth, and not be so consumption-oriented, and be less concerned with constant corporate growth.

For the April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting and Potluck we'll screen Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11." "The movie presents a searing examination of the role played by money and oil in the wake of the tragic events of 9/11" (from the dvd jacket).

Let's celebrate Earth Day, Sat. April 23 at the Croton Point Nature Center. We will have an outreach table there. Hopefully we can attract new members for the Riverlovers, but we need your help. Call Warren at 914-319-3379 or my home number to volunteer.

For the May 20<sup>th</sup> meeting we will plan summer activities such as hiking our nearby section of the Appalachian Trail up to Anthony's Nose overlooking the Bear Mountain Bridge and the Hudson River. Another walk we should do is a return to the Hudson Highlands Gateway Park. For water activities, we can do canoeing at Constitution Marsh, kayaking at Annsville Creek, and sailing on the "Solar Wind".

The June 17<sup>th</sup> meeting will be right before the Clearwater Revival Festival on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Riverlovers will have an outreach table at the Sloop Club tent at Revival, so plan to be one of the volunteers to staff it.

We have three dates to pick out for our favorite activity, a sail on the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater. They are July 26 or 27, or August 9, all in the evening. Do you have a preference? Make it known!

## Global Warming And You

Because emissions of heat-trapping gases in the United States are so high and continue to accumulate in the atmosphere, Americans have a special responsibility and opportunity to reduce global warming. Here are some ways to help.

Take personal action. Reduce your personal contribution to global warming and set an example for others by using less gasoline, natural gas, oil, and electricity (especially electricity generated from coal-fired power plants). Here are three suggestions for ways to do that:

Reduce the amount of gasoline you burn by choosing a fuel-efficient car or other transportation that uses less (or no) fossil fuel per person, such as trains, subways, and buses; car pools; walking; and biking.

Buy efficient appliances that use less electricity. Look for the Energy Star, awarded by the Environmental Protection Agency for meeting their efficiency standards.

Reduce everyday electrical use. Develop a plan to reduce daily electricity use around your home. Ask each member of your household to take responsibility for a different energy-saving action, such as turning off lights when leaving the room, unplugging appliances when they are not in use, using compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), updating your lighting system with LEDs as they become available, and only running dishwashers or washing machines with full loads.

You can also encourage community action. Work within your community to promote energy efficiency and use of clean energy. Lobby to make it easier for local people to use energy-efficient transportation. This might include community carpooling plans, construction of bike lanes, urging local businesses, governmental bodies and non-profit organizations to install bike racks (like we have at our local libraries and train stations), etc.

Encourage the use of clean, renewable energy in publicly funded projects. You can suggest that new construction or major remodeling projects incorporate passive-solar technology and other sustainable measures. There's no blockbuster magic bullet, but every little thing adds up to a lot, and if a lot of people pitch in together, we're achieve the sustainable future of our dreams.

**Pay your dues now—support our river!  
\$25 Individual & \$35 Family**

## Walkabout Coffeehouse Doings

You have two more chances this spring to support Clearwater and enjoy good music at the same time. The Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse's 23rd season is winding down with two more concerts to come. We've had a wonderful season—jazz, blues, folk and contemporary folk, and last Saturday, Seamus Kennedy, a marvelous Irish musician. Seamus bounded onto the stage dressed in kilts, took up his tri-colored (orange, white, and green) guitar and delighted us with his lively, clever and lovely music, and riotous repartee. You should have been there!

Saturday, April 9, the performers will be Priscilla Herdman who is well-known for her superb vocals. She has performed for years as a trio with Cindy Mangsen and Anne Hills. For our night, she will be joined by the husband and wife team of Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen. It will be an evening of beautiful music performed by consummate musicians.

That's at 7:30pm on Saturday, April 9, 2011 at Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Avenue in White Plains, NY.

The final Coffeehouse evening of the season, Saturday May 14 features John McCutcheon. Tickets are selling fast so if you want to hear John, buy your tickets now, and don't be disappointed!

Get your tickets early through [www.BrownPaperTickets.com/producer/5602](http://www.BrownPaperTickets.com/producer/5602). After you order your tickets, post the enclosed flier. And make a note to hear Priscilla Herdman, Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangsen on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Enjoy a night out and support Walkabout Clearwater, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, live folk music—and our River.

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## Electric Vehicles: Myths vs. Reality – I

*(Adapted from the Sierra Club's Insider)*

**Myth 1:** *Switching to an electric vehicle will just mean that the same amount of pollution comes from the electricity generation rather than from the tailpipe — I'll just be switching from oil to coal.*

**Reality:** According to a range of studies, an electric car leads to 35 to 60% less carbon dioxide pollution from electricity than the CO<sub>2</sub> pollution from the oil of a conventional car with an internal combustion engine. In some areas, like many on the West Coast that rely largely on wind or hydro power, the emissions are significantly lower for electric vehicles (EVs). And that's today. As we retire more coal plants and bring cleaner sources of power online, the emissions from electric vehicle charging drop even further. Additionally, in some areas, night-time charging will increase the opportunity to take advantage of wind power—another way to reduce emissions.

A caveat to consider, according to some studies, is that when coal plants supply the majority of the power mix in a given area, electric vehicles may emit more CO<sub>2</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub> pollution than hybrid electric vehicles. Learn where your electricity comes from, what plans your state or community has for shifting to renewables, and whether you have options for switching to greener power.

**Myth 2:** *Plug-in cars will lead to the production of more coal and nuclear plants.*

**Reality:** Even if the majority of drivers switched to electric, the existing electrical grid's off-peak/nighttime capacity for power generation is sufficient without building a single new power plant. Studies have shown that electric vehicle owners will largely charge their vehicles at night when there is plenty of capacity on the grid. In some areas, new "smart charging" allows you and the utility to set up a system by which you and other electricity users distribute the load evenly during charging so that the system is not overwhelmed by increased demand.

**Myth 3:** *Electric car batteries pose a recycling problem.*

**Reality:** Internal combustion engine vehicles use lead-acid batteries, and their recycle rate is about 98% in the US. The newer batteries for electric vehicles, such as those made of lithium-ion, include even more valuable and recyclable metals and will have a life well beyond the vehicle. In fact, a Belgian company plans to use Tesla Motor's electric vehicle battery pack material to produce an alloy it can further refine into cobalt, nickel, and other valuable metals as well as special grades of concrete. Technology will soon allow for EV batteries to store energy produced by solar or wind power.

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## Is Radioactivity In Your Drinking Water OK With You?

**No? Urge Gov. Cuomo to extend Executive Order No. 41!**

The ground-breaking *New York Times* series by Ian Urbina documents an extensive and disturbing amount of information that was gathered from EPA, state regulators and gas drilling companies, not previously made available, either to the public or to key government regulators and decision-makers. The EPA memo reveals that Pittsburgh residents suffered "one of the largest failures in US history to supply clean drinking water" due in part to fracking wastes.

According to the *Times*, the drilling industry has hidden conclusions reached by its own studies, publicly taking the position that radioactive elements in drilling waste are not a concern, including a confidential industry study agreeing with EPA's conclusion that radioactivity in drilling waste cannot be fully diluted by discharging into rivers and other waterways. A 1990 study found that radium in drilling wastewater dumped in Louisiana posed "potentially significant risks" of cancer for people who regularly eat local fish.

Nevertheless, the second *Times* article in the series reported that millions of gallons of drilling wastewater are treated at plants that continue to discharge their treated waste into rivers. Despite the potential health and environmental hazards associated with radioactive wastewater, federal regulators recently confirmed to the gas industry that drilling waste remains exempt from federal hazardous waste law.

The third *Times* article reveals that a deeply divided EPA has failed to increase needed regulation of oil and gas drillers and to enforce existing federal pollution laws that some agency lawyers insist are clearly being violated. As an EPA lawyer explained in an internal memo obtained by the *Times*, "Treatment plants are not allowed under federal law to process mystery liquids . . . . Mystery liquids is exactly what this drilling waste is."

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# What's Happening When

Sundays at the Beacon Sloop Club, **Farmers' Market** 10am-4pm. Local cheeses, eggs, pasta, bread, lamb, mushroom spring rolls, fruits and vegetables.

April 9, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse featuring husband and wife team Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen, and vocalist Priscilla Herdman.** At Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Advance tickets (\$17.50) available at [www.BrownPaperTickets.com](http://www.BrownPaperTickets.com), or at door (\$20). Proceeds benefit Walkabout & Clearwater. Refreshments available. Free parking. Informal songfest starts at 6:45pm. Info: [www.WalkaboutClearwater.org](http://www.WalkaboutClearwater.org) or call 914-242-0374.

April 15, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Potluck** at Croton Point Nature Center. Great documentary movie lined up: "Fahrenheit 9/11" produced and narrated by Michael Moore. Discussion afterwards. Info: [www.Riverlovers.org](http://www.Riverlovers.org).

April 23, Sat, 10am, **Earth Day celebration at Croton Point Nature Center.** We will have an outreach table there to showcase Riverlovers. Volunteers are needed for this. Sign up to help.

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The proposed Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) regulations and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) current draft environmental impact statement both are fundamentally flawed. Also, there are not enough regulators to assure that even a sound permitting regime could be administered effectively, especially given the drilling industry's consistent disregard for human health and the environment. Without major shifts in approach by regulators and industry, far more resources and a much longer timeframe than DEC and DRBC officials currently are working under, we can't see how this can be fixed.

We ask you to act now to maximize the momentum the *NY Times* stories have generated. Urge Governor Cuomo to extend Executive Order No. 41 for at least a year beyond July 1, 2011 to afford DEC the time needed to update the 1992 GEIS, with a cumulative impact analysis, and to take steps to ensure that DEC has the staff and budget necessary to complete the SEQRA process and to do a formal rule-making after that process is complete.

## PCB Dredging Update

GE has now agreed to move forward with Phase 2 of the dredging clean-up this spring. Phase 2 requires GE to remove 95% or more of the PCBs from designated areas. While not perfect, this agreement is a momentous victory for Clearwater and other organizations that have spent years advocating for remediation. Phase 2 is estimated to take up to seven years to be completed.

Judith Enck, the Regional Administrator of EPA, issued a statement regarding this announcement: "EPA commends GE on its decision to conduct the second and final phase of the Hudson River clean-up. The decision sets us on a clear

path to a clean-up of PCB-contaminated sediment that is based on the best science and will remove huge quantities of this dangerous chemical from the river.

"Over the next few months, we will work with GE on technical plans for the clean-up. We are scheduled to resume dredging this spring. This is an important milestone ... in cleaning up and restoring the Hudson River for future generations." At long last!

### Here's how to join Riverlovers...

(the local Clearwater Sloop Club in the Northern Westchester-Putnam County area)

### Application for Riverlovers Membership

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal \_\_\_ New \_\_\_ Additional Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send check (\$25 individual, \$35 family) for 2011 to: Riverlovers, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

I want to have *Riverlovers Currents* delivered electronically.

Send to this e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Yes! I Also Want To Join Clearwater

Please sign me up in the following membership category:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Individual \$40   | <input type="radio"/> Mariner \$500         |
| <input type="radio"/> Family \$55       | <input type="radio"/> Sailing-Master \$1000 |
| <input type="radio"/> Contributor \$100 | <input type="radio"/> Benefactor \$5000     |
| <input type="radio"/> Sponsor \$200     | <input type="radio"/> Student \$10          |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please include check payable to Clearwater, or charge by credit card

- |                            |                          |                                |                            |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Visa | <input type="radio"/> MC | <input type="radio"/> Discover | <input type="radio"/> Amex |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: Clearwater, Inc.  
112 Little Market Street  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Your Clearwater membership gets you the *Navigator* and other benefits, along with being part of Riverlovers' "parent" organization representing individuals and Sloop Clubs up and down the Hudson Valley "working for the River."

## Riverlovers - Who We Are

Riverlovers, Inc. is a chartered Sloop Club of the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc., an environmental non-profit membership organization whose most visible symbol is its member-owned and operated 106-ft. sloop "Clearwater." As a local affiliate, Riverlovers' purposes are:

- Maintaining an active Sloop Club in the Northern Westchester-Putnam County area;
- Meeting the needs and interests of individuals through a variety of interest groups, including monthly Potluck dinner meetings with varied programs, environmental education and awareness, boats and sailing, concerts and festivals;
- Organizing trips and recreational activities, seminars and workshops, learn-to-sail programs and Clearwater visits;
- Research, education and action to protect our rivers and our environment;
- Working for access and effective land use along the Hudson River and its tributaries;
- Boating projects on the Hudson River, to reach out to the surrounding community for educational and recreational purposes.

We invite you to join us. Contact our interest group coordinators, or write to Riverlovers, Inc., P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Together we can do a lot!

### Riverlovers Officers

President:	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
Vice Pres. (programs):	Robin Fox	271-6088
Secretary:	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396
President-Emeriti	Eric Marshall	827-3696
	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112



## Interest Group Coordinators

Interest Group	Coordinator	Phone
Envir. Education	Bill Flank	238-8240
Membership	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112
Newsletter	Bill Flank	238-8240
Newsletter Distribution	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Outreach		
Photographer/Archivist	Beverly Dyckman	739-5057
Potluck	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
Publicity		
ShadFest	Robin Fox	271-6088

Web Page: [www.riverlovers.org](http://www.riverlovers.org)

### Newsletter Submissions

Please send news articles and other items of interest to Riverlovers Currents, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Include your name, address, and phone number. Names can be omitted on request.

Newsletter Committee: Editor, Bill Flank; Associate Editor, Mel Fitting

April Newsletter Contributors: Robin Fox, Warren Lindholm

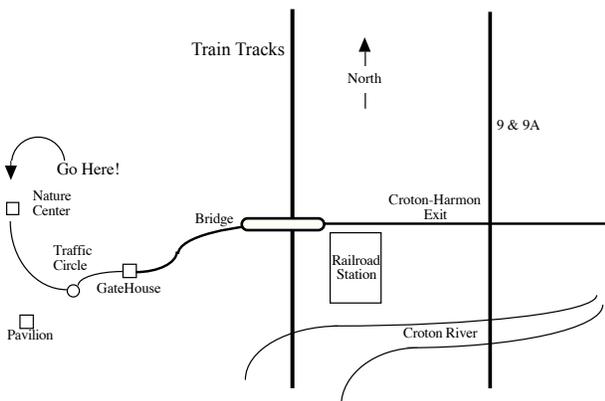
## Riverlovers Monthly Potluck and a "Fahrenheit 9/11" showing



**Riverlovers, Inc.**

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520



**Friday, April 15, 2011**

**6:30pm**

**Croton Point Nature Center**