



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 24, Number 1, January 2011

Message From The President

The Eagle Fest is coming Saturday, February 5, 2011. Again we will be serving soups and bread, for the volunteers and the vendors. At the November meeting I brought up the idea of having an “outreach” table down at the circular tents. The idea was well received, as we have enough volunteers at the Croton Point Nature Center, and the exposure for our group will be important. We’ll need to have someone negotiate this for us with the people at Teatown, and we’ll have to arrange “sales” coverage.

We’ll decide, at our January Potluck, on our annual contribution to Clearwater, and organize our participation at Eagle Fest. We’ll want to discuss what activities members want in the Spring. We did some hiking in the Fall, and maybe we’ll want to do a canoeing or rafting trip again. We’re also hoping to show a film on the electric car. Bring your ideas!

To all, Happy Holidays.

Jobs vs. Environment Shibboleth

Is there any truth to claims that we can't afford comprehensive climate and energy legislation and it would cost thousands of American jobs, as claimed by some legislators in Washington?

Union of Concerned Scientists' Climate Economist Rachel Cleetus says, “No, it's not true. Taking action to fight climate change is good for our country and will bring numerous economic, public health, and security benefits.” In fact, the most costly and risky thing we can do is nothing, because that will ensure that global warming emissions continue to rise. This path will likely lead to costly impacts like more extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and threats to energy and water resources.

Let's start with why climate and energy legislation would be good for the economy. A comprehensive program to reduce global warming emissions would stimulate the economy by spurring investment and innovation in clean technologies, creating new business opportunities, and creating new jobs. Other countries like China, Germany, and India are ramping up their clean energy investments, and we must act now if we want to retain leadership in this burgeoning global market. To this list of benefits we should also include all the avoided costs of unchecked climate change.

Unfortunately, the coal and oil industries, who are only interested in their own short-term profits, are standing in the

way of this progress. They have been engaged in disseminating a steady stream of false and misleading information on climate science and economics. In fact, independent analyses of the recent climate bills by the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Energy Information Administration, and Congressional Budget Office all show that the bills would have had a negligible effect on the economy and would have helped transition us to a cleaner, more efficient energy system. Yet the fossil fuel industries spent \$175 million in 2009 to lobby against clean energy and climate policies and have succeeded in halting such legislation.

A recent analysis by the Union of Concerned Scientists found that a comprehensive suite of climate and energy policies can help make deep cuts in our emissions—and this can be done in a cost-effective manner. Although these policies do require upfront investment, the economic results are impressive, with consumers and businesses reaping a net annual savings of \$255 billion by 2030.

Consumers alone would save more than \$126 billion in 2030, about \$900 per U.S. household: \$320 from lower costs for electricity, natural gas and heating oil, and \$580 from lower transportation costs.

But you can't just look at the economics of climate legislation alone, without considering the costs associated with not taking action to curb our global warming emissions.

Unchecked climate change means more sea level rise, heat waves, droughts, flood risk, public health threats, and more—all with a hefty price tag. A Tufts University report, “The Cost of Climate Change: What We'll Pay if Global Warming Continues Unchecked,” found that doing nothing could cost the United States alone \$3.8 trillion annually by 2100. The longer we wait, the harder and more costly to limit climate change and adapt to unavoidable impacts.

That's why the time to act is now. Investing in clean energy is exactly what we need in a down economy to spur growth and create new jobs, as well as avoid costly climate impacts in the future. We need to urge our legislators to recognize the importance of, and vote for, smart climate and energy policies.

Pay your dues now—support our river! \$15 Individual & \$20 Family

It cost \$7.60 a year to send you the *Riverlovers Currents*. Please consider adding at least that much to your annual dues. Support your Newsletter and the river!

Fox Climate News, Or Not News?

The venerable Washington Post did some investigative reporting, and this month broke the news on a confidential memo leaked from Fox News's managing editor, Bill Sammon, instructing Fox journalists never to report on global warming without IMMEDIATELY questioning the prevailing scientific consensus. It's exactly that kind of false controversy that has shifted public opinion and helped delay real action on global warming.

Sammon directed the network's journalists to use overstatements, half-truths, and verbal tricks to stoke public anger against climate science and also health care reform.

The memo establishing Fox's climate reporting policy was written on December 8, 2009, shortly after Fox White House correspondent Wendell Goler reported that 2000-2009 would be the warmest decade on record, and that the scientific community remained united behind their belief in human-induced climate change.

Just 15 minutes later, Managing Editor Bill Sammon made clear that truth-based reporting had no place at Fox News, telling his reporters to "...refrain from asserting that the planet has warmed (or cooled) in any given period without IMMEDIATELY pointing out that such theories are based upon data that critics have called into question..."

Over 99% of the scientific community has reached consensus on man-made climate change, but Fox only recognizes the very small group of nay-sayers (at last count, about 30 of them—including a few honest sceptics—among thousands of reputable scientists). That's not honest reporting, and Fox should be viewed not so much as a media company, but as the propaganda machine it actually is. The world has enough problems on its own, and we don't need Fox too!

Bjørn Lomborg vs. Climate Change

A new documentary on climate change recently opened up in theaters. Titled "Cool It," it features a Danish political scientist, Bjørn Lomborg, who has stirred up controversy in the past by questioning the urgency of addressing the problem. Lomborg cherry-picks data to present a skewed view of how we should combat global warming.

The good news about "Cool It" is that it doesn't dispute the reality of climate change. Lomborg accepts the overwhelming scientific evidence that burning coal and oil and destroying forests has overloaded the atmosphere with carbon dioxide, trapping heat that would otherwise escape into space, thus warming the planet and disrupting the climate.

Instead, the film argues against "fearing" climate change. While the film features many interviews with schoolchildren to bolster its case, it neglects the urgent need to address climate change that scientists identified. They conclude that if we do nothing to reduce heat-trapping CO₂ emissions, we could lock in 4 to 11 degrees Fahrenheit of global temperature increase by the end of the century.

Broadly, the film focuses on issues Lomborg argues should take priority over addressing climate change, including poverty, malnutrition, disease and clean water. In fact, those interrelated problems are only going to be more difficult to address in an increasingly warming world.

Climate change is only seen through the narrow lens of classical economics. For example, the film relies on tradi-

tional cost-benefit analysis, like weighing the economic benefits of a new bridge against the cost of constructing it and relocating a few hundred local residents whose homes would be displaced by the bridge and new roads. But as many economists have pointed out, climate change presents a unique challenge because actions we take (or fail to take) today will have grave repercussions for generations to come.

Engineering the climate is a dangerous proposition.

The film argues for more research on geoengineering, such as using a stratospheric spray of small particles to reflect sunlight from the Earth, to "buy time" while scientists and engineers develop new clean energy technology.

"Cool It," however, does not explore the very high risks and uncertainties of many geoengineering proposals. Reflecting sunlight, for example, would damage crop production worldwide because plants need sunlight to grow.

Lomborg argues against specific clean energy policies and action in isolation, failing to acknowledge that they all could work together. At various points in the film, he cherry-picks a single action or clean energy policy, emphasizes its cost, and contrasts it with what he claims would be its relatively small impact on global temperatures.

For example, he criticizes the European Union's renewable electricity requirement, hybrid cars and compact fluorescent light bulbs. However, he fails to mention what a comprehensive suite of policies and consumer actions could accomplish. Many analyses conclude that a combination of policies aimed at reducing vehicle emissions, boosting renewable electricity production, and increasing energy efficiency would dramatically lower carbon dioxide emissions.

CFL Replacement Wattages

Replacing incandescent light bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) bulbs is an easy and inexpensive way to maintain energy efficiency and reduce carbon footprint. It saves you money two ways: the bulbs use about a quarter of the electricity required by incandescents, and they last about ten times as long.

Here's a conversion chart so you can get about the same lighting effect (look for lumens on the label to get a closer match):

Incandescent Wattage	Comparable CFL Wattage
25W	5W
40W	9W
60W	14W
75W	20W
100W	23W
150W	27W

CFLs are slow to warm up to full lighting strength, but you can buy instant warm-up ones if desired, and you can even find ones specially designed to work with dimmers if you search hard enough. There are floodlight versions, and there are outdoor versions too. Get ahead of the curve, as utilities strive to reduce demand by getting customers to replace their incandescent bulbs.

If you're in Con Edison territory, they have a free replacement program for indoor lighting bulbs. Their contractor is Quality Conservation Services, and they will make an appointment to come and replace all your bulbs for free. Call 1-866-641-6321 and schedule a visit to start lighting your way around the house a bit more sustainably.



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.

Jan 1, Sat, **A New Year**, a new day and a new decade. Let us hope this will be a new beginning for Riverlovers and for all of us.

Jan 8, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse featuring famed blues singer Guy Davis**. At Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Advance tickets available at www.BrownPaperTickets.com, or at door. Open seating. Proceeds benefit Walkabout & Clearwater. Refreshments available. Free parking. Informal songfest starts at 6:45pm. Info: call 914-242-0374 or www.WalkaboutClearwater.org.

Jan 9, Sun, 5pm, **Uptown Coffeehouse featuring songs & stories by Bill Staines**. At 4450 Fieldston Rd, Bronx. Sponsored by Riverdale-Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture. \$15. Info: (718) 885-2955 or www.uptowncoffeehouse.org.

Jan 21, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Potluck** at Croton Point Nature Center. Celebrate the season, plan for Eagle Fest, help decide on annual contribution to Clearwater, and on Spring activities. Info: www.Riverlovers.org.

Through Mar 6, **Hudson River Reflections by Russell Cusick**. Exhibit of Hudson River-inspired art and photo acrylic panoramas. At Beacon Institute for Rivers & Estuaries Gallery, 199 Main St, Beacon.

What Are Green Infrastructure Practices—I?

Green infrastructure is a set of approaches and technologies that maintain, restore or mimic the natural flow of water in the landscape. They are designed to infiltrate, evapotranspire, capture or reuse stormwater, which is defined as rain or snow that becomes runoff. At the same time, green infrastructure often improves air quality, reduces energy demands, mitigates urban heat island effects, and sequesters carbon, while providing communities with aesthetic benefits and improved quality of life.

Some green infrastructure practices work to restore natural features like forests, fields, floodplains, or wetlands. Others improve the capacity of existing "grey" infrastructure like buildings, roads, parking lots, etc., to detain, treat and absorb stormwater.

Most green infrastructure techniques use soils and vegetation to infiltrate, evaporate, and/or recycle stormwater runoff. Green roofs, vegetated swales, rain gardens, cisterns and rain barrels, and street trees with enhanced tree boxes are some common examples.

Under state-mandated stormwater management practices, some of the green infrastructure that can be utilized includes constructed wetlands, tree plantings, permeable

paving, sand and organic filters, green walls, tree box filters, infiltration planters and riparian buffers. The goal is to protect and restore watersheds in the Hudson Valley region, and projects are to be implemented in the next several years.

The next article in this series will review the EPA-recommended practices and provide details on a number of green infrastructure projects being proposed for local implementation.

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 (\$15 individual, \$20 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

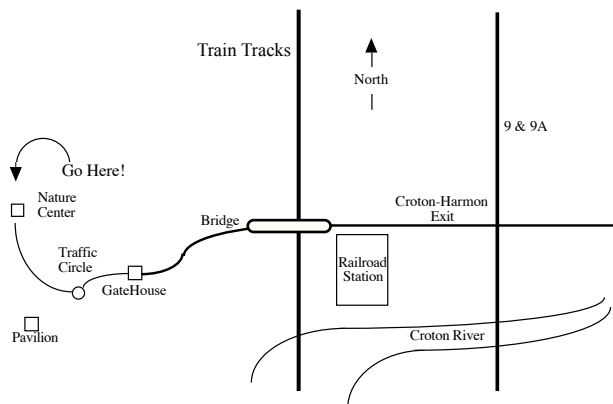
Newsletter Submissions

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

January Newsletter Contributors: Bill Flank, Warren Lindholm

Start the New Year With Riverlovers Monthly Potluck



Riverlovers, Inc.

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

Friday, January 21, 2011
6:30pm
Croton Point Nature Center