

## **Message from the Chair**

Our Commitment to Climate Action

There's no getting around it, 2016 was a challenging year for the climate and environmental movements, with the election of a new president who pledged to be hostile to the cause about which we all care so much. As I write this in spring 2017, it's clearer than ever that we are in the fight of our lives, here in Virginia and across the nation. There's never been a more crucial time to be an active, engaged member and supporter of the Sierra Club's Virginia Chapter.

With great challenges come great opportunities, and we must seize them in 2017 and the coming years. I'm pleased to report to you that we met our fundraising goals for 2016, thanks in no small part to an outpouring of support from people across the commonwealth following the November election. This 2016 annual report documents our success and also shows the many good uses to which we put the funds that you, our supporters, generously gave.

Our Virginia Chapter, with more than 19,000 members, is now the largest it's ever been. Our staff is also larger and more effective than ever. The great strength of the Sierra Club is in the interaction between its dedicated and talented volunteers and staff. With much of the federal government now working against us, the battle turns in significant part to the states and cities. We are well positioned to do our part here in Virginia.

But we can't take our strength for granted or rest on our laurels. As the Trump administration grinds on with its extreme agenda, we need to keep up our resistance, and raise it to higher, more effective levels. That means sustaining and growing our high membership numbers, raising even more funds, and engaging more and more of our members in active work to fight for a clean and healthy environment and a livable climate.

As you review this summary of our 2016 work I hope you will be proud of what we have built together, and will agree with me that our contributions to the Club here in Virginia have been put to good use.

Thanks for your support of the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter. I look forward to working with you in 2017 and beyond.

Seth Heald, Chair

Ana Prados, Air Quality Seth Heald, Coal Ash Will Driscoll, Membership William Penniman, Conservation Dick Ball, Energy Barbara Williamson. Environmental Justice Sherman Bamford, Forests Linda Muller, Fracking Boundaries Seth Heald, Legal Susan Stillman, Legislative &

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Marjorie Leach Parker,

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Eileen Levandoski. Coordinator, Pipelines Assistant Director Taylor Bennett,

Corrina Beall, Community Outreach Legislative & Coordinator, Political Director Ready for 100

Zach Jarjoura, Mary-Stuart Torbeck, Program Manager, Community Outreach Hampton Roads Coordinator, Richmond

Kendyl Crawford, Jeff Staples, Program Manager, Coordinator,

Richmond Hampton Roads Kelsey Crane, Ben Weiner,

Conservation Communications Assistant Coordinator, Kelly Adams, Northern Virginia Administrative Assistant

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Shenandoah-Elizabeth Chenevey York River-Tyla Matteson

## **Message from the Director**

Dear Sierrans and Friends,

Building a Movement

As a chapter, we saw a lot of changes in 2016 as well as accomplishments. We went through a transition in leadership, nearly doubled our staff, our budget grew and our conservation campaigns made significant progress.

Last year, we worked with an increasingly diverse range of allies to:

- Get the Atlantic out of the federal 5-year drilling program
- Secure permanent federal protections on the Atlantic and deny all permits allowing seismic air gun blasting
- **Delay construction** of both the Mountain Valley and Atlantic Coast Pipelines
- Secure more than \$1.5 billion in transit improvements for I-66 "Outside the Beltway" and an annual stream of \$10+ million prioritized for transit improvements "Inside the Beltway"
- Secure a commitment from Governor McAuliffe to develop a **state-based plan to cut carbon emissions**, through the issuance of Executive Order 57

- Cut allowable carbon dioxide emissions from the Greensville County gas-fired power plant by more than 10% (from Dominion's original proposal)
- Get Dominion to disclose its planned greenhouse gas emissions over the next 15 years through its Integrated Resource Planning process
- Take legal action against Dominion for its coal ash site in Chesapeake leaching arsenic into the Elizabeth River (which resulted in a partial legal victory in early 2017, with the Federal Judge confirming Dominion had violated the Clean Water Act)

These important milestones show how we are building on prior successes to further the protection of our natural resources in key areas. The focus on reducing our use of dirty fuels is paying off, with Virginia's renewable energy jumping from 14 megawatts in 2014 to over 238 megawatts at the end of 2016. While we still have a long way to go to be a clean energy leader, this represents tremendous progress. We are also seeing exciting progress on holding big polluters accountable – both for their contamination of our communities and our political system.

In 2016, we also put a focus on building power and diversifying the environmental movement in Virginia – a priority that is serving us well as we now fight to protect these victories from the efforts of our new President to dismantle federal agencies and programs. We are doubling down on solidarity efforts, developing new partnerships and supporting locally-based organizations working to advance environmental justice, particularly in communities of color.

Our strong and growing community of members and volunteer leaders continues to be what makes us strong enough to make this progress, and stand out from other organizations. Your involvement and support provides the foundation for our strategic campaigns to protect Virginia's environment.

Despite the challenges we face, we will continue to connect people to nature and fight to ensure every Virginian has access to clean water, air, energy and wild places.

Thank you for your support!

Late Asseron

Onward,

Wild ponies on Assateague Island, Virginia

## **Ensuring Climate Action for Virginia**

Although the U.S. EPA's Clean Power Plan, our nation's first standard to limit the greenhouse gases from power plants contributing to climate change, was put on hold by the courts, we succeeded in ensuring our Virginia leaders are addressing climate change.

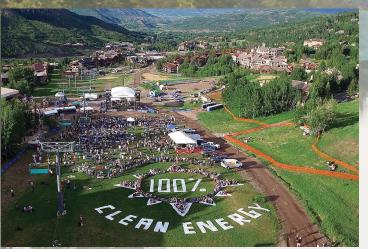
Thousands of Virginia Sierrans petitioned Governor McAuliffe in addition to other public officials to keep Virginia moving forward. In April, the Chapter along with partner organizations organized more than 10 simultaneous rallies on one Saturday for a statewide day of action calling on Governor McAuliffe to deliver a strong Clean Power Plan, and boost the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy like solar and wind power. Hundreds of Virginians participated in events that day showcasing the geographic diversity of support. As a response, Governor McAuliffe issued an executive order to find the best way for Virginia power plants to cut carbon pollution.

Local developments like the massive solar farm under construction urged by Amazon show that no matter who is in the White House, that the climate movement cannot be stopped.

Our work continues in 2017 as we defend the Clean Air Act at the federal level and work to push local and state solutions to climate.

Get involved:

Contact Kendyl Crawford at kendyl.crawford@sierraclub.org



The Sierra Club Ready for 100 National Tour Photo by John Quigley

## Ready for 100

The Ready for 100 Campaign has spent its first year in Virginia by laying a solid foundation for coming transitions to 100% renewable energy. The campaign continues to focus efforts in Arlington, where the primary goal is to secure a commitment from Arlington County to transition to 100% renewable electricity community wide; and in Alexandria, where the goal is to secure a commitment from Alexandria City Staff to transition to 100% renewable electricity for municipal use as a benchmark on the way to 100% renewable community wide.

Campaign strategy has been guided by leadership teams in each jurisdiction and volunteers have developed positive, working relationships with local elected officials, municipal staff, and citizen advisory commissions. Volunteers have also conducted extensive outreach and education tactics such as hosting an Energy Forum, an Equity Training, and tabling at local

festivals and farmers markets. Through these efforts, nearly 70 new volunteers have been recruited, 200 activists have participated in campaign actions and 800 people have signed a petition advocating for a transition to 100%. The relationships formed and volunteers recruited will enable us to continue advocating for equitable transitions to 100% renewable energy in our communities.

Get involved: Contact Taylor Bennett at taylor.bennett@sierraclub.org



Forest Service staff answer questions about the Atlantic Coast Pipeline Draft EIS in Staunton, VA

## **Stopping Pipeline Fever**

The Virginia Chapter is providing grassroots organizing, technical, legal and strategic support to our allies and partners in central and southwestern Virginia in opposing two hazardous fracked-gas pipeline projects, including Dominion's 600-mile Atlantic Coast Pipeline, and the 330-mile Mountain Valley Pipeline. In 2016, we were successful in delaying both of these projects.

These proposed pipelines would cross the Appalachian Trail and Blue Ridge Parkway, the George Washington, Jefferson and Monongahela National Forests, more than twenty steep mountains in the Allegheny and Blue Ridge mountains, and thousands of streams and rivers. The pipeline developers have the power of eminent domain to take people's property for the pipeline, and construction would jeopardize local residents' drinking water. The pipelines would triple the amount of greenhouse gas emissions in the mid-Atlantic region.

**Fast Facts:** More than **25,000 people** signed petitions opposing the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, and more than **17,000 people** signed petitions opposing the Mountain Valley Pipeline during the past 6 months.

Dominion polluting the

James with toxic coal ash

Get involved: Contact Kirk Bowers at kirk.bowers@sierraclub.org

## Cleaning Up Coal Ash

The Virginia Chapter has been working to clean up coal ash for nearly a decade, and our efforts ramped up again in the spring of 2016. The campaign sprang into action when VPDES (dewatering) permits were issued for Dominion's Chesapeake and Chesterfield coal ash sites. We worked with partners to turn out hundreds of people for the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) public information sessions and public hearings during the summer months.

Thousands of comments were submitted to DEQ urging the agency to require Dominion to dig up its coal ash from major bodies of water and move it to lined, capped landfills. In addition, we encouraged citizens to attend the State Water Control Board September meeting to speak out against coal ash being stored in unlined ponds, per the current regulations. We launched a petition telling Governor McAulliffe that Virginians want our waters protected from toxic coal ash. This petition was signed by over 5,000 Virginians, and several hundred people took part in online activism, tweeting the Governor asking him to take action. Testing has shown that arsenic leached from Dominion's coal ash site in Chesapeake into the Elizabeth River. In 2017, our work to hold the company accountable for this illegal contamination and move remaining coal ash impoundments away from bodies of water will continue.

Get involved: Contact Mary-Stuart Torbeck at mary-stuart.torbeck@sierraclub.org



## **Dominion: Time to Turn not Burn**

The Turn Not Burn campaign launched in July of 2016. An initial focus of the Turn Not Burn campaign was education of the general public and public officials so we kicked off with a series of launch parties and workshops.

We hosted 3 workshops and gave more than a dozen presentations to educate our members and supporters about this new campaign.

We hosted over half a dozen Turn Not Burn presentations for outside groups and held more than 25 meetings with public officials.

Throughout the year we held more than 40 public events including happy hours, film screenings, and demonstrations. We gathered more than 1,500 petition signatures and turned out more than 200 people to protests and demonstrations in Hampton Roads. We were able to chip away at the Hampton Roads Caucus support for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and were able to block the latest industry attempt at engaging the Hampton Roads delegation support in the FERC Draft Environmental Impact Statement process. We also engaged in very constructive discussions with Hampton Roads public officials about their support for offshore wind and the huge potential for economic development that it presents for our region.

Get involved: Contact Zachary Jarjoura at zachary.jarjoura@sierraclub.org

# **Taking on Air Toxics**

The Virginia Chapter released The Top 25 Virginia Localities with the Highest Toxic Air Emissions report in July 2016. Virginia, as of 2014, had the 21st worst total toxic releases occurring out of the 56 states and territories in the U.S. High ranking Virginia localities on the list included Hopewell, Covington, Isle of Wight, Buchanan and Chesterfield. The cities of Arlington, Gladys (Campbell County) and Axton (Henry County) were newcomers to the list.

The report was based on the Environmental Protection Agency's 2014 Toxic Release Inventory (the most recent data available at the time), a collection of toxic air pollution data reported by industrial and federal facilities across the country.

The report focused both on several large polluters across the Commonwealth and communities mobilizing to raise awareness of the negative health and environmental impacts of air pollution and received substantial media coverage across the state. The Chapter has continued a partnership with a community-based group in the Southeast Community of Newport News, No. 23 on the list, to assist in organizing efforts to decrease air pollution and the negative effects they have on local residents.

Get involved: Contact Kendyl Crawford at kendyl.crawford@sierraclub.org

Chesterfield, VA, nationally ranked among localities with the highest toxic air emissions



## **Offshore Drilling**

In large part thanks to our huge statewide and regional coalition efforts, in March 2016 the Obama administration pulled the Atlantic from its 5-year offshore drilling program. One of the reasons cited was the huge outcry from coastal communities. More than 120 East Coast municipalities, over 1,200 elected officials, and an alliance representing over 35,000 businesses and 500,000 fishing families have publicly opposed offshore drilling and/or seismic airgun blasting. These individuals and groups understand that nearly 1.4 million jobs and more than \$95 billion in gross domestic product are at risk if dangerous oil activities occur in the Atlantic Ocean.

Obama finished the job of protecting the Atlantic in December 2016 by securing permanent protection for 3.8 million acres in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast areas and denying all pending permits to conduct seismic airgun blasting in the Atlantic. Three big wins for our campaign to stop offshore drilling in the Atlantic and off the coast of Virginia.

With the new administration however we anticipate rejuvenized plans to "Drill, Baby, Drill" with Trump restarting a 5-year program that includes the Atlantic and allowing seismic companies to resubmit their blasting applications. But coastal voices gave a resounding "No Way" that hasn't changed or shifted in anyway. We spoke out strongly in 2016 and that voice only gets stronger as we work through the coming year.

Get involved: Contact Eileen Levandoski at eileen.levandoski@sierraclub.org

## **Transportation and Smart Growth**

In 2016, US Energy Information Administration, reports showed carbon emission from the transportation sector exceeding energy production for the first time nationwide. The Virginia Chapter began efforts to educate local planning officials in Fairfax County on successful carbon mitigation plans in similar localities. This effort lays the groundwork for a long-term goal of carbon dioxide being added as a criteria pollutant for air quality in the transportation sector.

The Virginia Chapter also played a role in ensuring Virginia's Governor and DEQ moved forward with applying for Environmental Mitigation Trust funds under the Volkswagen settlement. The Volkswagen settlement will provide businesses and local governments in Virginia and the DEC. Metropolitan region with investment opportunities in electric vehicles and charging infrastructure. We are working in coordination with several state and national partners to advocate for electric vehicles and for multimodal options that will alleviate congestion and reduce environmental impacts.

We continue to be a leading organization in a coalition-based effort advocating for a transit-first approach to improvements planned for the I-66 corridor in Northern Virginia. The planned improvements cover 35 miles from the Virginia/Washington D.C. border at the Potomac River to Route 15 in Prince William County. Thanks to our advocacy, the final plan includes more than \$1.5 billion in transit improvements for I-66 "Outside the Beltway," between the Washington Beltway and Route 15, and an annual stream of \$10+ million prioritized for transit improvements "Inside the Beltway," between the D.C. border and the Beltway. These transit investments will result in estimated reductions of 500,000 vehicle miles traveled or 148 Metric Tons of carbon dioxide emissions per weekday (or 38,480 Metric Tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year).

Get involved: Contact Kelsey Crane at kelsey.crane@sierraclub.org

## How We Fund Our Work in Virginia

c3 c4

Contributions to the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. They are not tax-deductible and constitute what is called "c4" activity under federal tax law.

Contributions to the Sierra Club Foundation are tax-deductible and they support our Virginia work in what is called "c3" activity. This activity strictly prohibits lobbying and advocacy efforts seeking to affect legislation.

For our campaigns to be effective, we must engage in both c3 and c4 activity. For example, with our campaign to stop drilling off Virginia's coast, our current funding supports 90% of our work – all c3 – which involves pushing the Trump administration to not include Virginia in its next drilling program. But one tactic in our campaign involves urging local governments to vote for resolutions opposing drilling. This is c4 work because it involves lobbying elected officials to vote on a matter.

A lot of our work is accomplished using c3 funds, and thankfully, a very large portion of our c3 funds comes from foundations and large donors. Our critical c4 funds come largely from our individual Virginia members and activists, making donations directly to the Virginia Chapter through various appeals, including our annual March appeal. As our work in Virginia expands with increasing injections of c3 support, so too must our budgets grow with more individual c4 contributions.

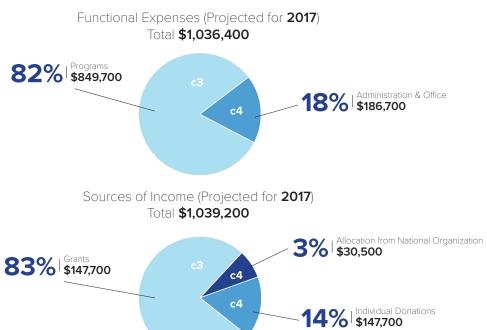
| 1  | Stopping multiple fracked-gas pipelines from criss-crossing Virginia.  | 90%  | 10% |
|----|--|------|-----|
| 70 | Preventing the Trump administration from opening Virginia and the Atlantic in its offshore oil and gas drilling programs.  | 90%  | 10% |
| 1  | Reducing toxic air emissions in Hampton Roads especially those from heavy traffic, electric utilities, ports, coal terminals and industry.   | 90%  | 10% |
| 1  | Working to increase the use of clean energy to generate electricity, including higher efficiency standards for new homes and advocating for offshore wind power and community solar. | 90%  | 10% |
|    | Fighting poorly planned road and development projects by supporting smart solution like pedestrian/bike friendly transit-oriented development and public transit projects.           | 90%  | 10% |
| -  | Enlisting local municipalities to pledge to 100% clean energy by 2050.   | 90%  | 10% |
|    | Building a climate movement in Virginia.   | 80%  | 20% |
|    | Lobbying our elected officials and keeping them accountable for protecting clean air, clean water, our natural environment and healthy communities                                   | 100% |     |
|    | Recruiting new members, fundraising, Chapter business/administration, and outings.   | 100% |     |

### **Financial Statement**

Since 1977, the Virginia Chapter has grown exponentially and now earns a spot as one of the best in the nation. We are extremely effective at what we do and that is thanks to the talents of our large professional staff, dedicated and engaged activists, and the generosity of many through their time and financial resources.

Your donation to the Virginia Chapter Sierra Club stays in Virginia and is dedicated to our Virginia campaigns to aggressively push for renewable energy, combat climate change, protect our forests and coastlines, and much more. We do this with grassroots power like no other environmental organization can. But big campaigns like the one needed to take on fracking, pipelines and offshore drilling require funding to support our grassroots outreach and activism. We depend on your continuing support.

Visit **sierraclub.org/donateVA** TODAY! Thank you.



## **Equity**

In 2016 the chapter engaged in outreach to build partnerships with allied movements and diverse communities to become a more equitable, inclusive and just organization. The Sierra Club Virginia Chapter assisted with an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) Centennial Rally. Chapter representatives attended a commemoration for Barbara Johns, one of the original plaintiffs in Brown v. Board of Education, and Sierra Club sponsored an outing to the National Park Service's Maggie Walker House.

During the summer, the Chapter built relationships with youth in the Virginia Student Environmental Coalition through re-granting funds to assist with summer fellowships. Additionally, Sierra Club showed solidarity with Labor by participating in several Verizon picket lines and Fight for \$15 rallies.

The Chapter participated in several solidarity events including interfaith prayer vigils, fundraisers and rallies for the No North Dakota Access Pipeline organizing effort. A video of a chapter rally from the National Day of Action is here.

The Virginia Chapter built partnerships with Interfaith Power & Light, an organization working on the faith response to climate change, by co-hosting a Clean Power Plan workshop with them at the Dar Al Hijrah Islamic Center. In 2016, the chapter also hosted its first equity, inclusion and justice training workshop focused on building transformational relationships.

### Get involved:

Contact Kendyl Crawford at kendyl.crawford@sierraclub.org

## **Building a Powerful Organization in Virginia**

The Virginia Chapter employs a variety of strategies and tactics to build political power, challenge decision-makers, and push for action. We not only advance conservation campaigns that sustain Virginia's environmental safeguards and lead coalition-based advocacy campaigns to implement stronger environmental protection, we also engage proactively in the political process.

### **Elections Matter**

In 2016, the Chapter endorsed a total of 13 candidates and two referendums, working to support environmental candidates in eight congressional, two general assembly, and three local races. Endorsed candidates were supported with digital and mail programs, and Victory Corps staffers were deployed full-time to assist in two congressional campaigns. Visit our PAC website at www.votegreenva.com.

Anti-carbon pollution protest at the General Assembly Building



### 7 take-aways from the election results in Virginia:

- Virginia was the only state in the Southeast to go for Hillary Clinton
- Incumbents Bobby Scott, Don Beyer, and Gerry Connolly were re-elected to Congress
- Former Virginia state Senator Donald McEachin decisively won the 4th congressional
- Former Delegate Monty Mason won the 1st State Senate district by a comfortable margin
- Democrat Mike Mullin won the 93rd House of Delegates seat
- Jana Andrews was victorious, pulling ahead by 2.5 points to win her seat on Poquoson City Council
- The Right to Work for less ballot referendum was defeated

### Lobbying in the Virginia General Assembly

The Chapter's Legislative Committee, a body of 37 active volunteers and citizen lobbyists, tracked a total of 185 bills in 2016. The Chapter took a formal position on 105 bills, and produced the third annual General Assembly Climate and Energy Scorecard. Sierra Club was the only Virginia environmental organization who lobbied on plastic bag waste, biomass, toxic sludge, ALEC and pollinators. Sierra Club was the lead in the Virginia environmental community on energy efficiency measures, solar net-metering, government transparency, and coal tax credits.

Our annual scorecard serves to increase transparency in state government and keep Virginia's elected officials accountable to environmental voters. It is intended to be a window into measuring legislative performance. The tool is used by activists, the media, Sierra Club members and elected officials in addition to informing our endorsement and lobbying strategies.

Get involved:

Contact Corrina Beall at corrina.beall@sierraclub.org

## Supporting Your Virginia Chapter Sierra Club

In Virginia, our supporters scale increasingly greater heights. Here we recognize our donors who help us scale any mountain-size threat to our vision for a clean energy future and a healthy, sustainable Virginia. Together we can move mountains. Thank you.

\*indicates sustaining monthly donor

### Scaling Old Rag \$100-249

Jenny Abel Dean Amel & Terry Savela Daniel & Margaret Ancona Sarah D. Barber Tom Barton Claire Beasley Priscilla & John Becker Gloria Benton Madelvn Berner James Bevins Diana Black lim Blackie Mr. & Mrs. James Blalock Anne Bryan Scott W. Buchan Linda & Kenneth Burchfiel

Thomas Callanen Dvlan Campbell Jon & Alice Cannon

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Rebecca Dameron Bishop & Laura Dansby Sherry & Guy Daugherty Diane Davidson

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John & Diane Foraste\* Emily Francis

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Whitcombe

Jennifer & Sandy Williams llse Winter

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Crutchfield Joe Cook & Anna Jeng

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#### Scaling Hawksbill \$2.500-4.999

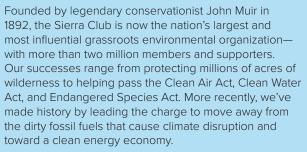
Ivv Main Carol Pruner

### **Scaling Whitetop** \$5,000-9,999

Seth & Caroline Heald Carolyn Key

#### Scaling Mount Rogers \$10.000+

Anonymous foundations Harris & Frances Block Foundation The Brunckhorst Foundation Susan Stillman



The Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club is over 19,000 members strong. We are your friends and neighbors working to build healthy, livable communities, and to conserve and protect our climate and environment. The Virginia Chapter is part of the national Sierra Club, the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

For more information, visit http://www.sierraclub.org/virginia



Community participation in the March on Dominion, November 2016

Front cover: Great Falls National Park, Virginia