

Virginia Chapter Annual Report 2018



SIERRA CLUB
VIRGINIA CHAPTER

We are 100% Virginia

About the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter



We are your state chapter of the Sierra Club: the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

Our goal at the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter is to lead the climate movement here in Virginia and build a future in which all of our communities have access to clean, renewable energy and the diverse natural places that make Virginia home. For this reason, we invest 100% of our energy and support from generous donors into grassroots campaigns and political advocacy in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In 2018, our 20,000 members, volunteer leaders, and staff mobilized thousands of Virginians and dedicated countless hours to a multi-pronged strategy focused on stopping new fossil fuel infrastructure projects; securing

strong state policies on energy efficiency, solar, and wind power; and ensuring a strong state-based carbon reduction plan for the commonwealth.

Together, we have advanced solar freedom across the state, expanded the clean energy commitments of cities and towns, derailed fracked-gas pipelines that disproportionately impact marginalized communities, and gained ground toward finalizing substantial carbon pollution standards for power plants.

From advocating for legislative action in the halls of Virginia's General Assembly to fighting for clean energy projects on rooftops and schools, we're proud to be creating change across Virginia and leading real climate action on the ground in our communities.

Sierra Club Mission:

To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

We have a vision

A message from the Director & Chair

Our vision at the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter is a future in which all Virginians have access to clean, affordable energy and transportation; where all people feel safe exploring nature in their communities and on public lands; where no one has to put their health at risk for a good job; and where clean air and water are assured, and adverse climate impacts are mitigated, protecting generations to come.

We believe this vision is attainable, and we know we're not alone.

In August of 2018, we began an eight-month strategic planning process. After months of reflection and review of feedback gathered from our members, leaders, staff and key stakeholders, the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter solidified a strategic plan including a set of five goals that will guide our grassroots advocacy and legislative work in the years ahead.

Together, we will:

- Be the most effective grassroots force driving climate solutions in Virginia
- Fully engage and empower our members to proactively address climate change
- Represent Virginia's population to better address issues of environmental justice
- Inform our activists, volunteers, and members through innovative communication
- Magnify the impact of members and groups on climate change

With a more robust staff than ever before and a deeply dedicated team of volunteer leaders across the state, we are already making significant progress toward these goals.

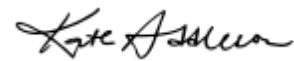
A few highlights from our work in 2018 include:

- Delaying the construction of the Mountain Valley and Atlantic Coast Pipelines by over 12 months
- Leveraging Dominion's grid modernization money grab to secure overdue increases in efficiency and clean energy
- Obtaining the governor's commitment to establish a state methane standard and reduce climate pollution from the transportation sector, as well as securing a strong plan to reduce carbon pollution from the electric sector
- Generating legal pressure to get Dominion Energy's Integrated Resource Plan rejected for the first time ever by Virginia's State Corporation Commission

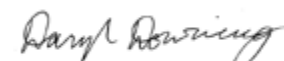
This annual report documents many more of our 2018 wins for Virginia and demonstrates what an investment in the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter can achieve. It is a great honor to work together with you to build healthy, livable communities and protect our environment for generations to come.

Thank you immensely for all of the ways in which you support this work.

Sincerely,



Kate Addleson, Director



Daryl Downing, Chair

Behind the scenes

We are committed to informing, empowering and engaging activists in implementing strategic climate solutions in and for Virginia.

Staff



Kate Addleson
Director



Corrina Beall
Legislative & Political Director



Eileen Woll
Offshore Energy Program Director



Zach Jarjoura
Conservation Program Manager



Tim Cywinski
Communications Coordinator



Mary-Stuart Torbeck Senior Organizer



I'eshya Wynn
Conservation Program Manager



Kelsey Zara Crane
Conservation Program Coordinator



Gustavo Angeles
Environmental Justice Program Coordinator



Kirk Bowers
Pipelines Program Advisor



Ann Creasy
Community Outreach Coordinator



Alice Redhead
Ready For 100 Organizer



Jessica Sims
Community Outreach Coordinator



Billy Davies
Pipelines Community Outreach Coordinator



Sierra Gladfelter
Development Associate



Kelly Adams
Administrative Assistant

Leadership



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Pete Bsumek, Wilderness Chair

Climate solutions start here

Over two-thirds of Virginia voters, from across the political spectrum, support the state generating 100% of its electricity from clean, renewable sources by 2030.



In April 2018, we launched 100% Virginia. This is a statewide movement to propel us toward 100% clean and renewable energy by 2050 through the development of local-level climate action and clean energy plans in cities, counties, and towns across the commonwealth. More than 18 localities in Virginia have already made a commitment to reduce carbon pollution or set clean energy goals in lieu of federal government action. In 2018, we supported community groups in Fredericksburg, Virginia Beach, Prince William County, Arlington, and Alexandria. In addition to helping develop campaign teams, we hosted dozens of outreach events including the nation's 100th screening of Reinventing Power with over 300 people in attendance at The Byrd Theatre in Richmond, and we collected more than 500 petitions to support local commitments to 100% clean energy by 2050.

Clean Energy like Solar and Wind

Through our new More Solar More Places education initiative, we engaged residents passionate about ramping up the use of solar in their own communities and leading Virginia's clean energy revolution. In 2018, we collected 3,000 petitions calling for the removal of distributed solar barriers that impede access of individual customers and communities and collaborated with Solar United Neighbors of Virginia to help over a dozen homeowners "go solar" in Hampton Roads and Richmond.

In 2018, we also worked to accelerate the development of offshore wind by working with energy and supply chain businesses, administration officials, and Dominion to secure the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project which will include the construction of the nation's first two test turbines in federal waters by 2020. In coastal communities, we hosted town hall meetings and an executive summit that were attended by more than 800 participants and worked with state officials to commission a strategic plan that positions Virginia to be the East Coast's top choice for offshore wind development.



Clean Transportation for All

Smart transportation investments will make Virginia communities healthier, more attractive places to live. In 2018, we launched the Transit for All Campaign to advocate for a clean, multimodal transportation system to tackle the largest source of carbon emission in Virginia while improving air quality, healthy water systems and access to green space. Through local partnerships we developed the Blueprint for Better Transportation, which serves as a clear vision for environmentally friendly and fiscally responsible development in Northern Virginia. The blueprint selects the best projects from the long range transportation plan for the Northern Virginia region and keeps spending within the \$4.5 billion in funding expected through 2040. Over 25 local organizations signed a letter to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority endorsing the blueprint and stating the need for a clean, multimodal transportation system. We engaged dozens of new activists through volunteer kick-off meetings, submitted over 20 letters to the editor, wrote over 700 comments to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, met directly with voting members of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority to review the blueprint and discuss the Six Year Program.

We are protecting Virginia's future



Fighting Fracked-Gas Pipelines

In 2018, we successfully delayed the construction of two proposed fracked gas pipelines—the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) and the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP)—by over 12 months while building a robust coalition of partners in the process. Working with our allies, we turned out hundreds of citizens at State Water Control Board meetings and held rallies and demonstrations across the state where people came out en masse to demonstrate their opposition. So far, our coalition has collected and delivered more than 10,000 petitions to the Northam administration from Virginians against pipelines.



Resisting Offshore Drilling

Working with a large and diverse coalition of environmental, military, business, tourism and fishing groups, we successfully delayed the Trump administration's efforts to open up the Atlantic to offshore drilling. The Sierra

Club's legal team was also successful in delaying permits that would allow deadly seismic airgun blasting, a first step in the drilling process. By the end of 2018, our coalition convinced all 17 municipalities in Hampton Roads, a majority of Virginia's congressional delegation, Virginia's Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, and a large bipartisan list of state lawmakers and notable organizations to join us in opposition of offshore drilling. Thousands of beach lovers rallied throughout 2018, making public comments, reaching out to their elected officials, penning over a dozen letters to the editor, and attending events like our ninth annual Hands Across the Sand events which took place on three Virginia beaches.



Reducing Climate Pollution

Throughout 2018, we also kept up a strong drumbeat of public support for expanding access to clean energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the state level. In March 2018, we organized 370 people to attend six hearings across Virginia on the state's carbon reduction plan, Executive Directive 11, calling on the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to strengthen regulations on carbon pollution from power plants and invest in clean energy. The Sierra Club Virginia Chapter worked with partners to submit nearly 3,000 grassroots comments, in addition to technical comments, on the plan and more than 250 citizens attended public hearings to demand aggressive climate action. This activism ensured that Virginia drafted a stronger plan that will result in more significant cuts in carbon pollution and encourage more consideration of impacts on particularly vulnerable communities.

We are committed to justice and building climate solutions together

The Sierra Club is committed to building an equitable and inclusive climate movement in Virginia that welcomes people from all of our diverse communities. To make this commitment a reality we hired our first dedicated Environmental Justice Program Coordinator, Gustavo Angeles, to work on integrating social justice and environmental concerns across our campaigns. Since joining our team in June 2018, he has worked tirelessly with diverse local partners to advance the growth of the environmental justice movement in Virginia. Thus far, three Sierra Club groups have been inspired to take on local campaigns of their own. With support from our team, local groups have been working directly with affected members of their communities to fight the siting of mega-landfills and other harmful projects.

Stopping Dirty Pipelines with Citizen Water Monitoring

When construction began on the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) in March 2018, the Sierra Club and our allies launched the Mountain Valley Watch, a citizen-led monitoring program to document incidents of permit violations along the pipeline route. While volunteers took photos of active construction sites from foot, drone and plane, we worked with our legal partners to prepare evidence-grade data for litigation. Thanks to the power of on-site data and grassroots organizing, evidence collected by this initiative resulted in a Notice of Violation issued by the DEQ and a temporary stop-work order in July. In December, state Attorney General Mark Herring announced that Virginia would sue for civil penalties for over 300 erosion control violations. Soon after, the State Water Control Board moved to consider rescinding the MVP's Section 401 certification.

The battle over fracked-gas pipelines is far from over in Virginia. The Sierra Club continues to play a leading role in building a diverse coalition of partners who resist the expansion of pipelines that threaten our environment and communities. In late 2018, Virginians responded



to Governor Northam's poor handling of the replacement of key members of the Air Pollution Control Board by standing with Union Hill, a historic freedmen community of primarily African-American residents, against the fracked-gas compressor station Dominion proposes to construct in their community. We continue to work with allies, including the state NAACP, to fight this blatant act of environmental racism, and other injustices associated with the use of dirty fuels.

We are making change through political advocacy and state-level action

As a 501c4 organization, legally empowered to engage in direct lobbying, the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter builds political will for change in Virginia with both carrots (positive accountability) and sticks (negative accountability). Not only do we work to build support for environmental policy in key legislative districts, but we also reward environmental leadership and punish those with poor voting records by scoring defining votes in our annual legislative scorecard.

General Assembly

2018 marked a year of change in the Virginia General Assembly as Democrats picked up 15 seats in the House, including 13 Sierra Club endorsed candidates. In the biggest electoral shift toward Democrats in Virginia since 1899, 49 of 100 seats are now occupied by Democrats. This change in the makeup of the General Assembly also led to an unlikely coalition of bipartisan reformists interested in working across the aisle to hold Dominion accountable for its pollution, clean up toxic coal ash, and rigorous pipeline permitting. Capitalizing on this new energy in the capitol, the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter scaled up its lobbying efforts during 2018's General Assembly session, introducing nine pieces of legislation and lobbying on 129 others.

Key legislative priorities in 2018 included:

- Enacting a moratorium on coal ash permits: Success
- Closing fracking regulation loopholes for oil and gas: Success
- Defeating the worst parts of the Grid Modernization and Security Act: Success

This work was made possible thanks to our grassroots supporters and a robust Legislative Committee comprised of over 35 members, including 14 core volunteers who served as Legislative Committee Issue Chairs.

Defeating Dominion's Dirty Politics in the General Assembly

Our greatest legislative victory of 2018 was successfully limiting Dominion's money grab with the Grid Transformation and Security Act: an unprecedented public defeat of Dominion and its grasp on Virginia politics. This bill originally allowed Dominion to keep billions of dollars in excess earnings rather than return it to ratepayers, plowing that capital into new infrastructure while still billing customers. On the eve of Crossover, the House of Delegates passed its own version of the bill with a key amendment carried by Del. Toscano. Virginia's newly-emboldened Democratic House Caucus actualized its power on the floor with all 49 votes cast for the amendment. Six Republicans joined them, making the vote count 55-41, with two abstentions. Seeing the vote tally, Del. Habeeb called for an additional adoption, and urged his 41 colleagues to change their votes and support the amendment. They did.

The unlikely coalition of 55 rural conservatives and urban progressives share a growing resentment of Dominion's abuse of power. Together, they checked Dominion's influence within the General Assembly and amended what had been a terrible bill to make it better for both the environment and captive customers. The most damaging provisions were removed, and now provides incentives for Dominion to invest in 5,500 megawatts of wind and solar energy and mandates up to one billion dollars to be invested in energy efficiency. This investment in wind and solar alone would allow more than 1.3 million Virginian homes to be powered by clean renewable energy.



Photo: David Everette

Legislative Scorecard

In Virginia, opportunities to participate in the law-making process can seem limited. Virginia's General Assembly sessions are shorter than those in many other states. Thousands of bills are filed and voted on in rapid succession during the 45 or 60-day window. Some bills are voted on with little notice on a public docket, curtailing the ability of interested citizens to weigh in. The Sierra Club Virginia Chapter releases an annual scorecard to increase transparency in the legislative process so voters can distinguish between the rhetoric and the reality of a lawmaker's record. In 2018, the Chapter scored 25 key votes taken by members of the House and Senate.

Legislative Awards

The Sierra Club Virginia Chapter recognized thirteen legislators for outstanding contributions during the 2018 legislative session to advance environmental policy. A bipartisan group of leaders from both the Senate and House were presented with awards in September at the Annual Chapter Gathering.

Supporting your Sierra Club Virginia Chapter

Our supporters scale great heights to protect Virginia's environment. In 2018, these donors enabled us to ward off threats to our vision for a healthy, sustainable Virginia while productively working to build solutions to the climate crisis.



Thank you for all that you give to this work!

Scaling Old Rag \$100-249

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Carol Pruner*

Old Rag.....3,268'
Hogback.....3,474'
Pinnacle.....3,730'
Stony Man4,010'
Hawksbill4,050'
Whitetop.....5,518'
Mount Rogers5,728'

* Indicates sustaining monthly donor
† Indicates contributions raised through Team Sierra fundraising platform (see: teamsierra.org/virginia)

Act Local

Invest in Virginia

Your support allows us to fight every day for the issues that mean the most to Virginians. Together we are working to empower our grassroots communities and fight for every citizen's right to put clean energy on their homes and businesses, to protect our waterways from pollution, and to push our state and local governments to lead on climate action in the Southeast.

Your support enables us to:

- ✓ Build the political will for climate action and environmental protection among our state leaders and representatives.
- ✓ Resist dirty infrastructure like fracked-gas pipelines that would add to the negative impacts of climate change and disproportionately affect marginalized populations.
- ✓ Ensure the responsible cleanup of coal ash disposal sites across our state.
- ✓ Defend Virginia's coast and marine life from offshore drilling and seismic blasting.
- ✓ Ensure all Virginians have the right to power their homes, businesses, and schools with affordable, renewable energy.



Your generous contribution to the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter makes this work possible. And remember that when you give, 100% of your gift stays in Virginia to support our local work. For this reason, contributing to the Virginia Chapter is a long-term investment to protect the environmental health of our state for future generations.

[Give today at http://vasierra.club/donate](http://vasierra.club/donate)



Founded by legendary conservationist John Muir in 1892, the Sierra Club is now the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization – with more than two million members and supporters. Our successes range from protecting millions of acres of wilderness to helping pass the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act. More recently, we've made history by leading the charge to move away from the dirty fossil fuels that cause climate disruption and toward a clean energy economy.

The Sierra Club Virginia Chapter is over 20,000 members strong and growing. 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.



SIERRA CLUB

VIRGINIA CHAPTER

Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet

Virginia Chapter

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