

Friends of the CARANTOUAN GREENWAY

Yes! Count me in! I believe in protecting farm and forestland, wildlife habitat and watersheds in the Penn-York Valley. I want to become a member of Carantouan Greenway!

- | | | | |
|--|----------------|---|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mighty Oak | \$500 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> Trailblazer | \$25 per year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Eagle | \$75 per year | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | \$_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stargazer | \$50 per year | | |

Name _____

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Gifts to Carantouan Greenway are fully tax deductible! (Tax Id Number: 23-2750872)

Please send all contributions to Carantouan Greenway, PO Box 441, Sayre, PA 18840-0441 or PO Box 827, Waverly, NY 14892-0827

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CARANTOUAN GREENWAY

PO Box 441
Sayre, PA 18840-0441

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



RIVER TALK

Winter 2010

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. Annual Dinner Mting.
1. President's Report
2. Greenway Statement
2. Bradford PA vs Tioga NY
2. Open Burning Bans
2. Canon Hole
2. December's Blue Moon
3. Trees
3. Nuclear Power: A Resurgence We Can't Afford
4. Friends of the Greenway

Annual Dinner Meeting

The annual dinner meeting will take place at Tomasso's on 17C on Wednesday evening February 3rd beginning with socialization at 6 pm followed by dinner at 6:30 or 7. This year's speaker, Jerry Acton, is a Tioga County resident who lives in Berkshire. His backyard is a National Wildlife Federation Wildlife Habitat. Jerry shares the property with his wife, one dog, three cats, three horses and the varied wildlife that he will share with us. I had the good fortune to preview Jerry's work at a Tioga County Bird Club meeting and can only say that his digital photography of birds is of National Geographic Society quality. He especially likes to document the growth and development of young birds.

Place your reservation for the February 3rd dinner meeting by sending your check at \$20/ person to Jim Daly, treasurer, at 305 Lincoln St. Sayre, Pa. 18840. You can contact Jim at (570) 888-9700 or jjdaly@stny.rr.com.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2009 has been an unusual year for the Greenway. Neither the Elm Street program for 6th graders nor the Talk to the Animals program came to fruition. We had a scheduling problem with Elm Street that was never resolved and an extra-ordinary weather problem with the Talk to the Animals program. As a result we are looking toward working with the Sayre Theatre for a weather-proof Talk to the Animals program.

We reiterated our High School Challenge to High School students to produce a DVD with a 15-20 minute presentation on "FRAGMENTATION EFFECTS" on our forest lands and forest land habitat as a result of drilling for and transporting gas from the Marcellus shale beds". While we had no takers last year hopefully this year will be more productive.

The Carantouan Greenway made two presentations on basic geology; one to SRAC and a second to the Valley's Rock and Mineral Club. The Greenway was also a sponsor for the reprinting of the TRAILS OF TIOGA. We have their signs at both the Wildwood and Forbidden Path trailheads. Two of our officers attended a Trail Conference held at SRAC and sponsored by the Rural Health Network thanks to a contribution by the Packer.

The Carantouan Greenway sponsored Chris Burger's presentation on "Marcellus gas drilling: What it will mean to Tioga County". The presentation was held on December 3rd at the Hubbard Auditorium in Owego. Well over 100 people came to hear the best basic program on gas drilling. On December 15th, after reading the State's 800 page draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement, and following our December meeting the Carantouan Greenway sent a comment letter to the NYS DEC.

We had committed to Ron Dixon, retired art teacher, from Waverly to do a photo shoot of the Great Blue Heron and the Heronry in Owego. Ron is completing that project now and hopefully we will have some of this work for the annual meeting on Wednesday February 3rd. We continue to set up spotting scopes for the public to appreciate this resource that confirms the water quality in the Susquehanna watershed.

The Palmers and I, representing the Carantouan Greenway, participated in data gathering known as the Christmas Count. Counts were done in Bradford in PA and Corning, Chemung and Tioga in NY. We had several field trips to Wildwood, Destiny Kinal's Riverfront trail and to Bill Hotchkiss's property. We also helped Trudy with a Bradford County spring count.

Greenway Statement

Carantouan Greenway comments on the Draft (SGEIS) Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement.

All words such as could or should must be replaced with shall.

Best Management practices must be required.

Cumulative impacts must be taken into account.

Toxic soluble organic compounds (SOCs) must be removed.

Toxic volatile organic compounds (VOCs) must be removed.

NOT ONLY should the cumulative impacts of each SOC and VOC be considered but also more importantly the synergistic effects of multiple sub-lethal exposures must be taken into account. These are real threats to the human health of Twin Tier residents.

Bradford PA vs Tioga New York

The Christmas counts for Bradford and Tioga were scheduled for December 26th and 27th. The weather was touch and go as to whether it would drop and freeze the rain on Saturday and be impossible to travel whereas Sunday was projected to be clear. I listened to the weather forecasters and got a little later start on Saturday beginning my territory at 8:30. My first bird was one rain-soaked yellow-shafted flicker and my third was a pileated as I scanned through the trees to the Susquehanna. Most productive is the process of speeching where you make sounds to attract birds. Actually you drive slowly with the windows open and when you see or hear a bird you get out and speech. The best speeching spot yielded bluebirds, a Carolina wren, juncos and goldfinches. At the edge of a large cornfield there were over 120 turkeys. I birded for 7 ½ hours and yielded 30 species.

In Tioga I birded for 6 1/6 hours and had 26 species. Speeching at the headwaters of the Owego Creek brought out cedar waxwings, tree sparrows, a cardinal, and bluebirds. Tioga also yielded two ravens and a great horned owl.

The black-capped chickadee was the most common though-out both counties. Juncos were the common sparrow and field sparrows uncommon. No winter finches were seen on either.

Both counties had very muddy roads and the car was a mess on both occasions. Maybe you want to join us next year.

Open Burning Bans

Many New York and Athens Township residents are unhappy with recent restrictions placed on open trash burning by a statewide ban by NYDEC, and new restrictions in the most heavily populated areas of Athens Township bordering other Valley municipalities. However, the position of Carantouan Greenway is that the benefits far outweigh any inconvenience.

Much of the household trash that Americans burn, once considered harmless, actually releases cancer-causing dioxin as well as other toxic chemicals, such as lead, arsenic, PCB's, and benzene. The EPA estimates that household trash-burning accounts for 32% of all dioxin releases in the U.S., compared with 4.5 and 5% from coal plants and municipal incinerators. Respectively! Although a majority of the dioxin comes from burning petroleum-based products, like plastic and polystyrene, even cardboard and paper emit dioxin.

Breathing the smoke can cause lung irritation, damage to the immune system, and lead to birth defects. The dioxin that settles onto plants eaten by animals can accumulate and contaminate meat and eggs eaten by humans. In addition, chemicals left behind in the ashes can leach into the soil and contaminate drinking water.

Protect your health and the environment by recycling as much as possible, and properly dispose of non-recyclable trash in the landfill.

Cannon Hole

The Town of Barton is working with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to set up a parking and river access area in the Cannon Hole. The marked lot is there awaiting funding for the concrete access pad, this year or next. The Cannon Hole had its banks secured last year by the Town of Barton highway department placing rip-rap on the wash-out. It is from this bank that you can usually see Canada geese, common mergansers, other waterfowl along with the Great Blue and Kingfisher. It is also great for feeding swallows and is known to have the deepest water on the Susquehanna.

December's Blue Moon

We've all heard the phrase, "once in a blue moon", referring to a very infrequent occurrence. According to some calendars a blue moon will occur December 31, 2009.

There are two definitions for a blue moon, one related to the seasonal calendar and one to the calendar year. Regardless of which speaks to you, any reason is always good cause to celebrate nature!

The original definition, the third full moon in a season with four full moons, has been published in the Maine Farmer's Almanac since 1819. In the seasonal calendar there are usually 12 full moons, three in each of the four seasons, some named for religious celebrations (Lenten moon) and some named for seasonal activities (Harvest moon). However, infrequently there are 13

full moons and hence the blue moon was added in such a way as not to interfere with any of the 12 named full moons and celebrations. These blue moons occur about once every five years.

Modern folklore holds that a second full moon in a calendar month is a "blue moon". Given a lunar cycle of 28.5 days, squeezing two full moons into one calendar month happens only about once every two and one-half years.

Trees

Living as we do in the Northeast we reside in what is known as the Eastern Deciduous Forest. Forest means that the trees dominate and deciduous refers to the fact that most of our trees lose their leaves in the winter. The evergreens hold their leaves. Our local evergreens are the white pine, hemlock and red cedar.

Our north-facing slopes are covered with beech, birch and sugar maple whereas south-facing slopes are usually populated by oaks and hickories. North-facing slopes are usually cooler and wetter whereas south-facing slopes are warmer and drier.

On Saturday February 20th at the Spencer-Van Etten High School there will be a free forestry program as well as a free lunch. The afternoon program includes speakers on ponds and wetlands. The New York State Forest Owners invite you to come. The program begins at 10 am.

Nuclear Power: A Resurgence We Can't Afford

According to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), "nuclear power – aside from its many safety and security risks – is simply too expensive. There are other ways to curb global warming and meet our energy needs." The following are excerpts from a UCS article, 'Nuclear Economics 101', by Elliott Negin, commenting on a UCS analysis, 'Nuclear Power: A Resurgence We Can't Afford'.

Nuclear power was once touted as the energy source that would be "too cheap to meter." In the 1960's and 1970's the industry proposed to build some 200 plants, but as construction costs escalated, only about half were built. Taxpayers and ratepayers were left footing the bill – about \$300 billion in today's dollars – for the abandoned plants, cost overruns for plants that were completed, and costs that were often higher than the wholesale market price of power. Since 1978, no energy company has ordered a new plant, and all plants ordered after 1973 were cancelled.

Why did the industry stop building plants? Because it reached the unavoidable conclusion that new plants are uneconomical. In 2007, six of the country's largest investment firms told the Department of Energy in writing that they were unwilling to accept any risk for financing new reactors. Utility executives have also made it clear that they will not place their companies at risk by financing new nuclear plants. They would consider it, however, if taxpayers assumed the risk – in the form of federal loan guarantees.

Taxpayers have more than one reason to be skeptical about such guarantees. First, projected construction costs have spiraled out of control. In 2002, the nuclear industry estimated it would cost \$2 billion to \$3 billion to build a typical 1,100-megawatt reactor, which can supply power for about a million homes. Since then, the projected costs have jumped as high as \$9 billion.

Second, based on the industry's financial track record, the Government Accountability Office estimates that the average risk of default on a federal loan guarantee for nuclear plant construction is 50%. UCS used this rate of default and current cost estimates to assess the overall risk to taxpayers for guaranteeing nuclear plant construction loans. The total could range from \$360 billion (to replace 100 plants operating today with new plants by 2040) to as much as \$1.6 trillion (to build 300 plants, as some in the industry have advocated, with 50% higher costs).

Without a loan guarantee, no energy company has taken anything more than preliminary steps toward constructing a new plant.

An April 2009 UCS report, Climate 2030: A National Blueprint for a Clean Economy, concluded that new nuclear plants would be one of the most expensive options for producing "low-carbon electricity – even when the likelihood of cost overruns is ignored. The peer-reviewed study used a sophisticated model to demonstrate that the U.S. can reduce carbon emissions from electricity generation 84% by 2030, but it did not find new nuclear plants to be an economical part of the generation mix, at least beyond four new 1,100-megawatt reactors that would be covered by existing subsidies and loan guarantees. Instead, the model showed it was more economical to meet a stringent emissions cap with a mix of energy efficiency, renewable resources, and combined-heat-and-power plants fueled with natural gas.

Ellen Vancko, UCS nuclear energy and climate change project manager, says, "Fortunately there are many viable alternatives to nuclear power, such as efficiency, wind, biomass, and geothermal, which are not only more environmentally friendly and cheaper, but can be up and running much more quickly and at much lower risk to investors and taxpayers. " The power source that was once promised to be "too cheap to meter" may now be too costly to revive. Contact your U.S. Senators and Representative and let them know that taxpayers and ratepayers cannot afford new nuclear power so that the nuclear industry can avoid investing and just reap huge profits.

To learn more about the economic and environmental impact of nuclear power, and read the full text of Nuclear Power: A Resurgence We Can't Afford, visit the UCS website at www.ucsusa.org/nuclear_power.