



# News from the Foothills December 2004/January 2005



The Newsletter of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club  
P. O. Box 5531, Charlottesville, VA 22905 Info/voice mail line: 434-990-0996

**Sierra Club Mission Statement:** 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 those objectives.

## Sierra Club Piedmont Group Meetings

**January 19, 2005** (Wed.) *NRC Public Hearing on North Anna Early Site Permit* 6:00 p.m. Louisa County Middle School. Mineral, Va. (Please see the ensuing article )

**February 16, 2005** (Wed.) *Piedmont Group Meeting* All members of the community are invited to discuss ways that we can protect, enjoy, and explore our natural environment. 7:30 p.m. at the St. Mark Lutheran Church (corner of Ivy Rd. & Alderman). Please call John at 973-0373 for more information.

## Piedmont Group Officers

Chair: John Cruickshank

Vice-Chair: Audrey Dannenberg

Membership: Carol Chandross

Secretary: Darren Pace

Newsletter /Webmaster: Burt Avery

Political Chair/Outings Coordinator: Dean Leshock

Conservation: David Sublette

Fundraising: vacant Programs: vacant

Publicity: vacant Treasurer: vacant

Info Line: (434) 990-0996

(1)



(2)



## Sierra Club Calendars

The Engagement desk calendar (\$12.95) and the Wilderness Wall calendar (\$11.95) will be for sale until January 30th. Remember, if you buy from us, the money goes directly to benefit the activities of the Piedmont Group. For more information, please contact Audrey ( 293-4232, [aadam@cstone.net](mailto:aadam@cstone.net) ).

## Lost Treasure by Audrey Dannenberg

After over 17 years of handling the finances of the Piedmont Group, Diana Abbott has decided to look elsewhere for more stress and even more fun, if that is possible! Diana has been a stable backbone of the Group providing incredible follow through on all major and minor requests over the years. Diana's energy, enthusiasm, and volunteer spirit will be greatly missed. Thank you, Diana, for all you have done for us.

Mail in your EXCOM ballot on the reverse side to:



Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club  
P.O. Box 5531  
Charlottesville, Va. 22905

# EXCOM Elections



for the Piedmont Group are now underway. Please return the ballot below by reversing the fold of this page and mailing it to the address shown on the reverse.

## Ballot

You may vote for all four. Two votes may be cast by joint membership households.

Darren Pace	___	___
Audrey Dannenburg	___	___
David Sublette	___	___
Burt Avery	___	___
Other	___	___



## Being an Environmental Activist

We understand that most people do not have the time in their daily lives to join demonstrations, lobby legislators, or even attend all the Sierra Club meetings. However, most of us do have time to write, email, or call our legislators and express our opinions. There are several issues that may be debated in the General Assembly that will have far reaching consequences for the health of our Commonwealth. Please contact your state representatives and ask them to vote for the environment. Here are some issues you may want to address in your remarks:



OR



- A balanced approach to transportation in Virginia is sorely needed. The VDOT budget should be restructured to allocate a much larger percentage of funds to public transit,

freight rail, walking, and bicycling. Highway funds should focus on repairing our existing transportation system, not the construction of new roads. The Sierra Club supports the creation of a strong state rail authority.

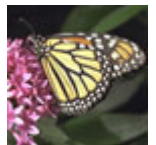
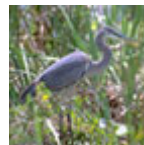
- The “Virginia Clean Smokestacks” bill, introduced by Del. Jack Reid, will require coal-fired power plants in Virginia to limit pollutants that cause ozone, smog and haze, as well as reduce mercury emissions by 90%. This law will help clear the skies above our Shenandoah National Park, the third most polluted national park in the U.S.A.

<http://www.scorecard.org>

- Full implementation of the state’s ban on development within 100 ft. of wetlands is necessary. It is important that this regulation be enforced statewide to protect our water supply and aquatic ecosystems.



- A bill sponsored by Del. Harvey Morgan would give localities the ability to restrict jet-ski use. Jet-skis that use two-stroke engines are a major cause of water pollution and noise pollution.



A Chesapeake Bay Cleanup fee on wastewater discharges or “flush fee,” similar to one in Maryland, should be passed by the state legislature. The Bay is a valued natural and economic resource that must be restored to health.

- Adequate funding for natural resources should be a top priority. Virginia is last in the nation for natural resource funding at under 1%. Such funding is critical for maintaining agency staff, conducting proper enforcement of our laws, and protecting open space.



Unless they hear from us, our

legislators assume people don't care about threats to the environment. Please be heard! Contact your representative!

**Mark R. Warner**  
Office of the Governor  
Richmond, Va. 23219  
(804) 786-2211

**R. Creigh Deeds**  
25th Senatorial District  
The State Capitol  
P.O. Drawer D  
Hot Springs, Va. 24445  
(540) 839-2473  
[rcdeeds@tds.net](mailto:rcdeeds@tds.net)

**Mitchell Van Yahres**  
57<sup>th</sup> District  
408 Altamont Circle  
Charlottesville, Va. 22902  
(434) 977-7863  
[del\\_VanYahres@house.state.va.us](mailto:del_VanYahres@house.state.va.us)

**Robert B. Bell**  
58th District  
2309 Finch Court  
Charlottesville, Va. 22911  
(434) 975-0902  
[del\\_Bell@house.state.va.us](mailto:del_Bell@house.state.va.us)

## Stop Sprawl: Transportation Issue (13)

The highways that are built to sustain sprawling suburbs add to our pollution and energy problems, and increase our dependence on an auto-centric way of life which is unhealthy, anti-social, and unsustainable. The Sierra Club encourages public transit and pedestrian/bicycle friendly neighborhoods



<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/community/>).

### Issues

In 2003 [date of this article], Congress will reauthorize the federal transportation spending bill. This bill, authorized every six years, determines how federal transportation money can be spent. In 1991,

Congress passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and renewed it in 1998 through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). [TEA-3](#) (<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/tea-3.asp>), as the new bill is being called, should build on the progress made in the past two.

Recently the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) has come under attack. Attempts are being made to short circuit NEPA's environmental review process by altering the laws ([http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/NEPA\\_projects.asp](http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/NEPA_projects.asp)). These changes, often referred to as "streamlining," would strip NEPA of key environmental safeguards and take power away from the people most affected by new transportation projects. Rather than changing the laws, efforts to improve the environmental review process ([http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/improve\\_review\\_process.asp](http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/improve_review_process.asp)) should focus on bettering the administration of current laws.

The Bush Administration's push to weaken -- in their words, "streamline" -- environmental reviews is strongly questioned by a General Accounting Office (GAO) Report (<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03534.pdf>). The GAO finds over 90 percent of transportation projects do not even require extensive environmental review, which underscores the Sierra Club's position that the Administration's proposal is unnecessary and unwise for communities and the environment.

## Transportation Solutions

The Regional Alliance for Transit offers alternatives to highway construction (<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/RAFT.asp>) and proposals for cleaner air through transportation reform (<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/air.asp>)

Paying commuters who don't drive with Parking Cash-Out (<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/cashout.asp>)

Employer Programs to Reduce Commute Driving (<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/commute.asp>)

Transportation Control Measures: (<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/control.asp>) How to Reduce Driving through Transit and Wise Land-Use

Sierra Club's official transportation policy: (<http://www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/trans.asp>)

## Credit for Graphics and Articles:

1. Sierra Club National Web Photo Library
2. Big Bend National Park, TX Paul Lucky
3. Sierra Club National Web Photo Library Population Issues
4. Sierra Club National Web Photo Library Population Issues
5. NASA
6. unknown
7. Traffic, Los Angeles, CA, Philip Greenspun
8. Jeff Vanuga, Wetlands, Marion, VA
9. Great blue heron, Everglades NP, Anhiga Trail, Philip Greenspun
10. Butterfly World, Pompano Beach, Florida Philip Greenspun
11. Microsoft Clip Art Gallery
12. Sierra Club National Web Photo Library, Environmental Issues
13. Articles on Sprawl, SC Web Site  
<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/transportation/>
14. Sierra Club National Web Photo Library, Energy Issues
15. Sierra Club National Web Photo Library, Energy Issues



(14)



(15)

## North Anna Nuclear Plants



Dominion Resources (formerly Virginia Power) has applied for an Early Site Permit to build two more nuclear power plants at North Anna in Louisa County. This is the first phase of the Bush administration's plan to construct 50 new nuclear

reactors by 2020. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission recently released the draft of its Environmental Impact Statement that concludes "the environmental impacts would not prevent issuing an Early Site Permit for North Anna." The Sierra Club and other environmental groups oppose the expansion of nuclear power at this site for the following reasons:

- Nuclear reactors present an **unacceptable risk** for the public. In addition to Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, there have been many documented near catastrophes.
- The **highly radioactive spent fuel** will most likely be stored at the North Anna site and will be vulnerable to terrorist attack.
- Additional power plants will have **serious consequences for water** temperature and water levels at Lake Anna and the rivers that flow from it. Decreases in downstream release of water would adversely affect the wildlife of the streams in the York River Watershed.
- Nuclear power is expensive and highly dependent on government subsidies (taxpayer money).

The NRC will hold a public hearing on the Environmental Impact Study on January 19, 2005 at 6:00 p.m. at the Louisa County Middle School in Mineral, Va. We encourage

Sierra Club Members to come to this hearing and speak out against the proposed new reactors. Comments can also be mailed to the Chief of Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mailstop T-6D59, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001 or sent by email to [NorthAnna\\_ESP@nrc.gov](mailto:NorthAnna_ESP@nrc.gov). All comments must be mailed by March 1.

For more information about North Anna please call John at (434) 973-0373

# Speak Out Today: No New Nukes!

National Rally against the 1<sup>st</sup> new license for a nuclear power plant since Three Mile Island

<b>North Anna Nuclear Licensing Hearing</b>	<b>January 19, 2005</b>	<b>Mineral, Virginia</b>
Chernobyl Disaster	April 25, 1986	Ukraine, USSR
Three Mile Island Disaster	March 28, 1979	Middletown, PA

**WHO:** The People's Alliance for Clean Energy, Nuclear Information Resource Service, Public Citizen and Sierra Club

**WHAT:** National Rally Against Nuclear Power immediately preceding a Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearing on a site permit for 2 new nuclear reactors at existing North Anna nuclear power plant in central Virginia

**WHEN** Wednesday, January 19, 2005 at 6:00 PM; NRC public meeting at 7 PM

**WHERE** Louisa County Middle School, 1009 Davis Highway, Mineral, Virginia 23117

**WHY:** *Flirting with Disaster:* U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is Ready for Action after streamlining the nuclear power plant licensing process to exclude public comments reactor safety and radioactive waste disposal

## Background:

Over the first four years of the Bush Administration, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission ("NRC") streamlined the permitting process for new nuclear power plants. Now the NRC is ready to begin issuing permits for new power plants as the Congress considers major subsidies for the nuclear industry. which include immunizing plant operators from liability in the event of a massive nuclear accident.

## What we need you to do!

We need you to come to our rally and the NRC's public meeting on this first site permit for a nuclear power plant in the US since the Three Mile Island meltdown.

**We need you to help us send a resounding "NO" to NRC Chair Nils J. Diaz and to Thomas Capps, Dominion Resources CEO. Dominion is the Virginia utility first in line for a license for a nuclear power plant site permit.**

## What you should say:

- Tell them to stop wasting tax payer money on the most expensive and most dangerous means ever invented to boil water and generate steam for electrical power.
- Ask them why if nuclear power is so safe why they can not find a private insurance company to insure against a major nuclear accident.
- Ask them where the high level nuclear waste would go from these two new reactors since Yucca Mountain, if its ever build, has a capacity limited only to the waste from existing nuclear plants through 2012.
- Ask them what their evacuation plan is for the neighboring community and for Washington, DC (less than 90 miles down wind), and Richmond and Charlottesville (both less than 40 miles)
- Ask them why citizens are being told that they can not even raise issues of nuclear reactor safety and nuclear waste.

## Be There! January 19<sup>th</sup>, Mineral, Virginia


We need a major turn out to send a message that we repudiate the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's and heavily subsidized industry's efforts to license new nuclear power plants despite unresolved safety and waste issues.

If you can not attend, please send your written comments to:

Chief, Rules and Directives Branch  
Division of Administrative Services  
Office of Administration  
Mailstop T-6D59  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001,  
or by e-mail (sent no later than March 1, 2005) to [NorthAnna\\_ESP@nrc.gov](mailto:NorthAnna_ESP@nrc.gov).

Make sure you send copies of your comments to:

Nils J. Diaz, Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
and  
Thomas E. Capps, CEO  
Dominion Resources  
120 Tredegar Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I want to join the Sierra Club! My check is enclosed.	
Name _____	
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Introductory <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Phone (Optional) ( ) _____	
Individual <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Joint <input type="checkbox"/> \$50	
Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to <i>Sierra</i> magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.	
F94Q <b>W 5004</b> -1	 <b>SIERRA CLUB</b> FOUNDED 1913
Please mail this to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, Colorado, 80322-2968	

Sierra Club, Piedmont Group  
P.O. Box 5531  
Charlottesville, VA 22905

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 298  
Charlottesville, VA

[LABEL HERE]