



NATURE'S ADVOCATE OF WESTERN MD

Western Maryland Group - Sierra Club - Maryland Chapter • <http://www.maryland.sierraclub.org/western-md/>



Winter 2007

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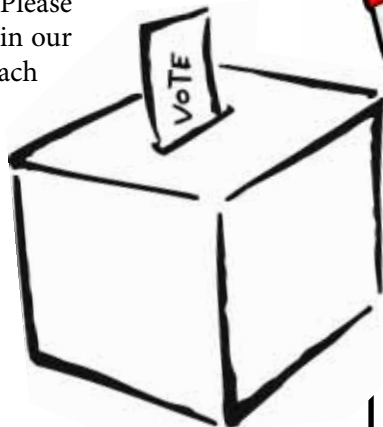
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tickets were sold on Friday night, and the Palace sold 290 tickets Saturday night! Folks from all over Allegany and Garrett Counties attended, as well as several from Mineral County and Bedford County. Several state and county race candidates attended, including Brian Grim(D), Mark Fisher(R), John Riley(D), and Judy Lipski(D). Not surprisingly, none of the candidates that won in November - County Commissioners, State Senator or State Delegates -attended, even though I extended an invite to them through a letter to the editor in the Cumberland Times-News. This is tragic of course, with daily world news attesting to our changing climate and the problems we will be facing by the end of this century. Now is the time to educate our elected leaders on the Climate Crisis.

From The Chair

by Sam White

It's that time again. It's that time again. The Western Maryland Group is holding elections for volunteer leaders to serve for the next two years. This issue of The Nature's Advocate has several candidate statements, as well as an election ballot for you to mail. Please take the time to participate in our own democratic process. Each of the individuals running for the ExCom have many years experience in environmental education, awareness, and protection. This is a great group of folks, and the Western Maryland Group will have solid leadership to protect Western Maryland's natural resources, for our families and for our future. Please vote!



I believe one of the climate change effects that will be felt most in Western Maryland is the decreasing level of soil moisture. We are projected to have a 20 to 50 percent loss by 2100. So think of any locale in our area

that has limited water now. How will those residents cope with half the water? Eastern Allegany County and the Potomac Highlands immediately come to mind. What about riparian ecosystems that already are low on water in the dog days of summer? How will this change our forests? Another casualty will be our local Maple Sugar industry. It will most likely not survive this century.

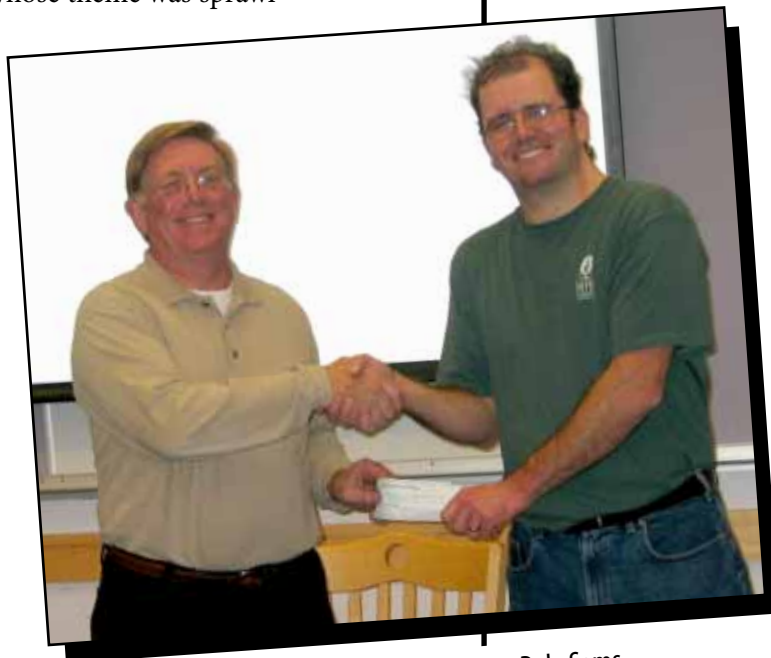


Anyway, not all is lost. We have 10 years to stop increasing the amounts of carbon dioxide we emit into the atmosphere, and 50 years to decrease it by 70 percent. This goal is attainable, and you are part of the solution. We are holding a public meeting Tuesday, March 13, and the topic will be energy and how we can reduce our usage of it. We hope to see you there.

We had an excellent turn out at the two night screening of An Inconvenient Truth at Frostburg's Palace Theatre on August 4 and 5. Two hundred thirty-nine

Western Maryland Group Supports "Citizens For Smart Growth In Allegany County"

The Sierra Club Western Maryland Group (WMG) hosted its winter public program in November, 2005. Approximately forty citizens attended the energized event, whose theme was sprawl and smart growth. Of particular focus was the contentious Terrapin Run housing sub-development, proposed to be constructed in an agrarian, undeveloped portion of eastern Allegany County. WMG chairperson Sam White is shown presenting a donation of \$500.00 to Dale Sams, president of



Sam White presents Donation to Dale Sams

the Citizens For Smart Growth in Allegany County. These monies will be used to offset expenses incurred in the fight against the Terrapin Run development.

County Recycles Electronics

by Karen Krough

The Allegany County Solid Waste Management Board has scheduled collection dates for electronic devices for 2007. The first collection will be January 12th and 13th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Penn-Mar collection site near the YMCA in Cumberland. Subsequent collections will be on the



Keep it out of our Landfills!

second Friday and Saturday of each month (same time and location). The goal of the Solid Waste Management Board is to keep potentially toxic materials out of the landfill, and recycle as many materials as possible to slow the rate in which the landfill is filled.

Electronic items that can be recycled range from large TV's and mainframe computers to hand-held devices like cell phones and electronic toys. There is a \$3.00 fee for recycling the larger items like floor model TV's and copiers; \$2.00 for computer systems, TV's, and microwave ovens; and \$1.00 for table top copiers, scanners, computer monitors, laptops, VCR's and stereo electronics. Smaller electronic devices are accepted with no charge. Anything that fits in a 6 inch hole will be recycled for free: telephones, computer components (mouse, wire, speaker, etc.), compact disc players, digital cameras and electronic toys.

Questions about the Electronics Collection should be directed to the County Solid Waste Management Board at: 301-777-5933.

Did You Know?

Google Earth is a very fun 3-D visualization software mapping tool that is



available at no cost at <http://earth.google.com/>

As if this software isn't cool enough already, recently the detailed variants of Allegany and Garrett counties were added.

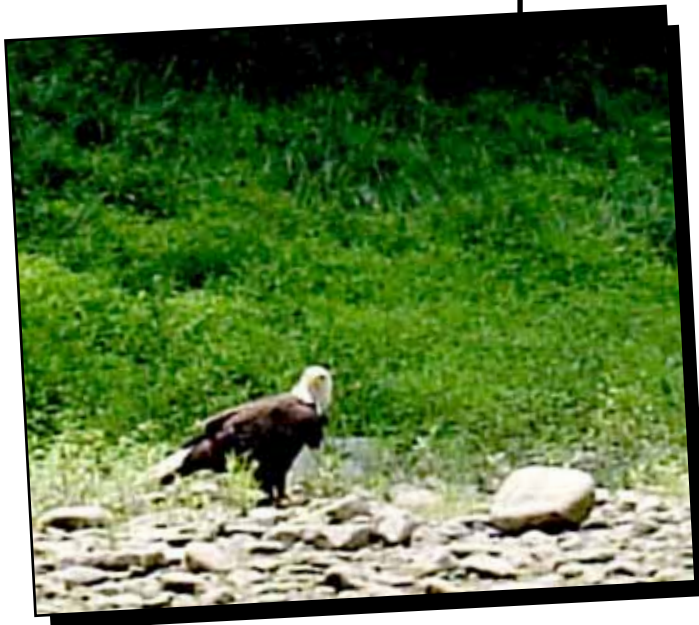
Now you can virtually visit anywhere in the area, provided that you have a high-speed (non-dialup) link to the internet.

Give Google Earth a test drive. You won't be disappointed.

Observing Nature at its Finest - A Brief Encounter with a Bald Eagle

by Becky Potts

A loud splash startles us from behind. As we turn around, we are face to face with a mature bald eagle. Using its wings to skim across the river's surface, the eagle pulls itself ashore to reveal the reason behind all the commotion. Its talons hold dinner, a feast of fish. Turning our boats around, we quietly paddle back upstream. No one speaks, being ever so careful not to disturb this beautiful creature. To my amazement, we are able to drift ashore within fifteen feet of this magnificent creature. For the next half-hour everyone in our group sits silently taking in this moment, this chance to witness nature at its best.



Bald Eagle on river in Western MD
- Photo by Becky Potts

We are all silent as we watch the grand eagle devour its catch. Each of us is having a unique experience and time of personal reflection. Every so often the bird stops and looks at us, for some reason accepting us as part of his world. There is a sense of connection between us as the eagle allows us the pleasure of watching him.

I travel these waters several times a year, always with the hope of spotting the sometimes-elusive bald eagle flying overhead. I personally am amazed at the sheer size of the eagle and the confidence that it exudes, especially towards us humans. I am convinced that the eagle was the right choice for our founding fathers to choose to represent our nation. The noble bald eagle exemplifies majesty, power, and freedom.

The eagle spreads its six-foot wings and with three thunderous flaps catapults into the air and heads down river. Amazed, we all sit in silence. Our boats turn back on course and begin to make our way downstream. No

**“EVERY SO OFTEN
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ACCEPTING US
AS PART OF
HIS WORLD.”**

one talks. Each person is touched and changed by the realization that we are all a part of the natural world around us. Experiencing the eagle was one of those few moments in my life that I realized was great while I was experiencing it, thus allowing me to fully take in the moment and appreciate it.

No description of what I witnessed that day will ever capture the wonder of the moment, but six of us were moved and changed by that magnificent bald eagle. This is only one of many experiences I have had on the waters around western Maryland. Being on the water is one of my greatest passions, and I find that this area provides me with many unique experiences. I'm always moved by the sheer beauty of the natural environment of our region.

Interested in a Canoe Trip?



To get info,
help organize or
suggest an outing,
Contact Nathan
Forbeck at
301-268-5408

Western Maryland Group Offering Free Climate Change Training

With great excitement, the Western Maryland Group proudly announces that our own Sam White has been selected to attend climate change training in Nashville, TN on Jan. 9-10, 2007.

Sponsored by The Climate Project, 1,000 people have been invited to six sessions in Nashville, Tennessee and Sydney, Australia to be trained to become Climate Change Messengers. Attendees will be trained to present an updated edition of the information that was delivered by Al Gore in the recent documentary, "An Inconvenient Truth".

Sam has committed to conducting at least ten local climate change seminars during 2007. Anyone interested in hosting a session is encouraged to contact Sam directly using the information listed on the last page of this newsletter. Sessions are free and should last no more than two hours. Groups of ten persons or larger are encouraged.

For additional information on The Climate Project, visit www.theclimateproject.org.

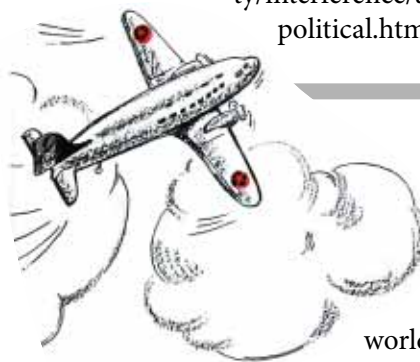
Union of Concerned Scientists: A to Z Guide to Political Interference in Science

The Union of Concerned Scientists released a guide to abuses of the Bush administration's oversight and manipulation of the science underlying federal policies and action.

The guide was released with a statement on scientific

integrity which denounces political interference in science and calls for reform. More than 10,000 scientists of all backgrounds from all 50 states - including 52 Nobel Laureates - have signed onto the statement. The guide to specific abuses is in the form of a "Periodic Table of Scientific Abuses," similar to the chemical periodic table of the elements, which most of us remember with varying degrees of fondness from our high school days. Agriculture issues are scattered among the topic areas and include research on CAFO airborne bacteria, pesticide regulation, and the impact of agriculture on wildlife habitat.

See article posted on the web (along with a list of issue topics) at: http://www.ucsusa.org/scientific_integrity/interference/a-to-z-guide-to-political.html



Aviation and the environment are on a collision course.

The number of airline flights worldwide is growing and expected to skyrocket

over the coming decades. Aircraft emissions pollute the air and threaten by 2050 to become one of the largest contributors to global warming, British scientists have concluded.

Aviation is believed to be less a factor in the Earth's warming than power plants or vehicular traffic, but its emissions are considerable. On a New York-to-Denver flight, a commercial jet

would generate 840 to 1,660 pounds of carbon dioxide per passenger. That's about what an SUV generates in a month.



Return of The Gypsy Moth... Wildlands Threatened

by Mark Diehl, Conservation Chair,
Western Maryland Group

Western Maryland saw a return of significant gypsy moth populations in 2006, and 2007 will likely see a repeat performance. The matter of how best to manage this invasive, exotic species (i.e., introduced into the ecosystem by man, accidentally) is a subject of great debate among the Savage River State Forest (SRSF) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). As is often the case with our various CAB debates concerning matters of ecological pertinence, the management method depends largely on one's perspective. To the forest products industry, gypsy moths represent a very real and present threat to the natural resource – they can kill or damage valuable timber. To the non-consumptive viewpoints (okay, tree huggers), gypsy moths do not represent such a catastrophic impact.

Western Maryland's state forest system is a patchwork quilt of parcels, constituting Maryland's two largest state forests (Green Ridge and Savage River).

**FIGHT
TO KEEP
WILDLANDS
WILD &
UNSPRAYED.**

Certainly, we are fortunate to have these natural resources in our back yards. Parcels of private lands are interspersed within state forest tracts, and gypsy moths know no boundaries. Herein lies the heart of the gypsy moth management debate that is discussed within this article.



Gypsy moths damage Wildlands' valuable timber industry resources, but will spraying harm the ecosystem?

After much lively debate at our semi-annual (Fall, 2006) SRSF CAB meeting, a letter with majority CAB support was drafted which proposes a drastic alteration of wildland management policy.

FIRST POSSIBILITY: spray the wildlands for gypsy moths

**TO
SPRAY
OR
NOT TO
SPRAY?**

SECOND POSSIBILITY: return the wildlands to the general management zone for logging!

As the representative of conservation interests on the CAB, I opposed this letter along with one other member due to its proposition that the state either give top priority to spraying Wildlands or allow them to be logged. Regardless, these possibilities are now being considered. A copy of the letter is contained on page 7

for your review. Do not think that our wild lands are protected in perpetuity; they are not.

Wildlands are protected by only two things:

- 1.) By law, via the COMAR (Code of Maryland Regulations), which is subject to change at any time by the legislative process; and
- 2.) The will and desire of Maryland's citizenry.

What should we do to prevent this proposal defined in the SRSF CAB letter to the governor from coming to fruition?

1

GET THE FACTS.

SEE WWW.NATURESERVE.ORG

facts by reading the gypsy moth excerpts listed below and by visiting the <http://www.natureserve.org> web site on gypsy moths. Readers are encouraged to peruse the entire "Explorer" section for an interesting and informative view into the world of the gypsy moth. Of particular concern with management methods is the indiscriminate eradication of non-targeted species as a result of the various spraying ingredients utilized. Please also read the aforementioned SRSF CAB letter as well as the related Associated Press "Gypsy Moth/Wildlands" pre-article interview (Dishnea/Diehl e-mail) and the published Associated Press "Gypsy Moths/Wildlands" news article, all listed below.

Next, call the SRSF office at 301.895.5759 and request a copy of the updated SRSF map ("Trail Guide").

2

GET THE MAP OF WILDLANDS IN SAVAGE RIVER STATE FOREST.

This excellent, field-grade resource contains a map of the entire SRSF, including the first-ever showing of wildlands' locations. Study this map. Take some hikes into these amazingly beautiful wildlands. See first hand why they're worth preserving.



First, do your homework. Learn the scientifically-based

Lastly, use your newfound knowledge and field experiences to compose a succinct and compelling letter to Governor-elect O'Malley. Send copies to the Secretary of Maryland DNR as well as to DNR's Steve Koehn (Director, MD Forest Service) and Glenn

3

WRITE A LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR.

Therres (Director, Heritage Services). Make it clear that wildlands should remain wild (i.e., be as unmanaged as possible) and should be sprayed only as a very last resort.



Precarious crossing in the Wildlands of The Savage River State Forest - Photo Mark Diehl

Recommend that any decision to spray in a wildland should be left to DNR's ecologists, not the forest service. Most critically, strongly emphasize that under no circumstances will a reversion of wildlands to a general management zone status be tolerated.

Your willingness to speak out on this critical matter is crucial to the long term viability of our prized wildlands system. You are encouraged to e-mail or snail mail a copy of your letters to yours truly at the address shown on the last page of this newsletter. This is a serious matter. Thank you for taking the time to fight!

1039 Fort Hill Road
Swanton, Maryland 21561
October 16, 2006

The Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor
Office of the Governor
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1925

Dear Governor Ehrlich:

Garrett County's Savage River Forest, Maryland's largest state forest, faces a catastrophic fate unless some major management changes are made in Annapolis. Gypsy moths defoliated more than 15,000 acres of trees in the county, including some 10,000 acres in Savage River Forest alone. If left unchecked, a second defoliation next year could likely kill 60 percent of the mature timber in these areas, devastating the region's forest products and affecting outdoor recreation industries. One of Maryland's most scenic areas would also be lost. Trees in many of these areas were already severely stressed by the 2002 and 2003 ice storms.

I am writing to you on behalf of the majority of the Citizens Advisory Board for Savage River State Forest to update you on the gypsy moth problem and offer some pro-active solutions to mitigate this onslaught of gypsy moths. To date, some members of the advisory board, working with the Garrett County Forestry Board, have met with the Garrett County Commissioners and field personnel of Maryland's Departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture on the gypsy moth issue.

MDA sprayed an estimated 14,000 acres of Garrett County forests, which was less than half of the severely defoliated acres. Most of the forest has re-leafed since spring's massive defoliation. So to the casual observer, all is well in Garrett County's forests. But in reality, millions of gypsy moths have laid billions of eggs for the 2007 defoliation. Plus, an extremely dry season has further stressed these trees.

The Citizens Advisory board has identified the following problems:

- 1) MDA is estimating the 2007 defoliation will be at least two and half to three times as many acres as the 2006 defoliation. Half of these acres will be defoliated for the second year in a row.
- 2) MDA can only handle spraying 15,000 acres of public and 10,000 acres of private lands in 2007, and that's with adding three more staff to western Maryland. Currently, a staff of four serves the three western counties.
- 3) Federal officials have cut their gypsy moth suppression budget from \$3.5 million to \$1 million and none of these funds will go to Maryland.
- 4) MDA's "priority" spray guidelines are based on spraying Central Maryland 15 years ago, so that residential areas get the highest priority.
- 5) Despite objections from our advisory board, the Garrett County Commissioners and local DNR staff, the state set aside 3,000 more acres of Savage River State Forest as Wildlands in recent years to "protect" large, old trees. But 40-60 percent of the large, old trees died, three to four years after a second gypsy moth defoliation in 1990-91, in areas of Middle Fork and Bear Pen Wildlands. The real tragedy is that the gene pool of these old trees was lost forever. The synergistic effect of gypsy moth defoliation, drought and the buildup of native insects and diseases is disastrous for older trees.

The state asks the private sector to be good stewards of its forest lands, but due to state budget cuts and hiring freezes in both DNR and MDA, there are inadequate DNR foresters and MDA entomologists to adequately manage our state forests and provide assistance to private landowners. Writing citizens' timber management plans, for example, may take a year. Also, Savage River State Forest's limited personnel struggle to generate \$1.5 million in annual timber sales, while other work is postponed. (The Savage River Forest is the only entity of DNR that generates more income than its budget every year).

If DNR were being a good steward of Savage River State Forest, it would be cutting the growth (6 million board feet per year) in the general zone and generating \$3 million in sales. Because of budget cuts and hiring freezes from Annapolis, tree growth in the general zone has declined by 50 percent since the last forest inventory, leaving the forest unhealthy and more susceptible to insect and disease attacks. This is not an example of good steward-

**Oct. 16, 2006 Letter
from SRSF (Savage
River State Forest)
CAB (Citizens Advisory
Board) to Gov. Ehrlich
(re: Gypsy Moth
/Wildlands Management
Recommendations):**

ship. For the Maryland legislature to set aside still more sections of Savage River Forest into Wildlands (Savage Wildlands) translates into killing more big trees that were earmarked to be saved. Is this good stewardship?

MDA must give gypsy moth spraying of Wildlands top priority or DNR should return them to the general management zone, so that the areas can be actively managed for the production and protection of valuable big trees and their gene pool. At the very least, DNR and MDA should make the highest priority spraying a buffer in all its forest classes where more than 500 egg masses are found. This strip should be 200 yards wide if sprayed with Dimilin and 300 yards if Bt is used. The spray choice should be that of the neighboring landowners.

If DNR would hire one forester and two technicians aside 3,000 more acres of Savage River State Forest as Wildlands in recent years to "protect" large, old trees. But 40-60 percent of the large, old trees died, three to four years after a second gypsy moth defoliation in 1990-91, in areas of Middle Fork and Bear Pen Wildlands. The real tragedy is that the gene pool of these old trees was lost forever. The synergistic effect of gypsy moth defoliation, drought and the buildup of native insects and diseases is disastrous for older trees.

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If DNR would hire one forester and two technicians for the Savage River Forest office, that office could increase its timber harvest. This would make the forest healthier and generate another \$1.5 million, money which could fill the gap in the gypsy moth spray program budget. This would indeed make DNR a good forest steward.

We hope that you appreciate the concern of the Citizens Advisory Board on this critical problem facing Western Maryland forests, and we thank you for the time spent in assessing our concerns.

Sincerely,

E. Marshall Stacy, Chairman
and the following members of
the Savage River Forest Citizens Advisory Board

**Oct. 16, 2006 Letter
(Continued)
from SRSF (Savage
River State Forest)
CAB (Citizens
Advisory Board)
to Gov. Ehrlich**

CC: C. Ronald Franks

Lewis R. Riley

Steven W. Koehn

Jack L. Purdue

Board of Garrett County Commissioners

Excerpts from: "<http://www.natureserve.org/explorer>" (string search = gypsy moth):

[Note: use the search option within the "Explorer section of the natureserve.org website. Do not search for string "gypsy moth" via the natureserve.org main page SEARCH option]

When gypsy moth outbreaks occur, the short term prognosis whether or not any intervention occurs is for decline to innocuous levels within a few, usually one to three, years. Exceptions may still occasionally occur, but not as frequently as pre-1989 due to the recent impacts of *Entomophaga maimaiga*. Once gypsy moth becomes established in a new area there is a high probability, but far from a certainty, that oak dominated habitats will have one or more severe defoliations within a decade. Treatment with either chemical biocides or the microbial insecticide *Bacillus thuringiensis* is commonly used to prevent defoliation. Neither has any documented long term benefit, however. Some older works suggest outbreaks recur more quickly after biocide use as opposed to natural collapse but it is not likely that this would be the case with current suppression strategies and not all older works agreed on this point. Regardless of tactics used, if any, subsequent outbreaks may occur.

The gypsy moth continues to expand its range annually and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. In general initial outbreaks in an area are the most protracted and most destructive. At least before the emergence of *Entomophaga maimaiga* in 1989 the general pattern was that outbreaks would continue to recur every decade or so once gypsy moth becomes established in an area. However, these subsequent outbreaks tend to kill fewer trees and to collapse faster. *E. maimaiga*, however, may greatly reduce the frequency of future outbreaks. Indeed there have been few large outbreaks in New England since 1989. Many Connecticut forests have had no defoliation since 1981 or 1982. Chronic outbreaks in parts of Cumberland County, New Jersey collapsed about 1996 and in most such place no gypsy moth stages were apparent for five years (Schweitzer) but a few adults were seen in 2002. While *Entomophaga maimaiga* seems likely to have a major impact in reducing outbreaks, they will continue to occur in some places.

Threats: While such claims are made, often to promote spraying, it is not true that unchecked gypsy moth infestation will result in deforestation of large areas. Or at least that failed to happen in the first 130 years. It is however quite likely that some trees will be killed during the first outbreak in an area and quite possible others will be in subsequent outbreaks. Mortality might include high quality canopy trees as well as many already stressed or weak individuals. It is also not true that every tree that refoiliates a few weeks after an

outbreak will recover. Many to most trees that die do so a year or more later often due to secondary agents such as two lined chestnut borer (a beetle) or *Armillaria* fungi (Dunbar and Stevens, 1975). As gypsy moth invades new areas the best case scenario (increasingly likely now due to *Entomophaga*) is that no serious defoliation will occur, the worst case probably is roughly 50% mortality to oaks and other highly favored trees when two or more severe defoliations coincide with drought. Such severe damage is much less likely in subsequent outbreaks.

**“IT IS NOT TRUE
THAT UNCHECKED
GYPSY MOTH
INFESTATION
WILL RESULT IN
DEFORESTATION
OF LARGE AREAS.”**



photo by Mark Diehl



Dec. 6, 2006
E-mail Interview
of Mark Diehl
by Dave Dishneau
(Associated-Press Reporter)

served by modern forestry practices. But the management goal of a wildland is best

-----Original Message-----

From: Dishneau, Dave [ddishneau@ap.org]

Sent: Wednesday, December 06, 2006 6:25 PM

To: Diehl, Mark

Subject: Wildlands-Gypsy Moth

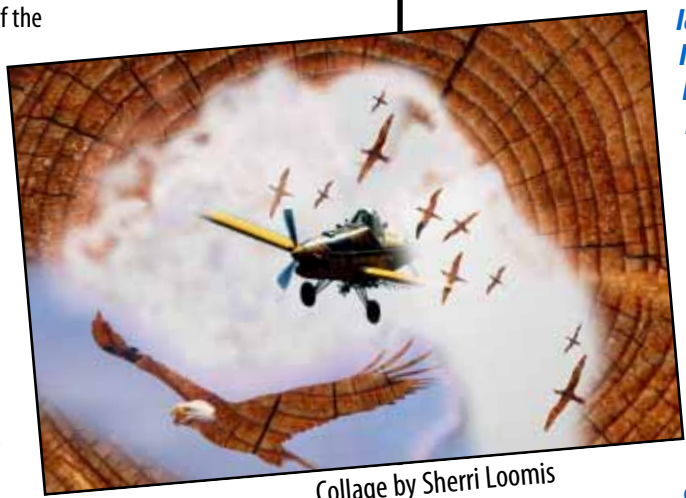
Hi, Mark. I'm working on a story about wildlands and gypsy moths. I read the recent exchange of letters in the Cumberland Times-News from Marshall Stacy and Bob DeGroot. I hope you will answer these questions, preferably by phone, in your capacity as a member of the Savage River State Forest Citizens Advisory Board, and vice-chair of the Sierra Club's Western Maryland Group.

1. Why didn't you sign the letter to the governor from the majority of advisory board members?

I opposed the letter due to its proposition that wildlands either be sprayed for gypsy moths or returned to the general management zone for harvesting.

2. Marshall Stacy says that if the point of a wildland is to have big trees, you can grow them faster by selective cutting. Please respond.

The point of a wildland is not solely to have big trees. A wildland is the most complex forest type because wildlands are unmanaged, leading naturally to an uneven-aged tree composition and an ecological complexity that is only beginning to be understood. This will never be the case in a managed forest, where the ecological clock is dramatically reset roughly every 80 years by a harvest. Appalachian forests were unmanaged for tens of thousands of years prior to the arrival of Europeans, and fared perfectly well. If the management goal of a given forest is to grow wood fiber, then it is best



Collage by Sherri Loomis

served by no management at all -- or the least amount possible. Wood fiber management goals notwithstanding, a forest can take care of itself in the long run far better without human management.

3. The Citizens Advisory Board recommends doubling the timber harvest in the Savage River State Forest to increase funds for gypsy moth suppression. Do you agree with that point?

I agree that the gypsy moth problem is significant and I support a temporary increase in harvest levels only if the proceeds would go directly toward localized gypsy moth damage mitigation in the general management (harvest) zone. I don't think that a comprehensive analysis has occurred that supports a specific harvest increase amount.

4. Do you oppose spraying pesticides in wildlands under any circumstances?

I prefer no spraying in wildlands, but these decision are best left to the naturalists within DNR, as they most fully comprehend the consequences.

5. Do you oppose wildfire suppression in wildlands under any circumstances?

I prefer letting fire take its natural course. It is common knowledge that fire suppression is not good for the health of a forest in the long run. Much of the fire suppression choices being made today are driven by limiting damage to

man-made structures and have little to do with the health of the forest.

6. Will there be another effort in 2007 to add to the state's wildlands? If so, will the effort include more than the Crabtree Creek Wildland?

I am aware of on-going efforts to preserve the Crabtree Creek area as a wildland, and feel that it is deserving. I am unaware of any efforts to designate additional wildlands other than Crabtree Creek.

(Associated Press' Gypsy Moth/Wildlands Article)

Gypsy moths prompt call for Wildlands review

– Frederick News-Post • Dec 10, 2006 –

Marshall Stacy, who Chairs a State Forest Advisory Committee for Savage River State Forest, suggests the state double the harvest of timber on state lands where logging is allowed. DNR Forester says that more logging may be ordered to remove dead and dying trees that could otherwise become fuel.

SWANTON (AP) - To most Marylanders, the protected state forests called Wildlands are more an idea than a destination - rarely seen but treasured by many as untouchable tracts of tall trees more than a century old.

To Marshall Stacy, they are a menace. Mr. Stacy grows giant Christmas trees up to 40 feet tall on 315 acres in Garrett County surrounded by the Middle Fork Wildland in the Savage River State Forest. Gypsy moth caterpillars defoliated more than 15,000 acres of hardwood trees in the county last spring during an infestation that is expected to worsen next year.

Some of the insects attacked hardwoods on Mr. Stacy's land, despite his spraying of pesticide. They laid eggs even on the trunks of evergreens, which they usually avoid. Now Mr. Stacy and most members of the Savage River Forest Citizens Advisory Board he chairs have sent the state an alarming message: either spray more pesticides in the Wildlands or log them to curb the gypsy moth damage.

Not even Mr. Stacy believes the General Assembly will allow timber sales in Wildlands. But he and his allies, including the Maryland Forest Association, hope to use this year's surprisingly heavy gypsy moth damage as a wedge to further loosen the Department of Natural Resources' restrictive management practices on Wildlands.

Mr. Stacy's insistence on making Wildlands the focus of a plea for more moth-suppression funds split the 10-member board. Two refused to sign the letter sent in November to Gov. Robert Ehrlich.

Mark Diehl, who represents the Sierra Club on the panel, said he opposed the proposition that the state

either give top priority to spraying Wildlands or allow them to be logged.

Kevin Dodge, director of the Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology program at Garrett College, said the letter was too sensational.

Wildlands have always been a sensitive topic, championed by environmentalists and opposed by the Maryland Forest Association, which counts logging and forest products companies among its members. Established by the General Assembly in 1971 to protect areas that have "retained their wilderness character" or harbor rare or vanishing species, the State Wildlands Preservation System encompasses 29 tracts and 43,773 acres. The law has since been amended to allow wildfire suppression and necessary measures to control insects and diseases, including chemical treatment.

Some Wildlands, including tracts in the Savage River State Forest, were sprayed last spring - but sparingly, state officials said. They used a biological insecticide, *Bacillus thuringiensis*, that is less effective but kinder to other wildlife than the chemical pesticide Dimilin.

Robert Tichenor Jr., chief of Forest Pest Management at the Maryland Department of Agriculture, said he's planning for a roughly 60 percent increase in spraying next year over an expanded area that will likely include parts of the counties of Allegany, Baltimore, Frederick and Washington. Last year, 25,500 acres were treated.

Stacy suggested the state double the harvest of timber on state lands where logging is allowed, and use the additional money to fund more spraying. Koehn said he's not contemplating such a strategy, but that more logging may be ordered after the caterpillars feast, to remove dead and dying trees that could otherwise become fuel.

This final article was devoid of key substantive points made by Diehl.

NatureServe: Conservation for Endangered Species

Who We Are:

NatureServe is a non-profit conservation organization that provides the scientific information and tools needed to help guide effective conservation action. NatureServe and its network of natural heritage programs are the leading source for information about rare and endangered species and threatened ecosystems.

NatureServe represents an international network of biological inventories—known as natural heritage programs or conservation data centers—operating in all 50 U.S. states, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean. Together we not only collect and manage detailed local information on plants, animals, and ecosystems, but develop information products, data management tools, and conservation services to help meet local, national, and global conservation needs. The objective scientific information about species and ecosystems developed by NatureServe is used by all sectors of society—conservation groups, government agencies, corporations, academia, and the public—to make informed decisions about managing our natural resources.

Key Activities:

Establishing scientific standards for biological inventory and biodiversity data management.

Developing comprehensive and current databases on at-risk species and ecological communities.

Designing advanced biodiversity data management systems in partnership with information technology leaders.

Making biodiversity information available to the public through our websites, publications, and custom services to clients and partners.

Providing information products and conservation services to guide natural resource decision-making.

Our History:

NatureServe carries on a legacy of conservation work that began when The Nature Conservancy helped to establish the first state natural

heritage program in 1974. Over the next two decades The Nature Conservancy and a collection of public and private partners built a network of natural heritage programs in the United States to collect and manage data about the status and distribution of species and ecosystems of conservation concern.

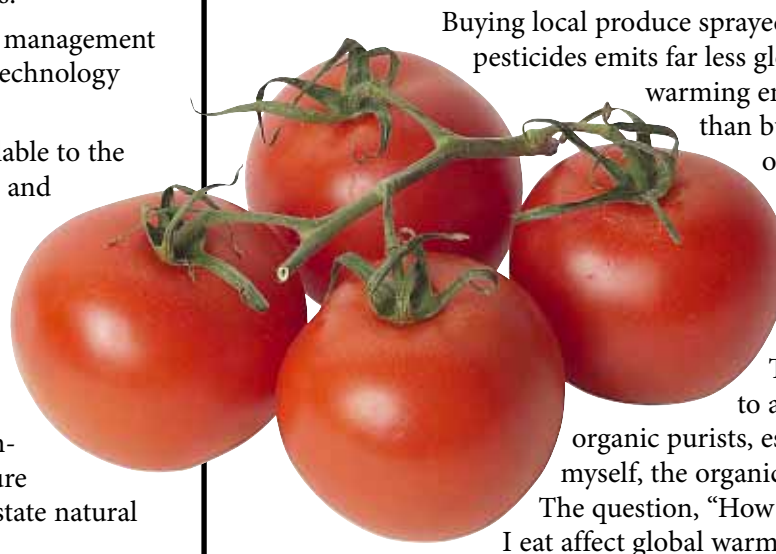
As this network expanded to include Canada and Latin America, natural heritage programs became the recognized source for the most complete and detailed information on rare and endangered species and threatened ecosystems, relied upon by government

agencies, corporations, and the conservation community alike. Today the NatureServe network includes 74 independent natural heritage programs and conservation data centers throughout the Western Hemisphere, with some 800 dedicated scientists and a collective annual budget of more than \$45 million.

NatureServe, the membership organization for this network, was established in 1994 and was originally known as the Association for Biodiversity Information. By 2001, the organization had grown and evolved into its present form. The Nature Conservancy, which since the 1970s had provided scientific and technical support to the network, transferred this role to NatureServe, along with professional staff, databases, and responsibility for the scientific standards and procedures under which the network operates. NatureServe is headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, with regional offices in four U.S. locations and in Canada.

Stop Global Warming – Buy Local Food

by Sam White



Buying local produce sprayed with pesticides emits far less global warming emissions than buying organic produce shipped in from other states. That's hard to accept for organic purists, especially myself, the organic farmer. The question, "How does what I eat affect global warming?" has



been pondered within climate activist circles for sometime, but no real data existed. Food Share Toronto, an agriculture policy think tank, has gathered the scientific data and give examples of the various emissions created by how far certain types of food travel before they reach your dinner plate.

Below are the types of food, the distance traveled, and the carbon emissions created.

Item	Distance Traveled	Carbon Emissions
8 Apples, Ontario	114km	23.805g
8 Apples, Washington State	5887km	974.97g
Carrots, Ontario	72km	14.904g
Carrots, California	4242km	840.213g
4 Lamb Chops, Ontario	72km	7.032g
4 Lamb Chops, Montana	2608km	255.891g



Although the study does not provide info on how much carbon is emitted in the production of the above listed products, it's safe to say that non-organic, locally grown food produces far less carbon emissions than its organic counterpart grown 4000km from you. Obviously, the best meal is one raised locally, without the use of pesticides and fungicides, both by-products of the petrochemical industry. To find a local farm near you, please visit <http://www.localharvest.org>. For the entire report from Food Share Toronto, please go to <http://www.foodshare.net/resource/files/ACF230.pdf>.

Heaven On Earth ...

by Mark Diehl

I had the good fortune of taking a vacation out west with my two teen-aged children this past summer. We experienced seventeen straight days of sunshine, dappled with numerous, rampant forest fires that defined the west's summer of 2006. We flew into Salt Lake City and drove a tight oval, visiting Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, and a dear, old friend in Missoula, MT (one of the west's cool small cities). We also backpacked in the vast Selway-Bitterroot wilderness and visited Olympic Park/Park City, UT before returning to Salt Lake City for the flight home.



photo by Mark Diehl

Every aspect of this trip was memorable in its own right, including my children's first flight and visit to the great American west. Even the occasional several-hundred mile drives every few days were spectacular. The ride on Montana state route 89 north from Yellowstone to Glacier is particularly noteworthy. Wow! Yellowstone is ... well it's Yellowstone. So far as other-worldly natural features go, there's perhaps just nothing else quite like it on earth. It definitely is a must-see place. However, it is strongly recommend to visit Yellowstone when the crowds significantly subside after Labor Day. We turned into the parking lot at Old Faithful and the crowds were so large that even my children agreed to opt out. We will see Old Faithful another day! The northern half of Yellowstone is not crowded at all, even in summer's heyday, although it lacks the density and variety of natural features concentrated in the lower half.

Regardless, any day in Yellowstone is a good day. We stayed two nights in a cabin at the Lake Yellowstone Hotel. Affordably priced, simple, quiet, clean ... recommended. The classical string quartet playing in the glass-walled foyer overlooking Lake Yellowstone provided great respite to three road-wearied souls upon their arrival into the park.

Despite the marvel of Yellowstone, we had Montana on our brains and clearly the high point of our trip occurred in Glacier Park. Specifically, we made reservations six months in advance to spend two nights at the Granite Park Chalet, a primitive hikers cabin that can only be reached on foot. Catching a van shuttle from Lake McDonald on the western side of the park, we bit our nails and repeated prayers as the seasoned driver whimsically joked while he ascended the precarious and breathtaking Going To The Sun Road to Logan Pass, at the continental divide. It is worth visiting Glacier Park even if you don't get out of your car. But hiking in this park takes the trip to another dimension. We're talking about a million acres, with but one mere road intersecting it at about the north-to-south midpoint (aptly named Going To The Sun Road). An estimated 300 grizzlies roam free here, estimated to be the largest population in the lower forty-eight. We saw none, and that was just fine.

We departed with backpacks at the Logan Pass visitors center and set out on the Highline Trail. It turned out to be the best hiking day of our lives. The Highline Trail is deserving in every right of its designation as one of North America's most spectacular trails. Hovering above the tree line, we gained only a few hundred feet in elevation during its jaw-dropping 7.6 mile course to Granite Park Chalet. At one point I heard my digital camera's battery utter "would ya give a guy a little rest, please?" One doesn't even need a camera on this trail. The memory etched from the sheer euphoria of this experience is far more



photo by Mark Diehl

powerful and lasting than any camera image.

Pushing dusk's limits, we arrived at the chalet tired and elated. It really is heaven on earth. That there even is a building at this location is unbelievable. But there is, and it is beautiful in its simplicity. Built with on-site materials by the railroad company who once owned the present-day Glacier Park lands, the chalet was constructed to lure eastern travelers into the great American west. Visitors would endure long train rides and then travel by pack horse to the chalet. A book containing a photographic record of these by-gone days is kept at the chalet and provides a fascinating glimpse into the comforts provided to these original sojourners, as compared to today's relatively austere backpacking traveler. Granite Park Chalet is only open each year for about two months --

from late June until Labor Day. Day hikes from the chalet afford opportunities to view breathtaking 360-degree panoramas from the Swiftcurrent Pass fire tower. A precarious mountain goat trail leads to a view looking down onto the famous Grinnell Glacier. We spent countless hours just sitting in a meadow above the chalet. It was hard to decide in which direction to gaze at times. Sometimes we just looked up in the sky to keep our heads from spinning off.

Granite Park Chalet is as close as it comes to camping out with a roof over your head. Given the hike required to reach it, it is a welcome oasis set amidst unparalleled



photo by Mark Diehl

beauty, dwarfed by its surroundings. A wonderful sense of hiker camaraderie pervades the chalet. The rooms are very austere, consisting of comfortable bunk beds or single beds, depending on the particular room configuration selected. It is highly recommended that earplugs be packed since the walls are paper-thin. The mess hall includes a surprisingly well-stocked kitchen, replete with a propane cook stove for self-prepared meals and a wood-burning stove. Potable water and solar-powered, self-composting

latrines are available via a short walk. Needless to say, there are no showers. The chalet offers order-ahead menu items such as freeze-dried backpacker meals, jerky, dried fruits, even bottled water. A pack-mule team carries supplies in and waste out once weekly. My daughter had the good fortune of celebrating her 18th birthday at the chalet (not an accident). Somehow the giant cupcake-turned-birthday cake survived the journey and the hosts secretly orchestrated the other guests for a rousing singing of “Happy Birthday”, much to my daughter’s delight and complete surprise. The magic of the chalet in her mind expanded instantly.

The next day we had to face the stark reality of departing this larger-than-life locale. It was an experience we will never forget, and we will return. Except that next time we’ll stay longer.

Welcome New Members!



The Western Maryland Group expresses our heartfelt appreciation to the following new members (for period Nov. 2005-Nov. 2006). This list also includes existing members who have transferred into our area, as well as a few prior members who renewed after a brief membership lapse

Renewing your Sierra Club membership each year is one of the easiest and most effective steps you can take to work for “the environment”. A portion of your annual dues is allocated to our local group and represents a critical revenue stream given our relatively small size and operating budget.

Can you think of anyone who is not afraid of long-term commitment and also loves nature? Perhaps someone who would enjoy and appreciate a Sierra Club membership?

If so, it’s their lucky day! In an effort to expand our base, your Western Maryland Group is offering to fund free one-year memberships to the first ten (10) persons who provide a name and mailing address to Mark Diehl at mad55@mindspring.com Providing an e-mail address and phone number of prospective new members is desired, albeit optional. Please know that we take great care in safeguarding the integrity of your personal information.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Baughner, G.	Cumberland	Gall, G.	Cumberland	Otto, C.	Cumberland
Bertsch, J.	Deer Park	Garland, C.	Cumberland	Packard, S.	Accident
Beyer, G.	Cumberland	Gary, K.	Swanton	Richardson-Heft, C.	Frostburg
Bolton, F. & M.	Grantsville	Georg, E.	Accident	Rider, O.	Cumberland
Briggs, S.	Williamsport	Grimm, L.	Oakland	Rush, R.	Oakland
Brode, S.	Frostburg	Hammond, A.	Cumberland	Santoro, P.	Frostburg
Burkey, J. Jr.	Cumberland	Harris, M.	Frostburg	Sizemore, N.	Frostburg
Cacopardo, L.	Oldtown	Hay, C.	Frostburg	Smith, S.	Grantsville
Cameron, S.	Frostburg	Hensel, M.	Cumberland	Smith, W.	Williamsport
Chawla, G.	Frostburg	High, C.	Frostburg	St. Marie, J.	Frostburg
Cordial, B.	Cumberland	Hoffman, M.	Rawlings	Starr, W.	Williamsport
Cross, J.	Cumberland	Horning, B.	Cumberland	Steinitz, K.	McHenry
Delauney, S.	Williamsport	Hummer, A.	Frostburg	Tomlinson, J.	Frostburg
Denton, S.	Oakland	Imes, L.	Cumberland	Tunney, K.	Grantsville
Dollinger, S. & J.	Frostburg	Johnson, A.	Cumberland	Vitek, K.	Oakland
Downey, N.	Williamsport	Jones, W.	Williamsport	Vrieze, J.	Frostburg
Elmlinger, E.	Oakland	Krogh & Caupp, K. & C.	Frostburg	Weddle, M.	Lonaconing
Evans, I.	Oakland	Lytle, B.	Friendsville	Wheaton, J.	Frostburg
Ewers, T.	Frostburg	Martin, M.L.	Flintstone	Wilkinson, S. & A.	Cumberland
Flanagan, M.	LaVale	Mattingly, R.	Cumberland	Willis, K.	Cumberland
Ford, D.	Williamsport	Millar, J.	Cumberland	Zumbrun, F.	Cumberland
Fuller, D.	Cumberland	Nazelrod, C.	Cumberland		

New E-mail Discussion Group

The Western Maryland Group now has an e-mail discussion group/Listserv for its members.

MD-WMD-FORUM@lists.sierraclub.org is a place for members to discuss conservation issues pertaining to Western Maryland. We will also announce Western Maryland Group meetings, outings, and other events. Please join! We promise not to fill up your inbox. To join, go to <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/MD-WMD-FORUM.html> and click the "Join the list" link.

"An Inconvenient Truth" DVDs available FREE for High School Science Teachers

The Western Maryland Group is donating FREE copies of DVDs of the recent global warming film, An Inconvenient Truth to any area high school science teacher willing to show the film in his or her class. For more information, please e-mail sam.white@maryland.sierraclub.org or call him at 301-264-4162.

Next Public Program – Tuesday March 13, 7 PM

The next public program will be on March 13 at 7 PM at the Frostburg Public Library. The topic will be Energy. We will have a viewing of the short documentary Kilowatt Ours.

Viewers will see how the director of the film, Jeff Barrie, and his family saved hundreds of dollars annually by conserving electricity. The savings, in return, were



used to buy appliances that would even further reduce their electric bill. The film will be followed by a general discussion on what everyone can do to reduce their electric bill, and where our energy comes from.

Anyone attending the program should look at their electric bill before attending, including the number of Kilowatt Hours used and the cost of their average bill for the last year.



Events!

Mid to late May - Invasive species eradication, Green Ridge State Forest.

Sam White, 301-264-4162.

Jan. 25 - Sierra Club N' Beer at the Draft Zone, Frostburg. Join others for a casual discussion on the environment over beer.

Nathan Forbeck, 301-268-5408.

Save Paper - Get Your Sierra Club Western MD Group Newsletter by E-mail

There are now 2 new ways you can get a copy of this newsletter to help us save paper and resources:

- 1) Call or E-mail sdloomis@sl4design.com to receive a pdf e-mail version of the newsletter.
- 2) Go to the website <http://www.maryland.sierraclub.org/western-md/> and click on the newsletter link to download a pdf of the newsletter

Help us save paper, postage and paper waste by receiving this newsletter through your computer or E-mail rather than through the postal service snailmail. And please Sherri Loomis know if we can remove your name from the hard copy newsletter mailing list.

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Will We Respond in Time?

by Craig Etchison

One great head-shaking disconnect of recent years involves our national lust after oil--to the point that we've seriously entertained the possibility of destroying the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for a few months of oil, not to mention the moonscape we're currently creating with drilling rigs, roads, pads, and polluted holding ponds in large areas along the Rocky Mountain front. Why a disconnect? Because burning fossil fuels is destroying our environment by producing global warming CO2 gas. If we continue to burn oil and coal at present rates--and rates of CO2 emissions have risen 2.5% each of the last 5 years--scientists say the planet will be poached by the end of the century.

CO2 acts like a blanket around the earth, locking in heat that is melting glaciers world wide, the prime source of drinking water for hundreds of millions of people in Asia and South America. What will those people do when their water supply disappears?

For hundreds of years, the ocean has been a CO2 sponge, but the amount of CO2 sopped up is turning the oceans acidic, threatening the base of the ocean food chain, potentially leaving the oceans as bare as the Sahara Desert.

Why are we doing this? Is it so a few oil barons can add more millions to their bursting coffers? The world cries out in protest through massive storms and melting ice and drowning polar bears and disappearing drinking water, but we ignore the signs.

Deep in the bowels of the Pentagon exists the Office of Net Assessment, charged with analyzing threats to the security of the United States. This office released a

report stating that global climate change is by far the greatest threat to our country. Remember all those millions of people who will lack drinking water when the glaciers disappear? They will become environmental refugees, a serious threat to world stability. Yet we--the world's greatest producer of CO2 gas--continue as if there's no threat. Yet climate change poses a greater threat to the U.S. than all the terrorists in the world.

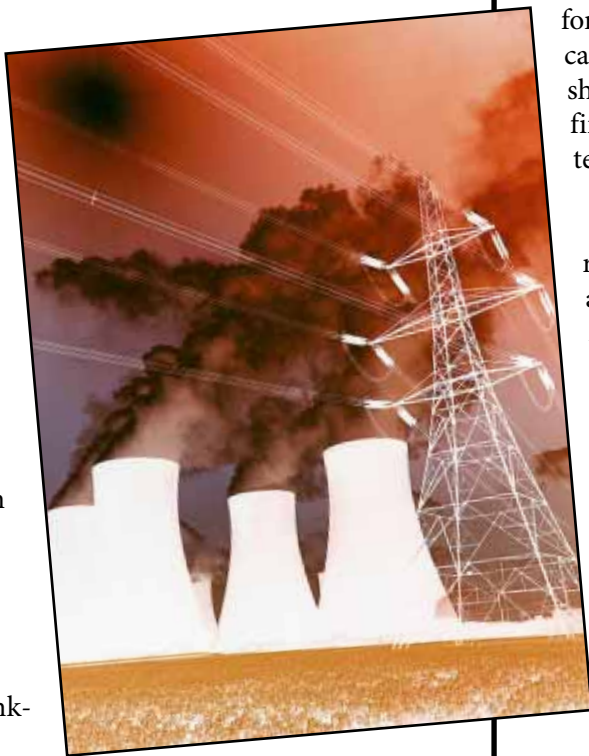
According to the best minds working on the problem of global warming, we have a small window of opportunity--perhaps 10 years, but maybe only 7. If we hope to survive, we must launch a Manhattan Project aimed at curtailing global warming and coming up with solutions for adapting to what is already inevitable.

We could do much right now. Instead of throwing more money away on weapons, such as \$150 billion to overhaul and expand our nuclear bomb making complex--weapons that can't even be used without creating a devastating nuclear winter--let's start plowing money into clean energy that will decrease the release of CO2. The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates this would generate more than 3 million good jobs.

We could increase our fleet average to 40 mpg with current technology--eliminating completely our need for mid-East oil and drastically curtailing CO2, since cars are the second leading producers of CO2. We should eliminate the Texas plan to add 10 new coal-fired electrical generating plants using 50-year-old technology, guaranteed to increase CO2.

We could recycle more effectively, which reduces CO2 emissions significantly. To recycle an aluminum can requires 6% of the energy used to make a new one, yet each year we throw away enough aluminum cans to rebuild our entire commercial fleet of 6000 jets four times. A compact florescent light bulb uses about 30% of the energy that an incandescent bulb uses. How many readers have replaced old bulbs with CFLs? Turning off lights and appliances that aren't being used helps save the planet. Instead of subsidizing dirty and dangerous nuclear power with billions of dollars, we should be putting that money into solar, wind, and other renewables.

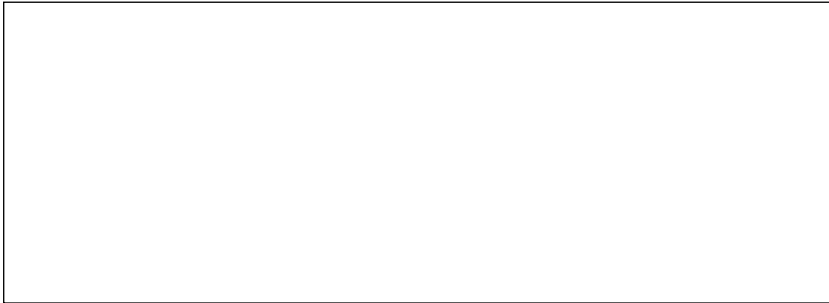
Everyone can do their part. We must. Global warming is only going to get worse if we do nothing, and we ignore it at the peril of this world and all its creatures, including ourselves.





Place
Stamp
Here

Western Maryland Group
13915 Valley Rd NE
Cumberland, MD 21502



Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet.



Next Meeting:

Tues., Mar. 13, 2007 • 7:30 pm
at the HRDC Cumberland Sr. Center
19 Frederick St. (corner of Frederick & Liberty,
Old Post Office Building)

(Meetings held 2nd Tuesday of the month)

Main Topic: ENERGY

- Deregulation
- Show the 40 minute documentary "Kilowatt Ours", which shows how to reduce your dependence on Coal-based power
- General discussion on how to get your electric bill below \$40/month.
- Discussion of wind and solar

Contact Information Executive Committee (ExCom)

Sierra Club – Western Maryland Group
Sam White*Chair*301.264.4162
.....E-Mail: cedarrockcsa@yahoo.com

Louis Bernstein ..*Vice Chair*301.697.2760
.....E-Mail: satya@aol.com

Mark Diehl*Conservation*301.724.6238
.....E-Mail: mad55@mindspring.com
.....13915 Valley Rd NE Cumberland, MD 21502

Karen Krogh*Membership*
.....E-Mail: ccaupp@mindspring.com

John Dunkle*Treasurer*301.689.5830
.....E-Mail: jldunkle@hereintown.net

Sherri Loomis ...*Newsletter*301-722-3232
.....E-Mail: sdloomis@SL4design.com

Craig Etchison ...*Newsletter*304-298-4704
.....E-Mail: cetchison@allegany.edu