



OTZINACHSON

The ACLU is a Friend of the Sierra Club

By David A. Young

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QUOTE

"Our enemies are innovative and resourceful, and so are we. They never stop thinking about new ways to harm our country and our people, and neither do we."

-President George W. Bush

Since 1920 the non-partisan American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has been fighting, by working in courts, legislatures, and communities, to defend individual rights and liberties. In a democracy, citizens have a right to know and free speech is valued. These basic American rights are being threatened by an administration that favors secrecy, deregulation, and corporate interests. Power and special interests are more important than families, clean air and water, or pro-

tecting our natural heritage.

The ACLU of Washington recently presented a workshop to the Washington Toxics Coalition about how to cope with SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) suits. The ACLU raised or supported cases for homeowner activist groups battling SLAPP suits by real estate developers.

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Trashin' the Parks By Ed Lawrence

America's National Park System, comprised of some 388 locations, is one of this country's crown jewels and finest achievements. We can be justifiably proud that the world's first National Park, Yellowstone, was established in this country in 1872 by President U.S. Grant. The National Park Service was created in 1916 to administer the parks, and today a dedicated professional workforce is entrusted with the job of conserving our National Parks "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations".

Unfortunately, all is not well in our National Park System. According to a coalition of 122 former senior park service officials the Bush administration is adopting policies that are undermining the integrity of our National Parks; policies that are actually "contrary to the mission of the National Park Service".

In August of 2003 this coalition of former park administrators, including four

past Park Service directors, signed onto an unprecedented letter to President Bush and Interior Secretary Gale Norton. This extraordinary letter cited deteriorating air quality and intrusive energy development within and around our National Parks as well as heavy-handed restructuring and management practices that are "strangling the very core of park stewardship", and accused the Bush administration of "not following the mandate to preserve the essence of the places that collectively represent our national heritage". These are alarming words to come from such a knowledgeable group of people who are passionately devoted to protecting our parks.

It is extremely troubling that the Bush Administration has taken its disdain for scientific opinion even into our National Parks, where policy decisions are adversely affecting the health of the parks. Former Director of the Park Ser-

(Continued on page 5)



Message from the Chair: Pink Slip the President

The Bush administration has a peculiar and nasty penchant for threatening to fire, (think prescription drug card fiasco), or actually terminating people for.... telling the truth. Last December, the Interior Department tried to fire the U. S. Park Police Chief Teresa Chambers after she went public with concerns about money and staffing and their impact on safety issues. The Park Service claims that Chambers provided an "open invitation to lawbreakers" by telling the media that her force was overstretched and under funded. Her status is currently in limbo while the Office of Special Counsel decides if she should be given whistle-blower protections. Learn more at her website- www.honestchief.com. The Bush administration has also wrecked havoc in our National Parks where employee morale has gone into a tailspin and conserving the parks has gone from the 'to do' list to the 'undo' list, see 'Trashin' The Parks on the cover of this issue.

Which brings me to November 2nd. There are many, many, many, many good sound urgent reasons to oust the current regime. The abysmal Bush environmental record is but one, albeit a very important one. John Kerry has been a strong (there's that word again) environmental advocate for his entire career. His life-time League of Conservation voting record is in the 90 percentile. I would call that a consistent commitment. Lets work to make sure that Kerry/Edwards carry Pennsylvania.

Ed Lawrence, Chair

OTZINACHSON

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Grassroots Action for Kerry in the Heart of Otzinachson

By Samantha Pearson

The Sierra Club has endorsed John Kerry for President of the United States. As a Club member and a resident in Pennsylvania, one of the swing states key to the election in November, you have to ask yourself: What are you doing about it? If you've been making phone calls for Move On PAC or Sierra Club Insiders and jumping every time the national Kerry campaign sends you an email, but you're still eager for something more concrete to direct your nervous election-focused energies to, consider joining the grassroots volunteer effort under way in Union County. If you aren't already feverishly working for change in November, check our group out. We offer volunteer opportunities from lower commitment election-day-only work, to occasional phone banking up through organizing our activities, events and goals in these next weeks leading up to the election.

We are based in Union County, just one small part of Otzinachson's area, and we have members in Snyder, Northumberland and Montour. We are doing traditional Get Out the Vote work as well as staffing information booths at farmer's markets and local fairs, doing friend-to-friend volunteer networking, holding events (like a Fahrenheit 9/11 discussion), and providing a framework for the otherwise undirected activist energy of all the currently disgruntled segments of the population, environmentalists ranking high on that list. We are focused on the

top of the ticket in order to reach out to both the right and the left. We have Democratic, Republican, Independent, and Green Party participants.

If you're too far away to join in directly, check in with us for suggestions and inspiration for your own local efforts. We like to hear what's going on in the rest of this great swing state. Our headquarters are at 111 Market St, Lewisburg, PA, 17837. And the phone number is 570.524.7220. Our website is www.pacoalitionforkerry.com. That gives our general information, lets you sign up to volunteer, provides access to talking points on the Kerry-Edwards platform, and has a link both to the national campaign and to an electronic forum you can join for more specific questions and concerns. We'd love to hear from you. Sign up today.

Samantha Pearson
Progressive Volunteer with
Grassroots Organizing in Union County, PA
www.pacoalitionforkerry.com
 111 Market St.
 Lewisburg, PA 17837
 570.524.7220

U.S. Senate Candidate Joseph Hoeffel, Good on Environment

Citing his strong and proven commitment to protecting the environment, The Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club today endorsed Joe Hoeffel for the U.S. Senate.

"Joe Hoeffel has been a true leader on environmental protection throughout his career," said Robin Mann, Chair of Pennsylvania Chapter of Sierra Club's Clean Water Committee. "The Sierra Club is endorsing Joe Hoeffel because we need a leader in the Senate who embraces the protection of our environment and economic growth as complementary – not competing – goals and one who has the drive and vision to confront the very serious challenges the nation faces."

"Sen. Specter has been supporting the bad environmental policies of the Bush Administration and the special interests that are bankrolling the Bush-Cheney re-election

campaign for too long," said Dr. David McGuire, Vice Chair of Pennsylvania Sierra Club Political Committee. "We need to send environmental heroes -- not environmental zeros -- to Washington to help pass laws that clean our air and protect our streams, lands and forests.

And that's why the Sierra Club is proud to endorse Joe Hoeffel as Pennsylvania's next U.S. Senator."

"Pennsylvanians face a critical choice this election," Hoeffel said in accepting the Sierra Club endorsement. "The Bush-Cheney Administration – with Arlen Spec-

VOTE
JOSEPH
HOEFFEL
FOR
U.S. SENATE

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Our Bodies As Evidence

The Pesticide Action Network (PAN) has released a report *Chemical Trespass: Pesticides in our Bodies and Corporate Accountability* (at www.panna.org) based on a fresh analysis of a study done by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that tested more than 9,000 people for the presence of over 100 chemicals in their bodies. The PAN analysis finds that many of the pesticides and their metabolites, or breakdown compounds, included in the study are present in practically everyone who was tested and that two neurotoxic insecticides were detected at levels well above "acceptable" thresholds set by the EPA. Even more troubling is the fact that children carry the highest burdens of some of the pesticides.

The report also introduces a Pesticide Trespass Index (PTI) to gauge corporate responsibility for pesticide body burden levels. An initial test case of the PTI identifies Dow Chemical as responsible for about 80% of the chlorpyrifos that Americans carry in their bodies.

No Sock Hop Blues

By Dodie Rippon Lovett

Dave Hafer is or was Mr. Sock Hop for the Otzinachson. He has been organizer since the Sock Hop was the Anarchists' Ball in the early 70's. He wants to direct his time and energy to other Otzinachson projects so this year there will be no Sock Hop.

Now is the time for someone special to come forward and take over Dave's role. He has kindly agreed to assist a new person in getting started and learning the ropes. This position can be handled by any interested member – you do not have to be an Executive Committee member.

If you like this event and want to keep the Sock Hop alive, please contact Dave Hafer (P.O. Box 65, Lewisburg, PA 17837 or call 570-523-3107).

You can also team up with others to ease the work load. Please consider helping out this fun event as it is our only public "Just 4 Fun Event" of the year – excluding, of course, our hiking activities.

Are You Kidding???

By Nicole Faraguna

In a bizarre and ridiculous attempt to honor Ex-Senator Edward Helfrick, Senator John Gordner, who was given Helfrick's seat, has introduced SB1160 into the State Senate to name the new Wyoming State Forest in Northumberland County, (known as the Roaring Creek Watershed portion of Brush Valley) as the Senator Edward Helfrick State Forest.

Helfrick who recently retired and had spent countless winters hunting Brush Valley's plentiful game when public access was prohibited, has been a long proponent of building a prison in the Trout Run portion of Brush Valley.

The Brush Valley Preservation Association (BVPA), the grassroots organization that has long fought the destruction of Brush Valley, has had a great deal to do with promoting the need for open space in Northumberland County and believes that there is another person after which this valley should be named.

C.Q. McWilliams, the founder of the Roaring Creek Water Company several decades ago, strived hard to provide a quality source of drinking water to the area and ensured the preservation of these watersheds. It was not until the current owner Aqua America, formerly Philadelphia Suburban Corporation, bought the water company that plans to destroy portions of this property were put in place. Senator Helfrick approved of the destruction of Brush Valley for a prison.

Having this land preserved has been a monumental achievement for the people of Northumberland County and it would be a disgrace to have another politician take credit for something he was against all along.

Please contact your State Senator and tell them to vote against SB 1160— and help us honor a man who spent his life preserving a beautiful treasure by naming this land the McWilliams State Forest.



Trash'n the Parks (continued)

vice, Roger Kennedy, put it bluntly when he said that this administration has "launched an attack on science in the parks". This assertion echos a statement signed this spring by 62 prominent scientists, including 20 Nobel Laureates that charges that "the [Bush] administration has consistently misrepresented the findings of The National Academy of Scientists, government scientists, and the expert community at large" for partisan and political reasons.

Air pollution, with its negative consequences for flora, fauna and human health, its acidifying deposition and visibility impairment impacts every National Park to some degree according to the National Park Service's own Air Resources Division. Incredibly, Acadia and Shenandoah National Parks have days when their air ranks among the dirtiest in the nation. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) a concern for the health of visitors and employees at some parks, including Acadia prompted the posting of ozone alerts.

In 2002, President Bush proposed his so called Clear Skies Initiative to reduce emissions from power plants and other sources. This Initiative would supplant Clean Air Act mandates all ready in place that were structured to reduce the same pollutants faster and in greater amounts. Also, under the Clean Air Act, National Park managers have the authority to review applications for new plants and proposed upgrades to existing units, and to furnish scientific data pertinent to pollution impacts on the parks. The Clear Skies Initiative would strip managers of this prerogative unless the facilities are within 31 miles of a National Park.

In January of 2003 a Clean Air Act permit was issued for a new coal-fired power plant in central Montana. This permit was issued despite findings from both the Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service that the emissions would impair visibility in Yellowstone and the UL Bend Wilderness Area in violation of the Clean Air Act. Shamefully, the Interior Department withdrew both findings from consideration, over the objections

Lumber Jacks – Needed

Actually just folks with chain saws are needed to clear up some large downed trees at the Lewisburg River Walk. The cleanup is planned for sometime in October – if you can help out (with or without a chainsaw) please contact Dave Hafer (P.O. Box 65, Lewisburg, PA 17837 or call 570-523-3107).

of the Departments own air experts, before the permit was issued.

The EPA issued another draft rule, in April, that would again supercede existing legislation and substitute a mechanism that would delay clean up of air pollution in 156 National Parks, refuges and Federal Wilderness Areas by a decade or more.

Our National Parks are national treasures and deserve better than to be sacrificed to a secretly crafted energy plan. Our Park Service employees, dedicated professionals, deserve better than to be haughtily swept aside in the administration's zeal to outsource and privatize. According to Michael V. Finley, who retired in 2001 after serving as superintendent at Everglades, Yosemite and Yellowstone, "I was in the Park Service under six presidents. It was never as bad as this". *The winds of change in November could bring our National Parks, and Park Service, a much needed breath of fresh air.* ☐

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

The ACLU is a Friend of the Sierra Club (Continued)

(Continued from page 1)

In Pennsylvania, Paula Knudsen, the ACLU attorney for central Pennsylvania was involved in an environmental case from Dauphin County in April 2004. She intervened on behalf of the grassroots Concerned Citizens to Preserve Zoning (www.PreserveHershey.org). This group had been working together for three years to oppose developers' requests to rezone farm and forest land to build new residential subdivisions. Derry Township sent letters to group members telling them to take down their "Stop Sprawl" signs that had been erected on their private property. After Ms. Knudsen sent a warning letter to the township, it backed off and agreed group members' First Amendment rights dictated that they must be allowed to keep their signs up.

In Rhode Island ACLU's involvement has been a First Amendment issue. The ACLU has defended local environmental groups' right to engage in door-to-door canvassing and it has represented individuals who have been sued after speaking out on environmental issues.

Sierra Club members are invited to view the national ACLU webpage at www.aclu.org and type into their search box "environment" or "pollution." Here are some titles of the documents available to you about how the ACLU is working to protect the constitutional rights of environmentalists.

- 1) In Court Brief, ACLU Rhode Island Officials Retaliated Against Environmental Whistleblower (Workplace Rights, 07/10/2001)
- 2) ACLU of Michigan Defends Washtenaw Woman Sued for Speaking Out On Environmental Issues (Free Speech, 07/08/2004)
- 3) ACLU to Defend Iowa Farm Families in Lawsuits Against Hog Factories (Criminal Justice, 06/30/1999)

The Central Susquehanna Chapter of the Pennsylvania ACLU is presently in a membership drive and it invites Sierra Club members to join them in their work to safeguard our Constitution and protect the rights of all Americans. This ACLU chapter represents Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union Counties. Membership categories and annual dues are Student (\$5), Regular (\$20), Contributing (\$35), Sustaining (\$50) and Defender (\$100). The Central Susquehanna Chapter of the Pennsylvania ACLU is attempting to start student chapters at Bucknell, Susquehanna, and Bloomsburg Universities and area high schools. Checks for membership,

along with your name, address, phone, and e-mail, should be sent to ACLU of Pennsylvania, P. O. Box 1161, Philadelphia, PA 19105-1161.

For several years the ACLU of Pennsylvania annually has held a state convention during the summer at State College. Each Pennsylvania Sierra Club chapter is encouraged to send a representative next year to this day of fun, fellowship, and empowerment. Additional information, to include displays or programs related to environmental issues, can be obtained from the ACLU state office by calling (215) 592-1513 or via e-mail at info@aclupa.org.

Your membership is welcome, your check is needed, and your willingness to speak out is what makes America special and great. ☐

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ORGANIC UPDATE

Following a storm of protest the U.S. Agriculture Department (these are also the people who control our National Forests) has withdrawn sweeping changes to the nation's organic food standards. The agency had announced mind-boggling new directives in April that would have allowed the use of pesticides and antibiotics for organic crops and dairy cows. The changes also allowed farmed and wild fish, personal care products and pet foods to be labeled organic even though no production standards exist for these items. What could Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman be thinking?



Top Ten Worst Environmental Abuses of the Bush Administration

Here's Carl Pope's, Sierra Club CEO, list of the Top Ten worst environmental abuses of the Bush administration. Which do you think is the worst? You can vote at <http://www.strategicignorance.com/poll/>

1. Allowing the logging of 10% of the trees in the Sequoia National Monument?
2. Allowing the Superfund to run out of money to clean up toxic waste dumps on September 30, 2003.
3. Walking away from the Kyoto Treaty and the entire international effort to curb global warming?
4. Proposing new clean air regulations that would quadruple the amount of mercury old power plants would be allowed to emit?
5. Basing America's energy future on opening up wild lands and wilderness to the oil, gas and coal industries, and giving them tens of billions of dollars in new subsidies?
6. Cutting clean water funding and enforcement so badly that for the first time since the Clean Water Act was passed America's rivers, streams, lakes and beaches actually got dirtier?
7. Decreasing the official value of a human life from \$6 million to \$3.7 million.
8. Denying the public access to the records of the Cheney Energy Task Force and other important public records?
9. Repeatedly distorting the findings of federal scientists on subjects from the impact of oil drilling in the Arctic to the effect on dolphins of tuna fishing?
10. Stripping protective status from natural areas covering 10% of the United States?

Source: Sierra Club, <http://www.strategicignorance.com/poll/>

Hoeffel (Continued)

(Continued from page 3)

ter's loyal support – has pursued a radical environmental agenda to roll back vital protections on public health and safety. I reject that agenda because I believe in something Arlen Specter seems to have forgotten – that we have a responsibility to protect our land and water and air for generations yet to come.”

“Joe Hoeffel is a leader on clean water,” continued Mann. “He has opposed the Bush Administration’s efforts to narrow the scope of the Clean Water Act to exclude millions of acres of wetlands and other waters from clean water protections. He’s also a leader on clean air. He has championed more protective soot and smog standards and urged the restoration of the stronger limits proposed to reduce toxic mercury emissions that the Bush administration weakened at the bidding of the power plant industry.” ☐

To learn more about Congressman Joseph Hoeffel or to learn how you can volunteer for his campaign, visit www.hoeffelforsenate.com.



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Vote for the Environment

At a great risk of preaching to the choir, everyone must turn out to vote this November to turn the tide on Bush's "Anti-Environmental" Policies, which have generally earned him the rating of the "Worst Environmental President in the Nation's History – surpassing the previous titleholder, Ronald Reagan", according to Ed Flattau in his new book, Peering