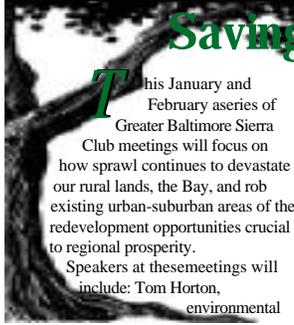




BALTIMORE SIERRA

Saving Our Farms, Forests and The Bay



This January and February series of Greater Baltimore Sierra Club meetings will focus on how sprawl continues to devastate our rural lands, the Bay, and rob existing urban-suburban areas of the redevelopment opportunities crucial to regional prosperity.

Speakers at these meetings will include: Tom Horton, environmental

columnist for the *Baltimore Sunpapers* and author of *Turning The Tide (Restoring the Chesapeake Bay)*, Dan Pontious, Director of the Baltimore Regional Partnership, Melody Flowers, of the Sierra Club national Challenge to Sprawl Campaign, and Bob Chance, of the Harford County Greenways Commission. Following is a description of how sprawl is harming each of us and what you can do to help.

ELECTION NOTICE

The Greater Baltimore Group of the Sierra Club has six vacancies on its Executive Committee (ExCom) The nine member ExCom runs the day to day affairs of the group based upon the wishes of our members and policies established by the Maryland and national Sierra Club. The Excom meets bimonthly. If you would like to serve or just some additional information then please contact Group chair Richard Klein at 410-654-3021 or GBSierra@ceds.org or 8100 Greenspring Valley Road, Owings Mills, MD 21117. Nominations must be received by March 8, 2002

Has Smart Growth brought sprawl to an end? Sadly, no; at least not in the Greater Baltimore area. By the year 2020 another 23,122 acres of rural farm and forest land will be converted to low-density housing in Baltimore and Harford Counties. More than 60 miles of streams will be degraded by this sprawl. And much of the pollution released into these tributaries will flow into the Chesapeake Bay. The tax-dollars needed to build new roads for this sprawl will rob the region of the funds needed to upgrade buses, metro and light rail. That's the bad news.

The good news is that *Smart Growth* has slowed the rate of sprawl. Both counties have taken a number of important steps to direct growth away from rural areas and into existing developed areas, such as the Baltimore City suburbs, Bel Air, and Edgewood. In fact, both counties received high marks, along with some low grades, in a recent 1000 Friends of Maryland report *Smart Growth: How Is Your County Doing?* A companion report, published by the Baltimore Regional Partnership, *Planning for Sprawl*, gave Baltimore County particularly high marks.

But are these efforts enough? NO!

Much more needs to be done. The map on the next page of this newsletter shows how sprawl could spread throughout much of our rural lands by year 2020. Each house on the map represents 50 new houses built on what

is now farm and forestland. Over the next 20 years sprawl could eliminate more than 80,000 acres of rural lands in the five counties surrounding Baltimore!

Fortunately, several recent citizen successes have proven that we can accelerate adoption of *Smart Growth* policies. For example, a coalition of Harford County groups - the Little Gunpowder Improvement Association, the Mountain Road Stonybrook Woodcrest Association, and the Greater Fallston Association - just defeated the proposed widening of Mountain Road from two to four lanes. The Friends of Harford just defeated widening of MD 22. Both projects would have accelerated the pace of rural sprawl and had a combined cost of \$130 million! Since the defeat of both project, these funds have been What you may notice from the preceding success stories is the absence of the Sierra Club. Yes, we were not part of these *Smart Growth* victories. Had our group, with its 3,000 members, participated in the Thornton Road *Smart Growth* coalition perhaps the interchange would have been defeated completely. But this is history. We can create a better future for us all. And the first step towards this better future involves nothing more than your participation in any or all of the following events:

Dan Pontious will talk about Smart Growth, Sprawl & Transportation on Tuesday, January 8th, 7:00 PM at the Bel Air library.

The Group Conservation Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 15th, 7:00 PM at the Rosedale library.

Bob Chance will talk on preserving natural corridors through the Greenways Program on Tuesday, February 5th, 7:00 PM at the Bel Air library.

Tom Horton will discuss Turning The Tide-Restoring The Chesapeake on Tuesday, February 12th, 7:00 PM, at the Rosedale library.

Melody Flowers will address *Smart Growth* at the national level along with Dan Pontious who will discuss local-regional Smart Growth, Sprawl & Transportation on Tuesday, February 26th, 7:00 PM at the Pikesville library.

For further information on these events contact Group Chair Richard Klein at 410-654-3021 or GBSierra@ceds.org. The 1000 Friends of Maryland report card can be viewed at: <http://www.friendsofmd.org/01report.htm>

The Baltimore Regional Partnership report can be downloaded from: http://www.balto_region_partners.org/sprawl.htm

OUTINGS LEADERS NEEDED

There are always openings in the Greater Baltimore group of the Sierra Club for outings leaders. If you are interested, Please contact Jack Wise at 410-256-3963

Action Needed To Protect Deer Creek

Deer Creek, which flows across the northern part of Harford County, was designated a scenic river by the Maryland General Assembly in 1973. As such, state law discourages any structures that impede the natural flow of the water.

However, an impoundment area was built in Deer Creek during World War II to

withdraw water for use by Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) The withdraw facility is now owned by the city of Aberdeen under the terms of their contract with APG.

The City of Aberdeen has applied to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for permission to withdraw twice the amount of water used by APG. A

public hearing on this issue is tentatively scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 13, at the Aberdeen City Hall. Anyone Concerned about the health of Deer Creek should plan to attend and speak.

Rich Norland, Vice President, Deer Creek Watershed Association, Inc.



BACKPACKING BASICS

A QUIZ ON HAVING MORE FUN WITH LESS STRAIN & PAIN



1. While backpacking, you should **always** treat the water you find before drinking it?
A. True B. False
2. Which of the following sources usually provides the cleanest water and hence would be the easiest to treat?
A. River B. Pond C. Spring
3. What is the minimum amount of water an average person should drink per day while backpacking?
A. One quart B. Half gallon
C. One gallon D. Three gallons
4. To minimize environmental impact, which of the following possible campsites should be your last choice?
A. Slightly used site
B. Virgin site
C. Well used site
5. When in bear country you should hang your food bag from a tree:
A. Only if there have been reports of bear trouble.
B. Only if bears are not hunted in the area.
C. Only if you see bear tracks around your campsite.
D. Always.
6. To prevent hypothermia, which of the following materials would be best to wear next to your skin when hiking in winter:
A. Synthetic B. Cotton
C. Wool
7. If you are hiking a blazed trail and you see a tree ahead with two blazes (one over top the other) does this mean:
A. There's a good campsites just ahead.
B. The trail will change direction just ahead.
C. You've hiked one mile since the last double-blaze.
D. The gradient of the trail changes just ahead.
8. You've just realized that you haven't seen a blaze for awhile and the trail you're on doesn't look quite right. Should you:
A. Keep on walking in the same direction assuming you'll see a blaze again.
B. Start walking in an ever larger circle assuming you'll come across the trail again.
C. Turn around and walk back the trail to find the last blaze.
D. Sit down, take out your map and compass and find your position.
9. As you come around a bend in the trail you see another hiker lying still on the trail. After unsuccessfully trying to rouse the unconscious hiker, what is the first thing you should do:
A. Check for a pulse.
B. Immediately start CPR.
C. See if they're breathing.
D. Go for help.
10. Which of the following colors should always be worn when hiking in fall or winter:
A. Brown B. Yellow C. Orange

To learn the answer to each of these questions, come to the Backpacking Basics Course on Tuesday, **March 12th, 7-9 pm** at the Rosedale library, 6105 Kenwood Avenue. To register call Richard at **410-654-3021** or send an e-mail to **GBSierra@ceds.org**

Newsletters/Environmental Alerts By E-Mail

Would you like to know when your phone call, letter or email to an elected official might win a crucial environmental battle?

Or, would you like to receive newsletters by e-mail, which saves us \$0.50 and saves paper?

If your answer is yes to either question, then either send an email to:
SierraAction@ceds.org

Yes, email me:

Newsletters/Environmental Alerts Both

Name _____
Email Address _____

Baltimore Group Leader Contact

Richard Klein	410-654-3021
Jack Wise	410-256-3963
Robin Leitch	410-420-9307

YOUR VOICE:

In the last issue of the Baltimore Sierran, we asked you to respond to a Transportation Survey. I would first like to thank all of you who took the time to send in such poignant replies. Following is one that I have decided to highlight because I feel it best describes the overall feeling that you all have about our local public transportation. Thanks again for your time and responses.

Sincerely,
Robin Leitch
Baltimore Sierran Editor

I think our public transportation system in Baltimore is a joke. I live along a MTA bus line, and the buses are very noisy and put out an incredible amount of exhaust fumes. Most of the time, these buses have few passengers, and I just can't believe there is any significant air quality conservation as a result of operating them. The buses have a negative impact on the city by lowering the home values of all homes that border city bus routes due to the noise, the pollution, and the people hanging out on street corners waiting for buses.

Finally, these huge buses are constantly blocking traffic. I cannot even take the bus system seriously as a reliable way for people to get to work. I used to commute to work using city buses, and often got to work late due to buses not running on schedule and having frequent mechanical breakdowns. Personally, I only see merit in the bus system as being a form of public subsidy for poor people who cannot afford their own cars. Marty Pierce

I do have some suggestions on how to

change this dismal situation. For instance, during hours where the MTA knows a bus line has a low passenger usage, they should send out small commuter buses to pick up the passengers. The capacity could be perhaps 20 to 30 people. Why does the MTA instead have to use these huge, gas-guzzling, smoke-spewing buses on every route and at all times?

This never made any sense to me. If the bus lines were privatized, I cannot see how any businessman in his right mind would allow enormous buses to operate unnecessarily along routes and times where they are not even 1/4 filled.

So my suggestions are that the state should: 1) definitely purchase and use a large number of small, commuter vans; and 2) seriously consider privatizing the buses and bus lines. (Privatization could be accompanied by large tax breaks and possibly some continuing state subsidies as needed to keep some bus lines operating).

One final suggestion would be: 3) require that all exhaust pipes be situated at the top rear of the buses so that the exhaust fumes do not blow out directly from the lower rear of the buses into people's faces and into the air intakes of cars sitting directly behind the buses.

Mr. Pierce also went on to thank us for our interest in this area. He did however inquire about the future plans of Sierra club to address his concerns. So I would like to take this opportunity to invite him and anyone else interested in the local transportation topic to the upcoming meetings listed in the outings section of this newsletter.

Outings Winter 2002

FEBRUARY 2002
2 SAT

Great Falls Hike and Dinner.
Hike approximately 4 miles in the woods and along towpath at Great Falls, MD. Stop at overlook to view the Falls. Dinner stop afterwards in Rockville. Meet at the Southwest Park & Ride at 12:30 pm. Bill: 410-574-1453.

2-3 SAT-SUN

Appalachian Trail Backpack.
Appalachian trail backpacking along a section in Maryland or Pennsylvania. Meet early Saturday morning at a specific trailhead, backpack 8-12 miles to a shelter, spend the night at the shelter then on Sunday we'll hike another 8-10 miles to our stopping point. To register call Richard at 410-654-3021 or send an e-mail to: gbsierra@ceds.org.

5 TUE

Bob Chance will talk on preserving natural corridors through the Greenways Program beginning at 7:00pm at the Bel Air library, 100 Pennsylvania Ave. For further information contact group chair at 410-654-3021 or gbsierra@ceds.org.

10 SUN

Big Gunpowder Falls Sunday Afternoon Circuit Hike.
There are five circuit hikes along the portion of Big Gunpowder Falls between Prettyboy Dam and Big Falls Road. On this date we'll do one of the 3-6 mile hikes. Meet at Mt. Carmel Road Park & Ride, next to I-83 exit 27, at 1:00 pm. Richard, 410-654-3021 or send an e-mail to: gbsierra@ceds.org.

12 TUE

Tom Horton, Baltimore Sun Papers environmental columnist will discuss Turning The Tide, Restoring the Chesapeake beginning 7:00 pm at the Rosedale library, 6105 Kenwood Ave. For further information contact group

chair Richard Klein at 410-654-3021 or gbsierra@ceds.org

15-18 FRI-MON
Cross Country Skiing in Western Maryland.

Cross country skiing in New Germany State Park. Suitable for beginners. Details, Jack, 410-256-3963.

23 SAT

Bayshore Hike.

Moderate 5-6 mile hike through the woods, along the shoreline, and in the marsh. We will stop at the fishing pier and visit some of the remaining Bayshore Amusement Park sites. Meet at 11:00 am in the main parking lot near the main entrance of North Point State Park off of North Point Road in Edgemere. John, 410-752-0104.

24 SUN

Local Cross Country Skiing.

If there is not enough snow, a hike will be held in the Loch Raven area. Meet at Seminary Road and Dulaney Valley Road at 11:00 am. Jack, 410-256-3963.

26 TUE

Melody Flowers will address *Smart Growth* at the national level along with Dan Pontious who will discuss local-regional Smart Growth, Sprawl & Transportation beginning 7:00 pm at the Pikesville library, 1301 Reisterstown Road. For further information contact group chair Richard Klein at 410-654-3021 or gbsierra@ceds.org.

MARCH 2002

2 SAT

Bombay Hook Wildlife Refuge Hike.

Six level miles around the Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge to view waterfowl and other birdlife. Possible dinner stop. Meet at Southwest Park & Ride at 9:00 am. Bill, 410-574-1453.



Outings Winter 2002

Outings Winter 2002 cont.

12 TUE

Backpacking Basics.

Learn how to have a great time while backpacking safely and minimizing pack weight. Beginning 7:00pm at the Rosedale library, 6105 Kenwood Ave. For further information contact group chair Richard Klein at 410-654-3021 or gbsierra@ceds.org.

24 SUN

Gunpowder River Hike.

Moderate 6 miles along the Gunpowder River and side trails. Meet at Belair Road (Rt. 1) and the Gunpowder River at 12:00 noon. Jack, 410-256-3963.

26 TUE

Baltimore Trails, A Guide for Hikers and Mountain Bikers. Bryan McKay, the author of the new book (an update of the *Baltimore Trail Book*) will describe the trails to hike in the Greater Baltimore area. Beginning 7:00pm at the Pikesville library, 1301 Reisterstown Road. For further information contact Richard Klein at 410-654-3021 or gbsierra@ceds.org.

APRIL 2002

14 SUN

Kelly Run & Pinnacle Hike.

Moderate 7-8 miles with a good view of the Susquehanna River. Meet at the Kmart on Belair Road at 10:00 am. Jack, 410-256-3963.

20 SAT

Earth Day Clean Up.

Help Gunpowder River State Park with a park clean up. For details call Jack, 410-256-3963.

MAY 2002

5 SUN

Gunpowder River Hike.

Moderate 7-8 miles below the Prettyboy Dam. Some hills and rocky areas. Meet at Deerco Road. Park & Ride at 11:00 am. Jack, 410-256-3963.

22 WED

Gunpowder River Hike.

Easy 2 miles along the Gunpowder River. Meet at the parking lot at Rt. 1 and the Gunpowder River at 7:00 pm. Jack, 410-256-3963.

25-27 SAT-MON

St. Mary's Wilderness Backpack. Six mile backpack around beautiful vistas and streams. Bring your own equipment and food. Limit 10. For info call Ted, 410-239-4590.

JUNE 2002

21 FRI

Loch Raven Sunset Hike.

Summer solstice sunset hike. Moderate 2 miles with a view of the sunset. Meet at Morgan Mill and Loch Raven Drive at 7:00 pm. Jack, 410-256-3963.

23 SUN

Gunpowder River Tubing Trip.

Bring a tube or rent one. Wear old sneakers or water shoes and have a way of keeping your keys from falling out of your pocket. Cool weather alternative will be a hike. Meet at Monkton Station at 1:00 pm. Jack, 410-256-3963.

JULY 2002

7 SUN

Gunpowder River Tubing Trip.

Bring a tube or rent one. Wear old sneakers or water shoes and have a way of keeping your keys from falling out of your pocket. Cool weather alternative will be a hike. Meet at Monkton Station at 1:00 pm. Jack, 410-256-3963.

12-14 FRI-SUN

Western Maryland Car Camping Trip.

Car camping in New Germany State Park. Escape the summer heat of Baltimore for the weekend. Moderate hiking and biking and swimming at nearby lakes. Info: Jack, 410-256-3963.

21 SUN

Gunpowder River Tubing Trip.

Bring a tube or rent one. Wear old sneakers or water shoes and have a way of keeping your keys from falling out of your pocket. Cool weather alternative will be a hike. Meet at Monkton Station at 1:00 pm. Jack, 410-256-3963.

FOR UPDATES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT [HTTP://MARYLAND.SIERRACLUB.ORG/BALTIMORE/OUTINGS.HTML](http://MARYLAND.SIERRACLUB.ORG/BALTIMORE/OUTINGS.HTML)

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