If you’re still unclear about the Utah Inland Port proposal, you’re not alone. The state legislature’s Utah Inland Port Authority (UIPA) has not been transparent about putting pieces in place to develop an enormous freight transfer complex in the northwest quadrant of Salt Lake City. It has been even less public about what it’s doing to establish “satellite ports” in counties throughout the state. Commerce and industry would likely skyrocket, but at what cost?

UIPA’s larger Inland Port(s) network, enabled by H.B.433 [2019], would include export shipments of dirty energy like coal, oil, and natural gas. Consequently, the amount of air pollution would increase substantially not only for Salt Lake City, but for other transit zones and burn sites in Utah, the U.S., and abroad. In addition to furthering deterioration of Utah’s already shameful air quality, an Inland Port system would exacerbate the effects of climate change, and have local environmental impacts, including devastating effects on wildlife on and around the Great Salt Lake.

As stated previously, the satellite port development (SPD) part of UIPA’s plan has been especially shadowy. Utah Sierra Club did learn that several counties have applied for satellite port involvement, and that there is likely a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
Our Mission

The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club is a grassroots volunteer organization dedicated to:
- Protect and promote Utah's outdoors and natural landscapes;
- Educate and advocate for the responsible preservation of clean air, water and habitats; &
- Support the development of sustainable renewable energy;
For the benefit of present and future generations.

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Submit all articles, artwork, photographs, letters and comments to utah.chapter@sierraclub.org. Phone: 801-467-9297. The Utah Sierran reaches more than 5,000 members and friends of the Sierra Club in Utah. Display advertising is accepted. For a current ad rate card, contact Mark Clemens, utah.chapter@sierraclub.org or 801-467-9297. We reserve the right to refuse advertising that we feel conflicts with the goals and purposes of the Club.

Bylined articles represent the research and opinions of the author and not necessarily those of the Sierra Club or the Utah Chapter.
Sierra Club's sexual harassment policy can be found online at mitchell.sierraclub.org/leaders/policies/sexual-harassment.asp or by contacting the Salt Lake City office.
Dear Friends,

I came to Utah five years ago, for one ski season, or so I thought. But it didn’t take long for me to become enamored with Utah’s red rock vistas, big mountain steeps, high alpine lakes, and vast desert landscapes. After rafting through churning whitewater in some of America’s most iconic canyons, exploring hidden slots and secret alcoves, climbing in the high Uintas, and ripping powder in Little Cottonwood Canyon, I was officially hooked.

Between Utah’s spectacular wild places and the tight-knit community of defiant, intelligent, supportive, and scrappy activists who work tirelessly to defend the places and people they hold dear, I knew I’d found my place.

For the last two years I have had the profound pleasure and responsibility to serve as the Utah Sierra Club’s Director, representing our community of over 40,000 members and supporters across the state and fighting local environmental battles that will serve as the litmus test for the nation.

I recently came across the first quote I penned on behalf of the Utah Sierra Club, it read;

“I am thrilled for the opportunity to lead the Utah Sierra Club in this moment of immense possibility. Now is the time for action, amplifying our grassroots power, influencing elections, and prioritizing environmental and public health. I embrace the challenges ahead and am excited to invigorate and inspire positive change. The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club is uniquely positioned to transform local politics and policy in defense of the wild, that’s just what we will do.”

And while this work is never done, in two years we made greater strides than anyone could’ve thought possible! Together, we ensured testing for diesel vehicles in UT County, we stopped the Legislature from renaming our iconic National Parks Highway for Donald Trump, we worked with students to pass progressive climate legislation, we beat back the proposed plastic bag ban, and we passed rules requiring cleaner water heaters! In just two short years, our Chapter has grown from just under 30,000 members and supporters to over 40,000!

I’m so incredibly proud of what we’ve managed to accomplish together and am truly excited to see what comes next for the Utah Chapter as our powerhouse team continues to champion some of the most critical work in the American west -- fighting for our land, air, water, wildlife, and each other. (Please consider supporting this work today!)

However, I wanted to let you know I have recently accepted a new position as Watershed Program Coordinator for the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council in the beautiful harbor town of Petoskey, Michigan. I’ll have a chance to help protect and defend the Great Lakes in my home state, and importantly, get to spend a lot more time with my family. So it is with a mix of joy, hope, and a twinge of sorrow that I write today to let you know that my last day at the helm of the Utah Chapter was, Friday December 6th. It’s amazing how the time has flown by.

I will always cherish the memories with our incredible staff, intrepid volunteers, and fellow advocates -- fighting to hold the line at our State Capitol, drafting hard-hitting air quality rules, beating back threats to our National Parks and Monuments, driving precedent setting policy on climate action, electing leaders with strong environmental ethics, dreaming to life community building events, and growing our small but tremendously talented staff. This has been one of the most formative experiences of my life and I will be forever grateful that you trusted me to fight arm in arm with each of you.

I am also excited to let you know that our own Carly Ferro, a dynamic organizer, skilled campaign strategist, and formidable activist, has been tapped as Interim Director, while we open our search for the Utah Chapter Director. (Keep your eyes peeled for that posting in a few weeks!) I remain confident that under Carly’s leadership, the Utah Chapter will continue to empower communities, defend our most cherished places, and improve the lives of all Utahns.

I hope you know that I am tremendously proud to have served with you, in defense of the great places and people of Utah.

Onward!

Ashley

P.S. “The idea of wilderness needs no defense, it only needs defenders.” - Ed Abby

Please pledge to help the Utah Sierra Club continue to defend Utah’s wild places today, tomorrow, and for the next 50 years.
Our Community

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

connection to the Uintah Basin Railway project. After we failed to get more specific details from UIPA director Jack Hedge and the Envision Utah team, Chapter director Ashley Soltysiak sent a GRAMA request to Stuart Clason at the Utah Association of Counties. As UIPA’s lead on SPD, he was responsible for summarily cancelling the August meeting where a satellite port update was to have been presented.

With the hope of bringing records of UIPA’s stealthy SPD process to light, we requested access to records that include correspondence between key UIPA players and county officials, Utah lawmakers, government officials outside Utah and the U.S, business interests and others. Since little public attention has been paid to satellite port activities despite their potential for significant environmental and societal impacts, Utah Sierra Club will direct much of its Inland Port focus to what’s happening behind SPD’s closed doors.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FILE A GRAMA REQUEST?

GRAMA stands for Government Records Access and Management Act. This act was put in place for the very reason we at the Sierra Club are currently utilizing it: To allow the people of Utah to have access to all the information they possibly can, and hold government accountable for the things they do outside the public eye. The recipient of a GRAMA request has a prescribed number of days to respond. Anyone can submit a GRAMA request to any government agency or official. Extra sensitive records are sometimes withheld from the public, although an appeal can be filed. That said, a majority of records are readily available to the public with the submission of a request through GRAMA. There is sometimes a fee, though this can be waived if the request’s intent is to educate the public. The Sierra Club intends to make any Inland Port documents we find through GRAMA public so Utah citizens can be better informed participants in the decision making process. The full text of our GRAMA request is on the Hot Topics page of the Utah Sierra Club website.

Kaden Daily is a University of Utah pre-law undergrad studying economics. We welcome him to the Utah Chapter volunteer team.

We Need YOU!

by Patty Becnel

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHTS

Write a quarterly article on a volunteer with Utah Sierra Club. It is a great way to meet others, connect to Sierra Club and contribute. Task: write a Spotlight for each newsletter.

WRITING CIRCLE OUTREACH

The writing circle has increased the number of letters to our local papers concerning environmental, social, justice and equity issues, but we need to expand by creating an online writing presence for those unable to attend. Help cull a list of potential writers and contact them regularly with pressing issues and fact sheets on pressing topics.

FACT SHEETS

Fact sheets are vital to informing the public and our members about relevant issues. Write one or many easy-to-read fact sheets to use in the writing circle and other capacities.

If you are interested in any of the above, please contact Patty Becnel: jbecnel_patty@msn.com
Our Community

Update on the Central Wasatch NCRA Act
by Will McCarvill

I

The Stakeholders Council undertook two actions over the past year. The first was to study a privately run shuttle bus service in Mill Creek Canyon. That effort ran into some road blocks. A subcommittee of the Council also proposed that a recreation visitor capacity study be conducted in order to estimate the limit of the Canyon's ability to absorb recreation loads. This is essential to prevent degradation of the environment, preserve visitor experience and properly size transit solutions in the canyons. A survey was conducted with the Stakeholders Council members to determine what may or may not be working. A majority of respondents feel changes are needed to make the Council more effective.

The CWC itself is now broken into three focus areas: legislation, transportation and short-term projects. It is likely the stakeholder committee will also be distributed to these three areas. A main focus of the transportation breakout will be the UDOT Little Cottonwood Canyon EIS. I'll discuss this topic in greater detail in another article in this newsletter.

Utah Chapter Presses National to Add Nuclear Organizer
by Stan Holmes

ExComm chair Will McCarvill presented to Sierra Club’s Council of Club Leaders (CCL) annual conference in September.

With chapter endorsements from South Carolina through Oklahoma to San Francisco Bay, Utah’s resolution called on the national Board of Directors “to expand the Nuclear Free Campaign with a full-time paid organizer to support nationwide Grassroots Network team activities that focus on civilian and military nuclear power related issues, from uranium mining through processing, energy fuel usage and/or weaponization to waste disposal.” The full text can be viewed at https://utah.sierraclub.org/hot-topics
Our Community

Fall Harvest + Save the Date for Spring Breakfast

Thanks for being a part of our Second Annual Fall Harvest celebration, commemorating 50 years of activism here in Utah. We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of support and encouraged to see the spirit of activism so vibrant and alive in our chapter.

We felt fortunate to have Scott Shoupe share his personal story of transition from coal culture to building support for a regenerative clean energy economy. We hope his powerful remarks inspired you to deepen your engagement with the Utah Sierra Club and the movement for change that we are building together.

We cannot thank our supporters, partners, sponsors, friends and allies enough for showing up on a very chilly October evening to help ensure success for our 2019 Fall Harvest Party. Now, we look forward to showing up for you for another 50 years.

SAVE THE DATE: SPRING BREAKFAST 2020

And just to look ahead, plan to join us for our Third Annual Spring Breakfast, tentatively scheduled for Thursday April 2nd, in Salt Lake City. Lots more information to come.

The Sierra Club is excited to continue our Solar Homes Program in Utah!

Through this program, we are empowering our members and supporters to be part of Utah’s clean energy future. If you are interested in saving on your energy bills, doing something positive for the climate, and supporting the Utah Sierra Club, Request a Free Estimate Today at sierraclubsonlar.org

Congrats to Creative Energies for earning their spot in the Top 10% of B Corps around the world in Environmental Sustainability!

Certified Best For The World 2018 Environment

Sierra Club Utah is approved for Smith’s Inspiring Donations Program for local nonprofits. Just create an account (or, sign in), go to your account, add an Inspiring Donations entry for the Utah Chapter (Org # DX772), start shopping and reap the rewards for Sierra Club Utah! It’s that easy.

(Please note: This does NOT affect your reward points, gas discounts, or coupons.)

Sign up today! smithsfoodanddrug.com

Attention Smith’s Shoppers

EARN MONEY FOR SIERRA CLUB UTAH!
OurCommunity

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

Richard Overmyer
by Patty Becnel

Describe yourself.
There are people who are good at telling you what they are like. I am not one of them. I love long walks in the mountains and on the beach. I dislike running, but don’t want to. My favorite books are 100 Years of Solitude and East of Eden. I don’t hike for Instagram, but you better believe I will post my hikes there. While not my personal choice, pineapple on pizza is perfectly fine.

Where are you from?
Cleveland, Ohio originally, but Salt Lake City now

Tell about your family, fiancé, etc.
My fiancé, Mikala, and I are the proud parents of one Golden Lab and wonder if we want our second pup before or after the wedding this summer. She teaches Instrumental Music at a local high school and loves hiking. The dog loves hikes too.

Profession/training/School
I currently work in a communications position with a digital marketing firm. I studied English and Marketing at the University of Utah.

Hobbies
Skiing, hiking, biking, shopping at REI. Oh, and video games too, sometimes.

What brought you to Utah?
College is what I told my parents, but even they knew it was skiing. I visited a few times in high school, and just loved being in the mountains.

What keeps you here?
Still skiing, but as I’ve become more active, I really just love how close Salt Lake is to the mountains. The general accessibility to so much of the west, the myriad of National Parks, and beautiful scenery are practically unbeatable.

What is something you are passionate about?
Besides nature? Music! I played in the University of Utah Marching Band (tuba and baritone) along with a few other ensembles in college. That’s where I met Mikala. Through her job as a music teacher, I still get to be involved with music.

What do you say to those who think the climate is doomed and there is no hope?
I would tell them, adopting that attitude would seem to make it a self-fulfilling prophecy. Ultimately, protecting our environment and fighting climate change are community efforts. If everyone were to ride his/her bike or take public transport to work once a week, we would reduce vehicle emissions by about 20%. Significant improvements can happen if everyone does just a little bit. If you’re going to choose to have a negative outlook on environmentalism or climate change, you are helping others justify doing the same.

What would you like to see our politicians in Utah and nationally do?
A lot. Certainly, more funding in bike infrastructure, better public transportation, regulations and subsidies that encourage clean energy and reduce emissions would be wonderful. However, to focus on one specific thing, I would want them to invest in funding stewardship. Not everyone is educated on what proper environmental etiquette is (i.e. Leave No Trace). I believe funding cleanup projects, monitored trash cans at popular trailheads, and hiring rangers and forest guides to remind people about such etiquette encourages people to take ownership for their impact and work to minimize it. In terms of really protecting the environment, actively supporting the U.S. Forest Service and related entities is one good way to close the gap between talk and action.

Why is Sierra Club important to you?
I believe that a well cared for, healthy environment is fundamental to equality. Misuse of natural resources, climate change, and pollution all have a significantly more negative impact on poorer communities and people. The Sierra Club is important to me because its environmentalism is defending and growing the foundation for disenfranchised communities to fight all injustices by helping them have better water, air, food, health, natural spaces and other essentials for well-being.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
On the heels of the most recent global climate strike, and just as Salt Lake City International Airport was diverting twenty-seven flights due to record-setting smog and dangerously elevated levels of PM 2.5, we are looking to the young people of Utah for inspiration to continue the fight to save our planet.

High school and college students across the state, many too young to vote, have taken on an impressive amount of responsibility in demanding accountability from our lawmakers and civic leaders. In March, after first meeting with Governor Herbert’s Deputy Chief of Staff, Mike Mower, to express concerns regarding carbon emissions and receiving an unsatisfactory response, Utah youth led a sit-in at Governor Herbert’s office. Knowing the BLM has a history of listening to governors, the young people who held the sit-in showed the Governor that simply acknowledging that climate change is real is not enough; it must be accompanied by significant action. The students delivered their demands for action in the form of a letter calling on the Governor to remove BLM land in Utah from the impending oil and gas lease sale. Unfortunately, when the oil and gas lease sale list was ultimately released, 156 parcels totaling over 217,000 acres were included—the largest oil and gas lease sale in Utah since 2008. In some cases, land was leased for as low as $2.00 per acre. What’s more, operators pay an annual rent of just $1.50 per acre—a figure that has not been updated or adjusted for inflation since 1987.

Mishka Banuri, a 2019 West High School graduate and a co-founder of Utah Youth for Environmental Solutions, let the Governor know exactly how she felt in a commentary for The Salt Lake Tribune, writing “Herbert has failed my generation. By acknowledging climate change but not following through with substantive action to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, the governor is knowingly sacrificing our future.”

Utah Youth for Environmental Solutions

OnClimate

(continued from Page 7)

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

Richard
Overmyer

You have done a lot of hiking. How would you describe the link between hiking and Sierra Club?
To add context, I completed a Northbound thru hike of the Appalachian in the Summer of 2018, and am actively working on section hiking the Colorado Trail. When hiking, I feel so happy! I get to intimately experience the beauty of our world, which reminds me of our connections to the land that is so vital to our lives. This is one of the main reasons I consider environmental protection and stewardship so important in my life.

In what ways are you involved with Utah Sierra Club?
I am a member of the Communications Team. With my marketing background, I want to help in the way best suited to my skills and experience.

What do you think should be SC’s main goal in Utah?
Expanding the accessibility of public lands to disenfranchised communities, while encouraging actions and legislations that protect our environment and grow our sense of communal ownership.

What would you like to tell volunteers, or those thinking about volunteering?
Working to protect our environment is a community effort, so if you can volunteer, please do!

...many too young to vote, have taken on an impressive amount of responsibility in demanding accountability from our lawmakers and civic leaders.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9
UNCE Team Wants You!

by Stan Holmes

Every other Monday at 5:30 pm, a dozen or so activists meet in the Sierra Club conference room. Many are Sierra Club members. Some are students. Others include academics, health care workers, techies, and retirees. All participate with the Utah Needs Clean Energy (UNCE) team of aspiring change agents. Lindsay runs the meetings, trying to keep creative, energetic minds focused. It can be challenging.

Here’s what the UNCE team is about:

- Monitoring clean energy rate-setting at the Public Service Commission.
- Speaking up at resource planning sessions of PacifiCorp (aka Rocky Mountain Power)
- Screening the latest renewable energy documentaries.
- Creating and distributing fact sheets at community events.
- Writing letters to the editor and op-ed articles.
- Hosting community forums and workshops to enable informed citizen action.
- Submitting public comments on specific Utah and national energy policies and programs.
- Sharing just transition ideas with coal country allies in Utah and Kentucky.
- Showing up for rallies against extractive carbon industries on public land.
- Staying current on the latest nuclear developments affecting Utah.
- Engaging with allied groups to advance the People’s Energy Movement.
- Promoting clean energy-related events through traditional and social media.
- Opening channels to turn YOUR creative energy idea into effective action.

A few chairs are still available at the Monday meetings. If you’d like your name on one, contact Lindsay lindsay.beebe@sierraclub.org or Stan stholmes3@xmission.com.
The Sierra Club and 23 partner organizations have an alternative plan for Utah’s energy future. The People’s Energy Plan would put Utah on track to clean energy policies motivated by social justice and environmental stewardship. This policy alternative is clearly distinct from Governor Herbert’s so-called “all of the above” Energy Action Plan in which nearly 85% of Utah electricity is still generated by fossil fuels and attempts are now underway to export Utah coal and natural gas across the Pacific Ocean.

On September 21, 2019, the Utah People’s Energy Movement hosted a sustainable future People’s Energy Summit in response to Herbert’s ‘carbon-first’ gathering at SLC’s Grand America Hotel. While the governor’s pricey event in May had featured outgoing U.S. Energy Secretary and climate science denier Rick Perry, the People’s Energy Summit at SLC’s Library Square was free to the public and offered speakers representing indigenous, youth, rural, and faith community perspectives across Utah.

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People’s Energy Summit workshop topics included Community Commitments to 100% Clean Energy, Moving Away from Fossil Fuel Infrastructure Investment, and Youth Activism. In contrast to Rick Perry’s approach, cutting Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy staff at DOE, one People’s Energy Summit workshop discussed “Saving Money and Energy at Home with Solar and Energy Efficiency.”

Other sessions addressed indigenous land defense, effective opinion editorial (op-ed) writing, religious community engagement, art-in-action, and non-violent direct action. One thread connecting every workshop, presenter, sponsor’s table, and stage presentation was a call for informed citizens to take action. And every aspect of the summit supported advancement of the People’s Energy Plan that includes the 10 objectives in the sidebar.

September’s event was Utah’s second annual People’s Energy Summit. Anyone interested in helping with next year’s sequel may contact Sierra Club Organizer, Lindsay Beebe at lindsay.beebe@sierraclub.org or Utah Needs Clean Energy Co-lead, Stan Holmes at stholmes3@xmission.com.

Additional group sponsors would also be appreciated. Do you belong to other forward thinking groups or businesses that might partner to promote the People’s Energy Plan? Contact us for partnership opportunities. Meanwhile, look for a Utah People’s Energy Movement workshop at Weber State’s Intermountain Sustainability Summit in March 2020.

The Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club extends a very special thanks to the George B. and Oma E. Wilcox and Gibbs M. & Catherine W. Smith Charitable Foundation for its continuing generous support of the Chapter’s programs.

The Foundation challenges you to increase your support for the Utah Chapter in 2020.
This year, Utah communities took a stand for clean energy.

As of today, eighteen communities in Utah have adopted commitments to achieve 100% clean, renewable electricity by 2030. Fifteen of those communities made commitments just this past year in 2019, thanks to a major win in the Utah legislature. An innovative clean energy program authorized by HB 411, also known as The Community Renewable Energy Act, passed with overwhelming bi-partisan approval in March. The Community Renewable Energy Act provides a pathway for committed cities to achieve their goal of 100% clean energy by working in partnership with the State’s only monopoly utility, Rocky Mountain Power.

Rocky Mountain Power is a six-state utility that owns the largest, dirtiest coal fleet in the West. The company currently provides electricity to 1.1 million customers in Utah, servicing 80% of Utah’s energy demand. Rocky Mountain Power has long called the shots, powering our state with polluting fuels that endanger our health, our quality of life, and our future. Cities and counties are recognizing the true cost of fossil fuels and are demanding clean air and a clean economy -- and it’s working.

This kind of progress is only possible when we work with city, state, and local community leaders, and when leaders work with each other towards a common vision. And over the past few years, this is exactly what has happened.

The movement kicked off with Park City and Salt Lake City’s commitments to 100% renewable energy in 2016, followed quickly by Summit County and Moab in 2017. These were among the earliest communities pushing for a total clean energy transition in the country. They had the ambition and the vision, but they needed a way to build renewable energy at a faster rate than the utility’s projections. The communities worked to bring Rocky Mountain Power to the table to negotiate first-of-its-kind legislation that allows for exactly that. Under the landmark Community Renewable Energy Act, these communities will be able to actualize a clean energy transition in a decade. For a state that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
OnEnergy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

“I joined the Sierra Club’s Utah Needs Clean Energy Team because I wanted to see systematic changes in our energy grid. After joining, I got involved with the Millcreek Ready for 100 campaign. Along with a few other Sierra Club members, we planned events, circulated a petition, tabled, and gained support for the initiative. In the beginning, I feel like committing to 100% clean energy was a low priority for Millcreek City Council, and by the end of the campaign we had a packed house attending city council meetings on the subject. As a result, the city council unanimously voted to pass a resolution committing to 100% clean energy by 2030. It really showed me how community organizing can make a huge difference, simply by showing up and speaking up for what we want to see changed. I’m just one person but now after 8 months of organizing, a city of 60,000 residents will be on their way to transitioning to 100% renewable energy. We still have work to do to be vigilant about this process and to make sure the cities that made this commitment will follow through, but I’m so hopeful to see cities across Utah make this incredibly important first step.”

Sally Weigle, Utah Chapter Sierra Club Volunteer Leader

currently generates 70% of its electricity from coal, to say this is remarkable progress is an understatement.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Under the legislation, Utah municipalities and counties served by Rocky Mountain Power will be able to achieve a net-100% renewable energy portfolio by 2030. This program will result in the construction of new renewable energy resources, servicing the PacifiCorp grid, and will prioritize local Utah projects that benefit communities directly. All individual customers in a community that passed a 100% renewable goal will be automatically opted into the program, with the opportunity to opt-out. Municipalities had until the end of December 2019 to commit to 100% renewable energy to qualify for the benefits of HB411 -- and 18 municipalities have taken advantage of it. More than 700,000 Utahns now have the opportunity to achieve 100% of their electrical energy from clean sources by 2030, that's nearly a quarter of the State's population, and roughly a third of all Rocky Mountain Power customers.

The timing could not be more critical. Utah has a long history of mining and burning fossil fuels that pollute the air and hurt communities. In 2017, Moab was the first community where Sierra Club activists successfully lobbied for the adoption of a 100% clean energy resolution, and with good reason. Utah's recreation mecca still contends with its toxic legacy of uranium milling and mining today.

On the banks of the Colorado River in Moab, beneath the rugged cliffs of Arches National Park, the Department of Energy has spent more than ten years cleaning up 16 million tons of radioactive uranium tailings. The superfund site comes with a price tag of one billion tax-payer dollars, not to mention the countless lives impacted by decades of radioactive contamination. To add insult to injury, visitors to Moab expect crystal clear vistas of...
Utah’s undulating red rock canyons, an ex-pectation that can be dashed when skies are hazey from pollution emitted by nearby Rocky Mountain Power coal plants, Hunter and Huntington. Moab leaders and residents know that the key to a healthy community means facing the mistakes of the past with wide eyes. Just like Moab, cities and counties across Utah are realizing the benefits that transitioning to a clean energy economy can provide.

And, as Utah communities transition to cleaner, more affordable renewable energy, communities that have not committed to 100% will be saddled with the cost of RMP's already-uneconomic coal fleet, including the Hunter and Huntington power plants in Utah. Other states in the utility's service area, like Oregon and Washington, have made bold commitments to stop paying for coal energy by 2030 and 2025, respectively. This means that fewer and fewer customers will be left to pay for expensive pollution control upgrades and volatile fuel costs at coal plants that the company plans to run into 2040 and beyond, long after the best science tells us we must stop burning coal.

The changing moral and economic winds are forcing the company to reconsider long-held timelines for coal plant retirements. This year was the first time we have seen Rocky Mountain Power propose significant coal plant retirements prior to 2030. It's a good first step, but the utility's 2019 plan also tells us that the majority of largest coal fleet in the West will still be polluting our air and water a decade from now. There's clearly more to do to ensure a livable future, and that's where HB411 gets to work.

The cities and counties that committed to 100% renewable energy show that Utahns want clean, affordable energy despite the utility's over-reliance on outdated coal power. The Community Renewable Energy Act is the catalyst to developing the energy future Utah deserves.

LOCAL TO NATIONAL IMPACT

Nearly 150 cities around the country have passed legislation to transition to 100% clean, renewable energy. As more cities, counties, and states start working together to give communities the chance to benefit from the environmental, economic, and health opportunities of renewable energy, models like HB411 show what it looks like to make good on these commitments.

The opportunity to build a clean energy economy and invest in Utah's health is immense. In 2018, Utah had the 10th most solar generating capacity of all states -- just one year earlier, it ranked 27th. Despite this recent growth in the solar industry, Utah still generates the vast Majority of its electrical energy from coal. But, with over 700,000 Utahns now afforded to the opportunity to achieve 100% clean energy, the State's energy grid is headed for a major clean-up, which...
OnEnergy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

means benefits the whole region can enjoy.

Moving from coal to renewables like wind and solar can minimize regional haze and also protect Utah’s iconic parks and recreational industry from damage caused by harmful pollutants and emissions. Transitioning to renewable energy will enable Utah to preserve the state’s outdoor industries that form the backbone of many communities’ economies. It’s no mistake that recreation gateway communities like Alta and Zion’s Springdale joined the 100% cadre in 2019, taking a stand for sustainable economies.

Activists across Utah recognized these benefits and jumped to meet the challenge in 2019. Teams of volunteers worked diligently to educate elected leaders about the opportunity that HB411 provides to make a positive impact on both the local and global level.

While other states (and the federal government) look to Utah communities’ leadership in pursuing innovative pathways to implement 100% clean electricity, it will be important for Utahns to keep demanding cleaner, healthier, more affordable power -- and to ensure that it benefits the many rather than the few.

The Community Renewable Energy Act could not have been passed or implemented so effectively without the dedicated support of hundreds of Utah Chapter volunteers and supporters. As we head into a new year, and a new Legislative Session, sign up to volunteer with the Utah Chapter and our team will reach out to you with the most current action opportunities!

TAKE ACTION


Weber State University’s Intermountain Sustainability Summit, (ISS) March 19-20, 2020, will feature three workshops sponsored by the Sierra Club:

- 100% Clean Energy Communities in Utah: The Path Forward
- The People’s Energy Movement in Utah
- Enabling Senior Action for Sustainability

For info about WSU’s 2020 ISS event visit weber.edu/issummit, or contact Bonnie Christiansen at bchristiansen2@weber.edu
**LETTER:**

**We need some innovation to clean the air**

Keeping critical conservation issues in the news is important. One way to do that is to write letters to the editor. The following letter appeared in a recent issue of the Salt Lake Tribune. Join the Utah Sierra Club Writing Circle for community, treats, discussion, and writing as we review the details for some of the most pressing issues.

By Carla Coates | The Public Forum; January 27

It seems we have a public awareness campaign about our dirty air. Billboards, radio and TV ads and daily air quality reports are good. To her credit, Salt Lake City Mayor Jackie Biskupski will make UTA more available, and UTA advertises gas- and electric-powered buses.

I read about cities developing, implementing nifty solutions that I don’t fully understand. It’s likely safe to say that to make headway into cleaner air, we will need some innovation, technical solutions and the cooperation of polluting industries.

Lots of things I don’t know, like whether state leaders acknowledge air quality as a big problem now, or if doing so is still a violation against their party. I don’t know if or how state leaders weigh public health against economic gains, or whether the Division of Air Quality has anything in process to help us get clean air. Maybe some things aren’t widely publicized. I don’t know what, if any, priority businesses give to operating in a clean way, whether, say, Rocky Mountain Power looks out at our dirty air and says, “Nah, we just can’t add to that.”

I hear some businesses create environmentally friendly buildings. I don’t know whether today, after breathing filthy air for more than a decade, “environment” is still a dirty word. I don’t know if we are now full throat behind getting clean air.
LocalNews

Northern Corridor Still a Hot Issue
by Lisa Rutherford

People from all over Utah, in fact from all over the world, come to Southern Utah to play. One of the signature features of our county is the area just north of St. George City that features world class vistas in our Red Cliffs National Conservation Area (RCNCA).

Previous issues of Utah Sierran have included my articles about RCNCA and the controversial Northern Corridor highway proposed to cut through RCNCA’s heart. The issue looms even larger now with our county, BLM and USFWS involved in the NEPA process to try and move the highway project along. The NEPA scoping commenting process will be complex because three plans are involved: the area’s Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) renewal, BLM’s Resource Management Plan review and St. George Field Office Resource Management Plan review. Each on its own is complex but having them converge makes it even more daunting.

Conserve Southwest Utah, on whose board I serve, has been in the thick of this issue since our 2006 inception and activities now are even more intense than before. We’re developing scoping comment plans in an effort to build a broad base of support for our NC opposition. As I write this column I do not know when the scoping period will begin. We are waiting for the government’s Notice of Intent (NOI) which we thought would be out mid-November to begin the meager 30-day period.

The issue has taken many twists and turns since 2015 when the HCP renewal process began. Here we are four years into the renewal process and SWCA, environmental contractors hired to do the renewal document, are still struggling to work in all the important issues, especially the NC.

The main purpose of the highway is to move east/west traffic across Washington County from I-15 to SR-18 and on to the Santa Clara and Ivins City areas. CSU understands the need to move traffic efficiently but feels that planners and leaders have not sufficiently considered all possible options in lieu of the $150M NC. For example, a $15M flyover from Red Hills Parkway (an approved road that currently runs through the NCA) to I-15 was dismissed as not effective. Planners acknowledge the flyover would be useful in 2040 “without the NC” so why wait? Just one of many questions we have.

The RCNCA has provided a sanctuary for not only the threatened Mojave desert tortoise but also other T&E species while providing an area where people can recreate in a respectful manner and rejuvenate from what’s considered one of the busiest areas in Utah. Many recreational events (St. George Marathon, Iron Man, Huntsman Senior Games to name a few) lure people from near and far to savor the views that RCNCA’s wide open area offers, and the county has done well economically due to its existence. Driving a highway through this NCA sets a terrible precedent for other NCAs and other currently protected areas in our nation.

I encourage Sierrans to stay engaged in this matter by checking in at https://conserveswu.org/ and if possible provide scoping comments to help stop this injustice.

Originally from New Mexico, Lisa taught elementary school after graduating from the University of Texas at El Paso before moving to Anchorage, Alaska, where she lived for thirty years working for an oil company for twenty of those years. After retirement she moved to Utah where, in 2006, Lisa began her involvement with Conserve Southwest Utah (formerly Citizens for Dixie’s Future) serving as a founding board member. She writes on conservation issues with a focus on water and public lands and also has served on the Ivins Sensitive Lands Committee since 2008 including committee chair. She and her partner and CSU board member Paul Van Dam, (former Utah Attorney General), are dedicated to helping preserve the quality of life in Washington County.
OurLand

Public Lands: A Five-Year Campaign Review
by Lawson LeGate

This fall Senator Mike Lee decided to hold a hearing in Moab at which he extolled the virtues and alleged superiority of state control and management of our public lands. Senator Lee, of course, would be very happy to see the Utah’s legislative leaders realize their dream of taking control of public lands that belong to everyone. Thanks to Keep Public Lands in Public Hands (KPLPH) campaign volunteers and partners, many audience members held the campaign’s signs to protest the hearing’s purpose.

Of course, Senator Lee limited his “witness” list to officials who agree with him. If he had adopted a more ecumenical approach he might have saved himself some embarrassment. A fair-minded witness might have testified about a recent study that found state-managed oil and gas well-pads on the Colorado Plateau were not recovering as well as those managed on public lands by federal agencies. Moreover, according to the Salt Lake Tribune, a recent legislative audit concluded Utah’s oil and gas program has let industry skirt environmental regulations, allowing cases of noncompliance to go unresolved for years and dilapidated wells to go without timely inspections. The audit also blamed inadequate bonding for putting Utah taxpayers on the hook for $1 million+ in reclamation costs.

Speaking up for our public lands and opposing a state takeover are two basic reasons the KPLPH campaign was inaugurated. In the past few years, campaign volunteers have been active in numerous Utah communities. Before the campaign was created, local activists worked with both Salt Lake City and the Grand County community of Castle Valley to adopt pro-public lands resolutions. Those actions helped to inspire volunteers to organize the KPLPH campaign. In 2017, Becky Yih and Peter Gatch led an effort that resulted in the adoption of pro-public lands resolutions by the Summit County and Park City councils. Their work set the standard for convincing local elected officials that opposing the legislature’s goal should be a priority. During that same period Steve Knox led a well-organized public education effort for the campaign in Millcreek. Volunteers spread across Millcreek neighborhoods to talk to residents about the threat of a state takeover of public lands. Then, in the spring of 2019, team member Kelsey Carlson organized a group of University of Utah students to persuade the student legislative body to adopt its own version of a Keep Public Lands in Public Hands resolution.

The success of any grassroots campaign depends on the involvement and participation of volunteers. The campaign has been active in other Utah communities. Campaign signs and bumper stickers have sprung up in Moab thanks to volunteers such as Marc Thomas and Mike Coronella. In Cottonwood Heights the first door-to-door canvass was conducted. Meetings and presentations about the campaign have been held in Logan, Alta, Boulder and Torrey along with outreach to Washington County and Bluff.

Campaign volunteers have received support from the Sierra Club’s Grassroots Network in the past few years. Grants from the network have made it possible to produce yard signs, buttons, bumper stickers and fact sheets and to hire the first campaign intern in 2019. The KPLPH campaign team is especially grateful for the support of Grassroots Network Program Director Gwyn Jones who manages the campaign’s finances.

THE WORK CONTINUES WITH NEW LEADERSHIP

Senator Lee’s hearing notwithstanding, Utah’s legislature has been relatively quiet lately on the subject of the proposed land grab. This is certainly due in part to the cover that has been given them by the Trump administration. With the efforts to reduce Bears Ears and the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments and the fire sale on dirty fuels leasing across public lands, public land opponents likely believe things are going their way. But make no mistake, once the Trump administration leaves office the Bundys and their friends will return in force, intimidation of public lands managers will rise to a new level, and the pressure on managers to make bad decisions will increase. When that happens, we will need this campaign more than ever.

The Keep Public Lands in Public Hands campaign will have new leadership in 2020 to help confront these challenges. Lawson LeGate who helped start the campaign and who has served as co-lead of the campaign team is stepping down. Assuming a new leadership role is Kiko Sweeney, a passionate public land defender who is also a member of the Utah Chapter Executive Committee.

The success of any grassroots campaign depends on the involvement and participation of volunteers. If you would like to help Keep Public Lands in Public Hands, please contact Kiko at Kiko.Sweeney@patagonia.com.
I had to finally give up my old paper-based boundary survey processes and make it easy and quick. The Sierra Club September wilderness boundary audit was one part old style, one part new style. We looked at the newly designated Big Wild Horse Mesa, Middle Wild Horse Mesa and the southern part of the Muddy Creek Wilderness areas all in Emery County. I loaded my phone with cached Gaia topo maps and superimposed wilderness boundaries and vehicle intrusion sites. I drove along the south border of the Muddy Creek Wilderness, and my navigator followed the GPS position indicator to sites along roads and sites several miles from roads in vague rolling country with no landmarks. She flawlessly found each site. She also did not panic as we decided to cross the Muddy Creek, in which we did not wish to get stuck.

We used a standalone camera to take pics of the sites. A second team used more traditional methods and struggled, but was ultimately successful in completing the survey. A third team made a valiant try, but the old methods were not good enough for them to follow. Based on the success of the phone method the Utah Chapter bought three iPads and I preloaded them prior to the October survey weekend. Not only were they loaded with topo maps, wilderness boundaries and problem sites, the sites also had the Google earth view of each site imbedded in the site information. After a bit of training, I handed out the iPads to three teams and turned them loose on Saturday morning October 19. The verdict: all teams found the new way to be easy, reliable, quick and some teams also took the site pics with the iPad rather than the stand alone camera.

The pics embedded in the site information so all information was contained in one device, the iPad. The Little Ocean, Horse Valley, Reds Canyon and the east part of the Muddy Creek wilderness areas were completed. The Little Wild Horse wilderness was only partially completed as the boundary roads were too rough to drive on and there was not enough time to hike them. I found it easy to write up reports detailing the vehicle ingress problems with the wilderness boundaries. These reports have been submitted to the BLM Price Field Office. The next step is to review the reports and plan next year’s remediation trip to stop vehicles from driving into the wilderness areas. Many thanks for those volunteers who answered my cry for help this fall and turned out to do good work and have fun in the San Rafael Swell.
EXPLORE WITH US! JANUARY–MARCH 2020

All members and nonmembers are welcome on any of the chapter or group activities listed. Radios, firearms and dogs are not welcome on Sierra Club outings. Interested participants are strongly encouraged to contact the outing leader in advance and inquire as to updates, degree of difficulty, and other outing details. Participants should be prepared for various seasonal weather conditions, temperature changes that occur due to rapid increases/decreases in altitude, and bring enough food, water, and appropriate clothing for the given outing. Outing leaders reserve the right to turn away anyone who appears unprepared for scheduled outings. Abbreviations in capital letters signify the group planning the outing. [E] = educational content, [C] = conservation focus, [S] = service activities.

Glen Canyon Group Outings

GCG Sat 1/11 Snowshoeing/Cross-Country Skiing in the La Sals. From the winter trailhead on the Geyser Pass road we’ll follow the groomed trail to Gold Basin for views of Mt. Tuk with the canyon country in the distance. On the return snowshoers will likely take a shortcut in the woods. If we have some cross-country skiers, they’ll stay on the trail moving faster but going farther so we all get back at nearly the same time. Snowshoes can be rented from outfitters in town or probably borrowed from someone you know. Naturally, good weather and good road and trail conditions are necessary. Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Michael Stringham (435) 259-8579 mikechristaa@gmail.com.

GCG Sat 1/25 Circle O Bike Trail. Five miles or so on one of the Bar M trails like Circle O, Rockin’ A, or Deadman’s Ridge depending on preferences and conditions. Little elevation change. Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Michael Stringham (435) 259-8579 mikechristaa@gmail.com.

GCG Sat 2/8 Rainbow Rocks. Start from a spur on the Dubinky Wells road and head west to the colorfully-banded rim of the mesa for views of Redwall Mesa, the intervening white sandstone complex, and broad vistas of more distant open high-desert meadows and red and white sandstone monoliths. A northern outlier of The Needles is an easy scramble. About 5 miles with a 200’ elevation range. Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Michael Stringham (435) 259-8579 mikechristaa@gmail.com.

GCG Sat 2/22 Chicken Panel. Up Courthouse Wash from the bridge on the park road past Ring Arch to a small panel on a boulder in a side canyon. At the head of the side canyon is a cascade, spectacular if frozen. Climb out beside the cascade and return over the cliff top. Flat walking in the wash, about 500’ to climb out, about 6.5 miles in length. Great views from the cliff top. Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Tammy Berrie (435) 260-0462 svensally@gmail.com, 360-774-1534.

GCG Sat 3/7 Richardson Amphitheater. Park at Hittle Bottom and cross UT-128. Formal trail is 3 or 4 miles along and between drainages dissecting the red slopes of the Cutler Formation. A side trip up another canyon is possible, weather and inclination permitting. About 400’ of elevation change. Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Michael Stringham (435) 259-8579 mikechristaa@gmail.com.

GCG Sat 3/21 Bartlett Slickrock. From the Bartlett trailhead gradually climb the orange Slick Rock Entrada to the base of the biscuits. At the end of the biscuits explore the Slick Rock to the gap in the canyon wall. Then walk at the base of the biscuits up the Hidden Canyon side of the point. With a mild scramble in the biscuits return to the Bartlett side and then to the vehicles. Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Michael Stringham (435) 259-8579 mikechristaa@gmail.com.

Salt Lake Group Outings

SLG Sun 1/12 Dog Lake via Mill D North Fork Snowshoe. A classic Wasatch winter outing, this trail takes us through a forest of aspen and firs to sunny, ice-covered Dog Lake. Distance to Dog Lake is 2 miles, 1520 feet elevation gain, about 4 hours round-trip. Bring snowshoes, warm clothes, water, lunch, and sun protection. Meet at 9:30 am at the 6200 South Park and Ride lot, 6450 South Wasatch Blvd. (1 mi north of the canyon mouth). For more info and updates on conditions, contact Sally Aerts, svensally@gmail.com, 360-774-1534.

SLG Sun 1/26 Little Mountain snowshoe/hike. Level: Moderate. The trail follows a mostly gentle ridgeline at the head of Emigration Canyon for two miles to the summit of Little Moun-

Continued on page 20
Outings, continued from page 19

tains, with views into Mountain Dell Canyon and as far as the Uintas. The overall climb of 800 feet includes a couple of steep sections. Bring snowshoes or boot traction devices, depending on conditions. Meet promptly at 10:00 a.m. at the parking lot east of Hogle Zoo at Crestview Dr. and Sunnyside Ave. The lot is marked by a large eagle statue. For more info and updates on conditions, contact Fred and Bessann Swanson, fbswan32@msn.com, 801-588-0361.

SLG Sun 2/2 Little Dell to Affleck Park snowshoe. Level: Easy. We will park at the winter gate at Little Dell Reservoir and walk along the trail to Affleck Park, where we will take a break and eat lunch. The return will be along the road, which is closed to cars. The trail is mostly level and traverses a variety of winter habitats for animals including moose. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in front of the Bombay House on Parley’s Way. Please bring water and lunch. Proper winter clothing and snowshoes are mandatory. Plan to be on the trail for 4+ hours. We will return to SLC in the early afternoon. For more info and updates on conditions, contact Colleen Mahaffey colleen.mahaffey@gmail.com, 801-554-7153.

SLG Sat 2/22 Twin Peaks microspike hike. Level: Moderate. The Avenue Twin Peaks overlook the Avenues and the University of Utah. As you reach the top you can see the Tri-Canyons (Millcreek, Big Cottonwood, and Little Cottonwood), as well as a nice view of Little Black Mountain, and City Creek Canyon. 3.2 miles RT; 1100’ elevation gain. Meet at the Terrace Hills Trailhead at 9:30 a.m. (The Trailhead is at the end of Terrace Hills Drive accessed from either 11th Avenue or Northcrest Drive. Well-behaved dogs are welcome, please follow all canyon rules. For more info and updates on conditions, contact Chris, millerc@aruplab.com, 385-229-0737.

SLG Sun 3/8 Greens Basin snowshoe. Level: Moderate. This lovely, aspen-filled hidden basin is reached by a 1,000-foot climb from the Spruces Campground in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the 6200 South Park and Ride Lot, 6450 South Wasatch Blvd. (1 mi north of the canyon mouth). Bring snowshoes, warm clothes, water, lunch, and sun protection. Please call leaders if winter conditions are threatening, as this may require us to modify or cancel the trip. Leaders: Fred and Bessann Swanson, fbswan32@msn.com, 801-588-0361.

SLG Sat 3/22 Scotts Pass in Big Cottonwood Canyon XC Ski and Snowshoe. Level: Easy. The trail to Scott’s Pass in winter never fails to delight with sweeping views of the Brighton Bowl snowy mountain peaks. Expect about 3.5 miles round-trip, about 600 feet elevation gain, and a leisurely 3 hour tour. This is an easy to moderate trip for folks who hike and ski regularly. Bring cross country or back-country skis, poles, winter clothing, daypack, water and lunch. Meet at the south end of the 6200 S Park and Ride Lot in SLC (above Wasatch Drive) at 10:00 for carpooling. Please call leaders if winter conditions are threatening, as this may require us to modify or cancel the trip. Leaders: Rebecca Wallace and Pete Mimmack, rebeccawallace38@msn.com, 801-557-5261.

The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ridesharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.
Bear in mind the consequences.

The Yellowstone grizzly bear is an irreplaceable part of America’s natural heritage, a symbol of the independence that defines the American character and an icon of all that is wild and free. The Bush administration set forth a proposal that would remove federal protection for the Yellowstone grizzly bear. Since it was first listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act in 1975, the grizzly bear has made a strong recovery, but there is still more work to be done. Help Sierra Club protect our forest friends; they prefer the woods than being on display.

Get grizzly and JOIN Sierra Club.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. BOX 421041 Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041, or visit our website www.sierrablub.org