

SPAN

State PIRG Alumni Network

State PIRG Alumni Newsletter • Winter 2007

National Forest Protections Reinstated

After years of organizing by the PIRGs and coalition partners to mobilize millions of Americans to protect our last pristine national forests, Judge Elizabeth Laporte of the Northern District of California overturned the Bush administration's repeal of the Roadless Rule in late September.

"The Bush administration took way too many short-cuts in their rush to clear cut," said **Anna Aurilio**, federal legislative director. "Our most pristine national forests are once again safe from destructive logging, mining, and oil drilling."

Judge Laporte found that the Bush administration's rule violated the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act and Administrative Procedures Act.

The decision reinstates protections first put in place under a policy known as the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, which provided protections for nearly 60 million acres of pristine national forest lands.

The Forest Service originally implemented the Roadless Rule in 2001 after record-breaking public input in support of increased protection for our national forests. U.S. PIRG field work was integral in the

rule's adoption, and countless staff and volunteers worked over several years to generate approximately half of the 2.5 million total public comments submitted in support of the rule.

Green Corps organizers and canvassers and directors with the Fund for Public Interest Research, through their work with Sierra Club, generated many of the public comments, helping to make the Roadless Rule the most popular conservation initiative in U.S. history.

Once the rule was enacted, the PIRGs fought back when the timber and mining industries tried to roll back protections. Unfortunately, the Bush administration overturned the rule in 2005 and replaced it with a process whereby governors could petition to have their states' pristine national forests protected.

In the year since the president's decision, PIRGs and affiliated environment groups helped ensure that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (Calif.), Gov. Bill Richardson (N.M.) and Gov. Mike Easley (N.C.) submitted petitions to the federal government to reinstate full roadless

—Continued on page 5



PROTECTING WILD FORESTS—Years of organizing by the PIRGs and affiliated state environment groups paid off again for America's last pristine national forests in September when the Roadless Rule was upheld in federal court.

Election Highlights

- At least 15% of the electricity from Washington state's largest utilities will come from renewable sources by 2020, thanks to the successful WashPIRG-backed Initiative 937.
- Colorado voters overwhelming passed CoPIRG-backed Amendment 41, which bans lobbyist gifts to elected officials, cracks down on the "revolving door," and creates an independent ethics commission.
- Voters in Maryland passed an Environment Maryland-backed constitutional amendment to prohibit selling public lands without approval from the General Assembly.

Campaign Highlights

New Energy Future Program Gains Momentum

On Sept. 27, U.S. PIRG and state-based environmental affiliates officially kicked off the New Energy Future Campaign to build broad support for policies to move America beyond oil and toward cleaner energy. Just a few weeks later, nearly 250 organizations in over 39 states had endorsed the New Energy Future platform, and hundreds of candidates had signed on to the platform's goals. November's elections proved decisive, showcasing bipartisan support and endorsements from key party leaders at both the state and federal levels.

Energy Program Director **Rob Sargent** sums it up: "Candidates from across the political spectrum responded very positively to our platform, which signals they understand that Americans want to move away from dependence on oil and toward clean, renewable energy sources. The support we garnered through the New Energy Future campaign has laid the groundwork for a shift in direction on energy in the new Congress." ■

New Voters Project Posts Huge Vote Increases

This fall the state PIRGs' New Voters Project ran what organizers have called the "largest nonpartisan youth voter turnout campaign the country has ever seen during a midterm election."

On 80-plus college campuses in 25 states, the New Voters Project registered more than 75,000 students to vote and made over 95,000 reminder calls to voters. An analysis found that in student-dense areas where the project was active, turnout was six times that of young adults overall. ■

Ban on Predatory Lending to Military Personnel

Nearly 30 years ago, actions by the Supreme Court and Congress eliminated federal loan interest rate limits. The result has been a PIRG-documented explosion in "legal" loan sharking by pay day lenders, rent-to-own stores and other predatory lenders charging interest rates of 200 to 300 percent APR.

In early October, progress was made against these predatory lenders: PIRG-backed legislation to ban predatory lending to military personnel and their families was sent to the President and will become law. Specifically, the bill places a 36 percent annual percentage rate and fees cap on these loans.

The legislation was supported by an unprecedented coalition of consumer groups, military aid societies and the Pentagon itself.

The next step following this major victory, says Federal Consumer Program Director **Ed Mierzwinski**, is to expand protections to all consumers. ■



Environment Colorado's Will Coyne announces the New Energy Future campaign, alongside representatives from the Rocky Mountain Farmers Union and the Colorado Building & Construction Trades Council.

Exelon Energy Takeover Stopped in New Jersey

On Sept. 14, the nation's most profitable utility, Exelon, pulled the plug on its proposed buyout of PSE&G—a utility merger that would have given Exelon a regional monopoly, raised New Jersey electric rates by as much as \$2.3 billion a year, and made service less reliable.

Negotiations ground to a halt after advocacy by NJPIRG's **Suzanne Leta** and allies convinced officials to reject Exelon's anti-consumer proposal.

This victory for New Jersey families and businesses took two years and a coalition including: New Jersey Citizen Action, Public Citizen, the New Jersey Large Energy Users Coalition, the Chemistry Council of New Jersey, the New Jersey Tenants Organization, SEIU, New Jersey

State Council, the Sierra Club of New Jersey and others. ■

Environment Texas Wins State Parks Protection

Texas Gov. Rick Perry scrapped a backroom deal to sell Eagle Mountain State Park land to developers and gas drillers after Environment Texas Advocate **Luke Metzger** exposed the plan in a front-page article in the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

Not only did the governor back off the plan, but on Sept. 13 announced that the 400 acres would be sold instead to the Trust for Public Land, a nonprofit land conservation group.

The proceeds from the sale will go to protecting the Cross-Timbers region, which contains ancient deciduous forests and clean water. ■

Alumni Profiles

Maggie Drummond: Smart Growth Advocate

When **Maggie Drummond** stumbled across the Fund for Public Interest Research canvass office in Newton in 1998, she was promptly recruited by the office's canvass director, **Moire Murray**. Working with Moire, alumna **Gigi Norcross** and Assistant Director **Sarah Gaudette** (now assistant national canvass director), Maggie found going door-to-door to be an eye-opening experience that gave her both political perspective and personal motivation.

Maggie later directed the Newton office with alumnus **Sam Boykin** before moving on to work with former National Canvass Director **Jon Scarlett** as the national canvass administrative assistant. Maggie remained in

that role for three years, and says that Jon is not only a great friend but the "best boss she's ever had."

Maggie later moved back to her home state of Maine where she directed the Portland office of Toxics Action Center (TAC) for three years, working with **Matt Wilson**, then TAC director, current Director **Alyssa Schuren**, alumni **Jay Rasku** and **Will Everitt**, and current Maryland PIRG Advocate **Johanna Neumann**.

Today, Maggie serves as the Advocacy Director for GrowSmart Maine, where she focuses on sprawl and land use issues and on community building at the local level. GrowSmart Maine

recently celebrated repealing the state's minimum acreage requirement for school siting, securing funding for the Maine Downtown Center to invest in urban revitalization, and turning out 800 attendees—including four gubernatorial candidates—to an October summit.

Maggie keeps in touch with many friends from the PIRG network. At last year's Alumni Aspen vacation she was able to catch up with current staffers **Erin Bowser**, **Tom Fendley** and **Harris Parnell** as well as Progressive Voter Network Lead Organizer **Erin Casey** and **Jon Scarlett**. She regularly bumps into Green Corps alumnus **Mark Hays** and current USPIRG Student Chapters Field Director **Ben**



Current staffer Amy Floyd & Maggie Drummond in 1999.

Unger, and attends an annual spring vacation with CALPIRG alumna **Mary McClelland** and current staffers **Mia Scampini** and **Stacey Hafner**.

Maggie can be reached at drummondmaggie@yahoo.com. ■

Chris Taylor: Wind Energy Leader

A leader in the field of wind energy development, **Chris Taylor** got his start on the 1988 Portland summer canvass with



Chris Taylor

alumnus **Bob Jenks** and current OSPIRG Executive Director **Mo Kirk** and then as a MASSPIRG volunteer at Amherst College.

After serving with the Peace Corps in West Africa, Chris joined the staff of OSPIRG as an advocate in 1994, where he worked alongside alumni like **Jeana Frazzini**, **Elizabeth Kennedy**, **Kathleen Sullivan**, **Beckie Lee**, **Ivan Frishberg**, and **Randy Tucker**. During that time, Chris lobbied for a policy to establish the Energy Trust of Oregon and served as a cam-

paign manager for OSPIRG's 1996 ballot measure campaign to update the Oregon Bottle Bill.

Chris went on to earn a graduate degree from Princeton, and then worked for the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. In 2002, he joined the team at Zilkha, an up-and-coming wind energy developer that he discovered through MASSPIRG alumna **Rachel Shimshak**.

Chris now serves as a regional Project Development Director at

Horizon Wind Energy and is excited to play a part in creating an industry where people can make money by doing the right thing.

Chris frequently teams up with OSPIRG staff like **Jeremiah Baumann** on policy issues, and Horizon has hired other PIRG alumni like **Hilary Foote** and **Josh Magee** along the way.

Chris lives in Portland with his wife, Kathleen, and their two children. He can be reached at Chris.Taylor@horizonwind.com. ■



Megan Jennings and Garth Schultz were married last summer in Montana.

Weddings and Babies:

Jen Brock (Green Corps '98) recently married Mark Cancellieri at a ceremony at the Cloisters in Baltimore. The event was co-organized by alumnae **Stacy Jackson** and **Meg Gray**, attended by former Canvass Director **Emily Greenfield** and current MaryPIRG Policy Advocate **Johanna Neumann**, and officiated by alumnus **Aaron Viles**. Across the country, **Garth Schultz**, former canvass director, and **Megan Jennings**,

former CALPIRG organizer, were married on June 25 in Bozeman, Montana; they met on the summer canvass in 2003.

Former NSCAHH Field Organizer **Katy McGiffin** was married to Bryant Gauthier on Oct. 8 of last year in Orcas Island, Washington. The couple now resides in Minneapolis where Katy serves as Assistant Hennepin County Attorney in the Juvenile Prosecution Division.

Alumni Updates

Gustavo Haans Metzger was born at home on Aug. 4 to **Melissa DeHaan**, former campus organizer, and **Luke Metzger**, current Environment Texas legislative advocate; "Gus" weighed in at a whopping 9 pounds! Former campus organizer **Amy Marrinan Davidson** and husband Dean welcomed Riley Grace to the world on Aug. 22.

Juliette Dellecker Michaelson, former MASSPIRG and Pubs staffer, and husband Andrew welcomed the arrival of Elsie Rose on Sept. 13. Alumna **Diana Myrvang** and alumnus **Joel Ario** are enjoying the latest addition to their family: Benjamin Haakon Myrvang Ario ("Benny" for short) was born in 2005 and joins brothers Samuel, age 13, and Scott, age 11.

Movers and Shakers:

After eight years as a writer and editor at Utne Reader, former MASSPIRG Campus Organizer **Leif Utne** has left the

family business and returned to Seattle to work as publisher of Worldchanging.com, an online magazine about models, ideas and tools for building a sustainable future.

Husband and wife alumni **Aaron Viles** and **Emily Greenfield** are high and dry in New Orleans and are both working actively to restore the region: Emily is working to curb crime and FEMA fraud as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, and Aaron is working to help protect the Gulf Coast from future tragedy as Campaign Director of Gulf Restoration Network.

Tom Hucker, former regional canvass director, was elected to the Maryland General Assembly on Nov. 7 on a platform of building the progressive movement inside the state Legislature. At the same time, former VPIRG Assistant Director and Maryland state Delegate **Peter Franchot** beat out the competition to become Maryland's new Comptroller.

New Babies



Amy and Riley Grace



Benny Myrvang Ario and dad



Gustavo Haans Metzger



Elsie Rose with her dad

AkPIRG, U.S.PIRG and Fund alum **Randy Fleisher** is currently in St. Louis serving as Rabbi of a progressive urban synagogue involved in social justice causes, especially dismantling racism.

Shari Diener, former campus organizer, recently graduated from law school, got married, and is now awaiting results of the Maryland Bar exam.

Mike Brooks, former New Voters Project Iowa assistant organizing director, is serving as the National Director of a college-focused volunteer engagement program called The 10,000 Hours Show. **Joan Clayburgh**, former campus

organizer and Pesticide Watch director, and **Tom Mooers**, former Green Corps organizer, lead the Sierra Nevada Alliance and Sierra Watch, respectively, which were both involved in a recent legal victory resulting in conservation funds and development restrictions in a spectacular alpine meadow near Lake Tahoe. You can read the *L.A. Times* article detailing the story at the <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-martis2oct02,1,7096311> story.

Former NJPIRG & MASSPIRG Advocate **Patty Dorsey Kelmar** recently returned to New Jersey after more than three years in Switzerland working with various UN-affiliated organizations.



Jen Brock & Mark Cancellieri at their wedding.

Send alumni news, updates and photos to alumni@pirg.org. ■

National Forests

—Continued from page 1

protections in their states; helped convince the governors of Arizona, Oregon and Maine to begin their petitioning processes; and led the charge for protections in Colorado and Wisconsin.

PIRG organizers around the country were featured in coverage of the rule's recent reinstatement: **Anna Aurilio** was quoted in the *New York Times*, U.S. PIRG Minnesota field organizer **Monique Sullivan** was interviewed on a statewide radio network, and OSPIRG's **Jeremiah Baumann** was quoted in the *Statesman Journal*.

The Bush administration could still appeal September's judicial ruling and in fact has already indicated plans to move forward with individual state petitions and rulemaking that could weaken and eliminate roadless protections.

Nonetheless, the court's decision is an historic victory in ongoing work to protect our national forests and the clean drinking water, wildlife habitat and recreation that they provide to our country.

To read about the latest on state and federal PIRG campaigns, please visit www.ospirg.org. ■

OSPIRG Wins Healthcare Victory at the Ballot

In November's election, Oregon voters overwhelmingly approved Measure 44 to expand the OSPIRG-backed prescription drug-buying pool to more than 1 million Oregonians who lack insurance coverage, regardless of age or income.

By overwhelmingly approving measure 44, Oregon voters have enacted a powerful solution to the problem of skyrocketing prescription drug costs.

The measure's passage helps cut costs for the Oregonians paying the highest prices at the drug counter—those lacking prescription insurance coverage.

A recent OSPIRG study found that, with no one to negotiate lower prices on their behalf, un-

insured consumers pay an average of 61 percent more than the federal government for the same medications.

"The Oregon Prescription Drug Program changes that, using the power of bulk purchasing to negotiate lower prices," says OSPIRG Consumer Advocate **Laura Etherton**.

Expanding the program will not cost additional taxpayer dollars. Rather, the program becomes even more effective as more people join.

In addition, the expanded program provides a critical tool in the fight against rising health insurance premiums. Every time people must go to the emergency room because they can't af-

ford drugs like insulin or heart medicine, it forces costs up for everyone.

For the average family, more than \$1,100 of the annual premium is used to pay for the expensive care for the uninsured.

The Oregon Prescription Drug Program's ability to cut drug costs is a critical component of reducing the overall cost of health care.

OSPIRG helped to establish the state's original drug purchasing pool in 2003 and stands together with a broad coalition of supporters including Oregonians for Health Security, the Oregon Business Association and the Oregon Nurses Association to celebrate this victory. ■

Alumni Services Directory

In an effort to help publicize the great work and many services alumni have to offer, SPAN is developing an Alumni Services Directory. If you run a business that offers services such as Web development, graphic design or campaign consultation that may support alumni in their social change efforts, send us your information at alumni@pirg.org to be included in the directory. Here's a sample of listings:

• **Tippens + Furry Consultants** • (503) 528-2873

Former OSPIRG campus organizer **Louise Tippens** and business partner Deb Furry are pleased to announce their new firm, Tippens + Furry Consultants, where they will combine their skills and experience to offer comprehensive services to non-profits, government organizations and businesses. Their areas of expertise include organizational development, project planning and management, and philanthropic initiatives. You can reach Louise directly at ltippens@teleport.com.

• **Design For Social Impact** • www.dfsi.org • (215) 922-7303

Former campus organizer and GRFX co-founder **Ennis Carter's** company Design for Social Impact provides communication services to non-profit and public interest groups across the country. DfSI specializes in communication strategy, graphic design, Web design and print production to accomplish its goals. Ennis can be reached directly at ennis@dfsi.org.

• **The Principled Pen** • www.principledpen.com • (215) 990-7334

Former Publications staffer **Rebecca Farabaugh** runs an independent creative consulting and print communications firm, specially designed to meet the needs of non-profits and socially responsible businesses nationwide. Rebecca specializes in campaign marketing and persuasive writing, as well as print publication layout and production. You can reach Rebecca at rebecca@principledpen.com.

Current Career Opportunities With the state PIRGs And Affiliated Organizations

For more information, please visit www.uspirg.org/jobs.

You can also call Dana Dorman at (215) 985-1113.

• **Political Department Staff, U.S. PIRG**

Location: Los Angeles, CA

Expand visibility and resources for the PIRG network by garnering media coverage for the state PIRGs' state-level program work with national media; developing short and long term strategies for broadening our political network and raising our profile; and deepening financial support by writing grants, organizing fundraising events, and developing high-level individual donors.

• **Assistant General Counsel, U.S. PIRG**

Location: Boston, MA

Work with PIRG leaders to oversee the growth of the PIRG network and ensure legal compliance in carrying out the organizations' operations. Practice areas include employment law, First Amendment law, nonprofit corporate and tax compliance, charitable solicitation regulation, and contracts.

• **Field Organizer, Environment California**

Location: Los Angeles or Sacramento, CA

Organize members in all 80 state Assembly districts, with particular attention to the Central Valley. Build our political network on the ground and on the web, generate media attention, build public awareness, lobby decision-makers, and help build the organization for the future.

• **Clean Energy Advocate, U.S. PIRG**

Location: Washington, DC

Lead our efforts to build support for New Energy Future campaign goals in Congress and the White House. Conduct research, create policy solutions, lobby, cultivate relationships with media and coalition partners, and fundraise for U.S. PIRG's energy program.

• **Environmental Advocate, ConnPIRG**

Location: Hartford, CT

Conduct research, create policy solutions, lobby, cultivate relationships with media and coalitions, and fundraise for ConnPIRG's environmental program.

Welcome back, Stacey!

A member of the UW-Madison crew returns to PIRG staff

As a member of the student government at University of Wisconsin-Madison during the mid-1990's, **Stacey Hafner** worked closely with WISPIRG student leaders. It was this work that inspired Stacey to continue working with college students, so becoming a PIRG campus organizer upon graduation in 1998 was a natural choice.

Stacey had stepped into an already storied culture of student organizing at UW-Madison, where PIRG alumni like **Nels Bjorkquist, Clayt Freed, Sam Sager, Zach Corrigan, Robin Hubbard** and **Matt Blevins** recruited her and fellow student government leader **Patrick Wojahn. Annie Davini**, WISPIRG board chair during Stacey's sophomore year at UW, directed

the Madison office where Stacey, Sam and Clayt all canvassed one summer. **Kerry Schumann**, who had been a WISPIRG board member and campus organizer, would become Stacey's staff director during her first year on staff.

Stacey's time as Madison campus organizer proved fruitful: in addition to scoring campaign victories, Stacey recruited current TAC Development Director **Mia Scampini**, former Campus Organizing Director **Jessica Tritsch**, and current Center for Campus Free Speech Director **Megan Fitzgerald**. After two years of organizing students at her alma mater, Stacey then worked as a MASSPIRG assistant organizing director for five years.



Stacey Hafner (center, front) and friends prepare for Summer 2000 canvass director training.

In 2005, Stacey returned to Wisconsin as the Executive Director for United Council, the University of Wisconsin statewide student association. There, Stacey led efforts to institutionalize the United Council internship program and to provide for ongoing focus in the student organization's campaign work.

Now that her work with United Council has concluded, the PIRGs are excited to have her serve as the new organizing director for the National Student Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness, based in Chicago, Ill. Stacey can be reached at Stacey@studentsagainsthunger.org. ■

Additional Nonprofit Career Opportunities

Check out these career opportunities around the U.S. To list open positions e-mail alumni@pirg.org.

- Work with alumnus **Brant Olson** as the Global Finance Campaigner, Development Associate or Webmaster with Rainforest Action Network in San Francisco. Send cover letter & resume to resumes@ran.org.

- Work as the Associate Deputy Executive Director of Campaign Strategies & Actions with Amnesty International in D.C. Send resume & cover letter to humanresources@aiusa.org.

- Work with alumni **Zach Corrigan, Vicki Kaplan** and **Jen Mueller** as the Research Director, Web Editor or Wild Oceans Organizer with Food & Water Watch in D.C. Send materials to Foodandwater@fwwatch.org.

- Work in coalition with alumnus **Mark Dunlea** as the Executive Director of Citizens' Environmental Coalition in Albany, NY. Send cover letter & resume to jobsearch@cectoxic.org.

- Work with alumni like **Jon Goldin-Dubois, Pete Maysmith, Josh Zaharoff, Ned Wigglesworth** and **Dave Algozo** as Media Programs Director or Development Associate with Common Cause in D.C. (send cover letter & resume to hr@commoncause.org), or as an Organizer with Common Cause California (send cover letter, resume, & writing sample to ca-info@commoncause.org).

- Work with alumni **Kristen Brengel** and **Jeremey Sheaffer** as the Montana Forest Program Director with The Wilderness Society in Bozeman, MT. Send cover letter, resume and references to anne_rockhold@tws.org.

Save The Date: Winter Alumni Events

As temperatures outside drop, be sure to make it to an alumni social near you to relax and catch up with old friends. For more details and to RSVP, visit www.pirg.org/alumni/calendar.html. If you'd like to host a social event in your city, contact Kirsten Schatz at alumni@pirg.org.

Raleigh, NC **Jan. 17, 2007**

Contact Elizabeth Ouzts: elizabeth@environmentnorthcarolina.org

Austin, TX **Jan. 18, 2007**

Contact Luke Metzger: luke@environmenttexas.org

New Brunswick, NJ **Jan. 20, 2007**

Contact Doug O'Malley: domalley@environmentnewjersey.org

Washington, D.C. **Feb. 6, 2007**

Contact Liz Hitchcock: elizabeth@pirg.org

Philadelphia, PA **March 15, 2007**

Contact David Masur: davidmasur@pennenvironment.org

Aspen, CO **Dec. 14-22, 2007**

Eligible career alumni should save these dates for next year's Aspen Vacation!



**Jake Brown, Hyam Kramer and
Lori Catalozzi at the Boston
alumni event in November.**

The State PIRG Alumni Network
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