

Virginia Chapter Annual Report 2021



SIERRA CLUB
VIRGINIA CHAPTER



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Acknowledgements

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With the support of our staff, members, leaders, donors and volunteers!

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Chapter Director's Note

2021 was another trying year as the pandemic wore on and disrupted in-person activities. Despite the challenging circumstances, however, we achieved significant victories and grew as a team and a movement. I am incredibly proud of the tenacity our leaders and staff demonstrated, navigating adversity with determination, grace and humility.

We got to see the fruits of our labor with strong new environmental policies like the Virginia Clean Economy Act, Environmental Justice Act and many more being implemented for the first time. Revenue—far exceeding expectations—from Virginia joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) began flowing to local communities across the state to support flood preparedness and energy efficiency investments. And, we saw a turning point in energy regulatory policy, with the State Corporation Commission instituting requirements on

Dominion Energy to provide more cost-effective and sustainable long-term plans for our electricity supply.

It was also an exciting year for Virginia given the victories achieved for clean transportation. After a concerted effort with partners, our state became the 15th nationwide to adopt Clean Car Standards that will reduce tailpipe emissions, improve air quality, and mitigate climate change.

Our chapter also doubled down on our commitment to equity and inclusion last year, expanding efforts to educate ourselves through training, assessment and coaching so that we can recognize and dismantle systemic oppression wherever it shows up. The need for expertise in this area led to our collaboration with Virginia Community Voice, a nonprofit organization based in Richmond, equipped to provide guidance to our leaders and staff.

Sadly, we also lost some dear friends and tremendous leaders last year, who are recognized in the new segment we

are adding to our Annual Report: “In Memoriam.”

The end of the year brought disappointing results from the state election, with a new administration led by Glenn Youngkin taking office, and dashing hopes for further progress on environmental protection. The final months of the year were spent preparing to defend our progress from attacks by polluter-friendly officials. No doubt, the strong relationships and hard won-achievements secured by working together in 2021 would enable us to prove a formidable force against rollbacks. The scale and success of our efforts for climate action and environmental justice continues to be a testament to the possibilities that abound when we work together for positive change.

Thank you for your support!



Kate West
Director

2021 By the Numbers

 110,000+ advocates

 ~20,000 members

 949 Lifetime Members

 Nearly \$443,000 in 501(c)3 grant monies received!

 Over \$102,900 501(c)4 support donated!

 14 Staff

 20 Chapter Executive Committee members

 140+ Chapter and local volunteer leaders

 944 501(c)4 donors

 70 Monthly Donors

 1,772 individual donations

 11 Regional Groups

 4,406 comments opposing dirty energy projects

 1,135 comments supporting clean energy

 617 comments with accompanying social media posts sent to the Department of Environmental Quality advocating for environmental justice



610 comments sent to the Department of Environmental Quality opposing severe damage to our waterways from the Mountain Valley Pipeline

 350 meetings with legislators



5 Virtual Grassroots Conversations

 207 bills the Legislative Committee took a position on

 81 Press Hits



45 new climate and environmental protection laws passed



44 years since the founding of our VA Chapter in 1977!



30 Letters to the Editor published by chapter volunteers



18 Chapter Volunteer Awards



27 Letters to the Editor published



For the first time ever, the Virginia Air Pollution Control Board denied a permit for a compressor station (for the Mountain Valley Pipeline)



1 Activity Section: Sierra Club Potomac Region Outings (SCPRO)

2021 Environmental Action Priorities

In coordination with partners, our chapter is working across Virginia to create a just transition to a clean energy economy by collaboratively working toward climate solutions that enable all people to benefit from healthy communities and a healthy planet through building an inclusive and equitable movement.

Achieving a just transition requires us to acknowledge that the systemic problems fueling the climate crisis are inherently connected with those that uphold economic and social injustice. Working toward a just transition means developing an energy and economic system that is regenerative rather than extractive. A

regenerative economy is based on renewal while an extractive economy requires destruction.

A regenerative system will precipitate the usage of clean energy, and improve public health and wellbeing. Yet, this approach doesn't leave dirty-fuel dependent communities and workers behind. It ensures that these communities receive the necessary support to thrive economically, socially, and environmentally. Supporting those who are historically marginalized and have been excluded from decision making processes will shift power away from polluters and to those on the frontlines of environmental degradation and the impacts of climate change.



Our Top Issues

Energy Equity

Ensure that no Virginian has to choose between paying their energy bills or affording basic needs by increasing awareness of energy efficiency and weatherization programs in communities that are the most overburdened, and building a strong community-based coalition of organizations working on energy burden, with an emphasis on representation from those communities.



Stop the Pipelines

Build a powerful, resilient and inclusive movement to stop the fracked gas pipelines in Virginia by working in collaboration with diverse groups including, but not limited to frontline communities, youth, communities of color, elderly, regional environmental organizations, health care and business community members, and our Sierra Club base, to ensure key permits are denied and construction is halted or averted.

Environmental Justice

Support communities most impacted by water contamination, air pollution and climate impacts to mitigate further harm and redress historic injustice, with a priority on communities that continue to suffer from legacies of discrimination.

Clean Transit For All

Erase tailpipe pollution in Virginia by transitioning the transportation sector to 100% zero-emissions vehicles. Our strategies include working with local transit officials to transition municipal public transportation fleets to zero-emission, including transit buses, school buses, and passenger vehicles, and advocating for funding of recently passed electric school bus and electric vehicle (EV) rebate bills.

Community Engagement in Coastal Resilience and Flood Preparedness

Work with the coalition of groups involved with the state's coastal resiliency and flood preparedness plans to ensure that the state is developing and implementing community outreach programs that provide residents in vulnerable communities to voice their flooding concerns; and ensure disproportionately impacted residents' flooding concerns are addressed and reflected in specific projects under consideration for funding within both the city's and the state's resiliency plans.

Advance Clean Energy Development

Ensure wind energy is developed in a way that is fair, equitable and beneficial to all Virginians, not placing an undue burden on electric customers, and providing good jobs, economic benefit, and building wealth in disadvantaged communities (or DACs).

Support growth in distributed solar generation and community solar, especially for low-income communities, and improve Virginia's building codes to make buildings, especially single and multifamily dwellings, energy efficient and able to support full electrification, solar and electric vehicle charging.

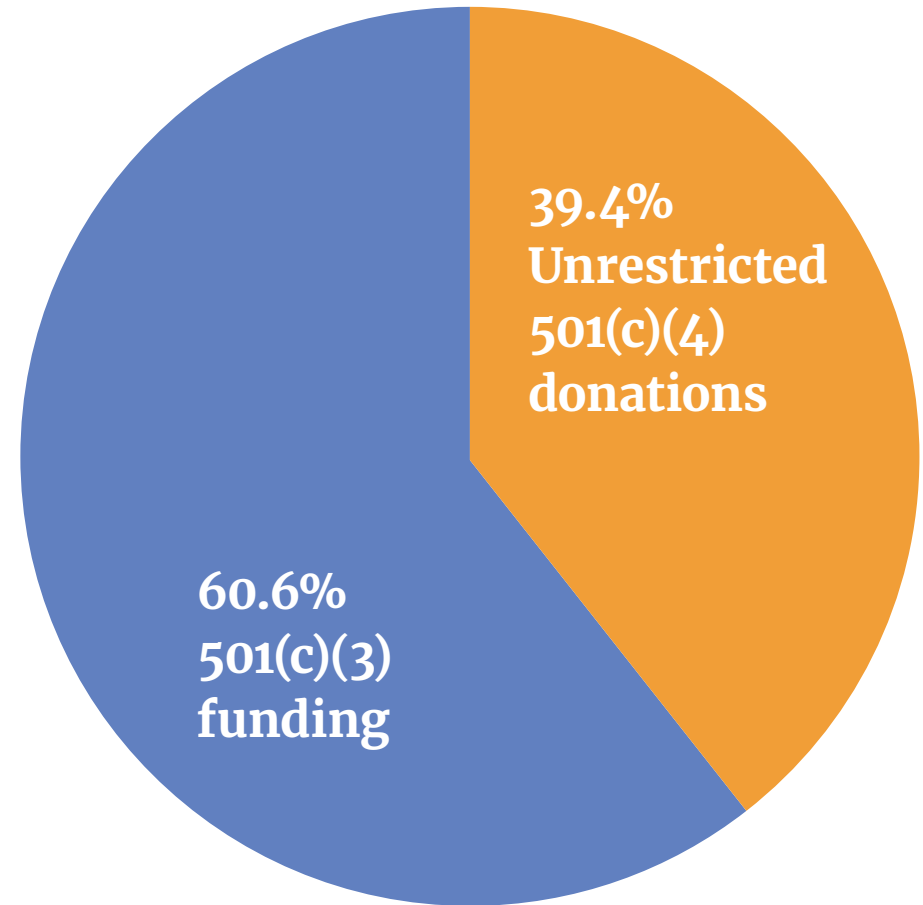
Reinforce Virginia's energy transition by working with localities to secure bold climate action plans, and ensure that large, well-funded corporate customers like data centers help lead the clean energy transition as they expand their footprint in Virginia, avoiding increased fossil fuel use that would harm our communities and our climate.



Your Critical Support

We are proud of how much we achieve on a tight budget. Sierra Club and its local entities, including the Virginia Chapter and our local Groups and Activity Section, rely on unrestricted, non tax-deductible funds (shown in orange) to function. Your donations contribute critical resources to support core operating expenses and legislative advocacy work.

The Sierra Club Foundation is the fiscal sponsor of our 501(c)(3) funding (shown in blue), which supports our campaign work to educate, recruit, and mobilize grassroots power to achieve big local, state, and federal regulatory policy victories that protect our environment. We can't do one without the other, and we can't do any of this without our members and donors!



Your generous contribution to the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter makes this work possible. And remember that when you give, 100% of your gift stays in Virginia to support our local work. For this reason, contributing to the Virginia Chapter is a long-term investment to protect the environmental health of our state for future generations.



Give today at
vasierra.club/donate

Donor Appreciation

We cannot do this formidable work without the sustained support of our committed members and donors. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of the generous donors (listed on the following pages) who supported our chapter in 2021! Your contributions enable us to continue the fight for a healthy planet. We depend on committed changemakers like you.

For 45 years, by working together, we have achieved countless victories that protect our precious resources and make progress toward creating a healthy future so our communities can thrive for generations to come. As long as you continue to show up for our chapter, we will continue to fight for environmental policies that benefit you. Progress toward a clean energy future, protections for our lands, air and water, and reducing harmful pollution doesn't happen on its own. It requires everyday people like you and me to stay involved and lend support.

There are many ways to support our chapter. Today, one of the most valuable ways is to become a monthly donor, which provides sustained operating funds that we can count on. These funds support core expenses including our amazing staff organizing and lobbying capacity.

Scaling Old Rag \$100-249

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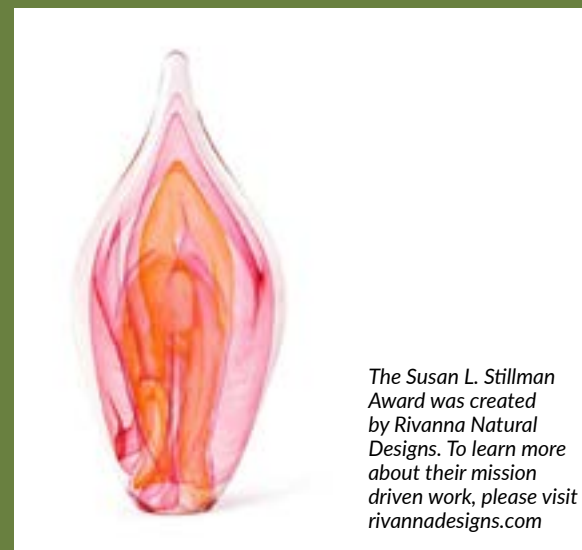
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Scaling Whitetop \$5,000-9,999

Mary B. Jones

Old Rag.....	3,268'
Hogback.....	3,474'
Pinnacle.....	3,730'
Stony Man	4,010'
Hawksbill	4,050'
Mount Rogers...	5,728'

* Indicates sustaining monthly donor
 † Indicates contributions raised
 through Team Sierra
 fundraising platform
 (see: teamsierra.org/virginia)



The Susan L. Stillman Award was created by Rivanna Natural Designs. To learn more about their mission driven work, please visit rivannadesigns.com

Susan L. Stillman Award

An individual is recognized with this award when they have both demonstrably contributed to advancing our Chapter's mission with both a substantial commitment of volunteer time and financial support (through direct, non-tax deductible giving or fundraising efforts). Each year potential recipients are considered, but it is not necessarily given. No award was granted in 2021.



In Memoriam

In 2021, Virginia lost two titans of environmental leadership and service: Dr. Charles Price and Debra Jacobson, who had each dedicated countless hours volunteering with our chapter among other groups for the benefit of our shared communities and our planet. Their memories live on in the impactful initiatives they participated in, decisions they influenced, and lives they touched.

Dr. Charles Kemper Price November 1, 1938 – March 11, 2021

Born in Berryville to Dick and Lucy Price, **Charles Price**, from his youth, understood the value of education in improving his own life and the lives of others. He was awarded a scholarship to the University of Richmond, where he earned his bachelor's degree. He earned his master's from the College of William and Mary and his doctorate from the University of Virginia.

He began his career with the Portsmouth City Public schools, first as a teacher, then as an assistant principal and finally as a principal. Upon finishing his doctorate, he was appointed the first superintendent of the Rehabilitative School Authority, Virginia's former agency for correctional education.

Dr. Price's finest contributions, however, awaited him in retirement. Despite political obstruction, resistance and indifference, Dr. Price's vision of environmental protection and green-space conservation not merely endured: it prevailed. Primarily due to his political savvy, absolute determination and pragmatic idealism, the James River Park System now enjoys the protection of a conservation easement, as does Bandy Field Nature Park and the Cannon Creek Greenway. Charles Price, in 23 years of leadership of The Friends of Bandy Field, spear-headed the movement to create, maintain

and protect the only park in Richmond's West End. To commemorate his efforts, a bench with a plaque bearing his name has been placed on Bandy Field. In further recognition of his endeavor,



ors, characterized by Jane Hotchkiss as “brilliant and innovative solutions for the long-term protection and improvement of Richmond's parks that

will be lauded for generations to come,” Dr. Price was named as a 2012 Richmond History Maker by the Valentine and Capital Region Collaborative.

In addition to conservation work in Richmond, Charles Price was a dedicated member of the Sierra Club. He served as Chair of Falls of the James Group, as well as Chair of the Sierra Club's Virginia Chapter. For his outstanding service in these capacities, he received the National Sierra Club's Special Achievement Award in 2011.

Dr. Price's final public-service project, the restoration of the Cannon Creek Greenway and the establishment of a link to the Capital Region Bike Trail, combined his two chief passions: conservation and education. To accomplish his goal, Charles Price initiated the Cannon Creek Work/Study Program with the Richmond City Justice Center and the Workforce Development Program, with Richmond's Parks and Recreation Department. The two programs teach not only groundskeeping, a marketable skill, but work values and habits that can transform participants' lives. For his dedication and work, the city designated a portion of the bike trail as the Charles K. Price Trail.

Dr. Charles Kemper Price is survived by his wife, Dr. Phyllis Price; his cousin, Becky Raiger and her husband, Jim; and many nieces and nephews. He will be buried in his home town, and a party in his honor will be held in Richmond in the spring.

In Memoriam

Debra Ann Jacobson

March 20, 1952 – September 15, 2021

Debra Ann Jacobson, a lawyer who worked on Capitol Hill for nearly 20 years and specialized in energy and environmental issues, died on September 15, 2021 at her family home in McLean, Virginia. She was 69 years old. The cause was complications from liver cancer, said her husband, David Jacobson.

Ms. Jacobson started her career as an intern for Rep. Bob Eckhardt (D-Tex) and advanced to become his legislative assistant and, later, one of his investigative counsels on the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. She continued in this later position for 14 years after Rep. John D. Dingell assumed Chairmanship of the Subcommittee in 1981. On August 26, 1991, U.S. News and World Report ran an article on Dingell that dubbed him “Congress’s most feared Democrat.” The article detailed the skills of Dingell’s investigative “junkyard dogs,” including Debra Jacobson, “a lawyer who knows more about the EPA than most of its bosses.” The most noteworthy investigation of Ms. Jacobson’s



career involved her work as a member of the legal team that overcame President Reagan’s claim of executive privilege over Superfund documents in 1983 and led to the resignation of the Administrator and more than 20 high-ranking officials for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). After her career on Capitol Hill, Ms. Jacobson worked at the U.S. Department of Energy on clean energy and other issues. Following her retirement from public service in 2000, she co-taught an Energy Law course for 12 years at George Washington University and engaged in private consulting. Debra (Denkensohn) Jacobson was born in Kingston, New York on March 20, 1952. She graduated from the University of Rochester in 1974 and from The George Washington University Law School in 1977. She lived in Northern Virginia from 1977 until her death.

Ms. Jacobson married David Jacobson in 1975. In addition to her husband of McLean, Virginia, survivors include one son, Andrew Jacobson (of Montclair, New Jersey) and his wife as well as one grandson. She also is survived by one sister, Sheri Denkensohn, and a brother, Michael Denkensohn. In 1981, Ms. Jacobson was one of the co-founders of the Women’s Council on Energy and the Environment, a women’s networking and

educational organization, that still exists today. For several years, she served in leadership roles in the local and state Sierra Club groups. From 2017 to 2020, Ms. Jacobson also served as a member of the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council, and she played a key role in convincing the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to install solar arrays on more than 100 county buildings and schools. She also worked on activities to promote voter registration and early voting and to assure voter protection in numerous Federal and Virginia elections.

Special Awards

Debra Jacobson and Dr. Dick Ball were recipients of the Glen Besa Lifetime Service Award in 2021 for their devoted service and outstanding contributions to the success of the Virginia Chapter Sierra Club, and for their extraordinary courage and leadership at the grassroots level, in the universal struggle to protect the environment.

Behind the Scenes

We are committed to informing, empowering and engaging activists in implementing strategic climate solutions in and for Virginia.

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Legislative & Political Director



Eileen Woll
Offshore Energy Program Director



Kelsey Crane
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Tim Cywinski
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Hunter Noffsinger
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Ann Creasy
Conservation Program Manager



Paige Wesselink
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Susan Stillman, Renewable Energy Chair

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Glen Besa, Plastics Chair

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Douglas Stewart, Transportation and Smart Growth Co-Chair

Dean Amel, Solid Waste Chair

Pete Bsumek, Wilderness Chair



The Sierra Club is the most enduring and influential grassroots environmental organization in the United States. We amplify the power of our 3.8 million members and activists to defend everyone's right to a healthy world.

We know actions speak louder than words. That's why we've built a national community of volunteers, advocates, and grassroots activists who show up when and where it counts. Our supporters have the tools and resources to make themselves heard in nearly every district in every state across the country.

From securing protection for 439 parks and monuments, to winning passage of the Clean Air and Endangered Species Acts, to putting over 281 coal plants on the path to replacement with clean energy, to securing the right of every kid in America to visit a national park, we have an unmatched record of success and impact.

The Sierra Club Virginia Chapter is over 20,000 members strong. We coordinate action to promote climate solutions and oppose projects and policies that put the interests of corporate polluters above the needs of communities.



SIERRA CLUB VIRGINIA CHAPTER

Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet

Virginia Chapter

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