

Volume 4 Issue 6
June 2022



New Paltz Climate Smart Newsletter

Community Choice Aggregation Under Threat

The New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force is closely following the story about Columbia Energy as it relates to our CCA (Community Choice Aggregation). To get up to speed, please read the articles from local papers which are linked below:

[Saugerties asks state to stop utility from breaking up community choice aggregate program](#)
(May 5, 2022 Daily Freeman)

[Utility faces more criticism over bid to shed some community choice aggregation customers](#)
(May 15, 2022 Daily Freeman)

[Uproar in New Paltz over plan to abandon green electricity](#)

(May 18, 2022 Hudson Valley One)

[Central Hudson is Broken. Can New York Fix It?](#)
(May 24, 2022 Chronogram)

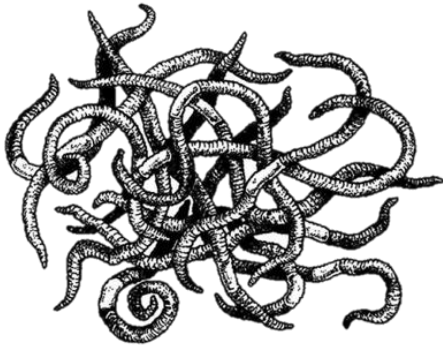


In brief, Columbia Energy is threatening to sell their contract which could be worth hundreds of millions of dollars to buyers of energy supply and customers in the 10-municipality purchasing arrangement would be transferred back to Central Hudson. CCA participating municipalities, including the Town and Village of New Paltz, entered into three-year electricity supply agreements in 2021 in which Columbia agreed to provide electricity to municipal residents and small businesses on an opt-out basis for a fixed price with renewable energy as the default product. Based upon current rates this will result in more than doubling of electricity supply rates. If Columbia has either sold or intends to sell its electricity hedges at current market rates, it would result in an enormous windfall to Columbia at the expense of New York consumers.

More importantly from our point of view, if Columbia Energy is successful in their attempt to break their contract it spells the end of Community Choice Aggregation and will definitely negatively affect the state's climate goals. The impact of Columbia Energy's actions cannot be understated. We are fighting this but need community participation and other people to get involved with this important issue. Please send an email to newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com stating your interest in this critical and time sensitive issue.

Monthly Climate Solutions Meetup: **Vermicomposting: Composting With Worms!**

Every month we present a new climate solution to learn about and discuss. In the past we have learned how important it is to compost rather than send food scraps to the landfill. This month we will learn about a form of composting that you may not be familiar with: vermicomposting, also known as vermiculture. Vermicomposting (composting with worms) is a great way to compost indoors all year round, whether you live in an apartment, dorm, or a home. Vermicomposting is also a great option for group settings such as composting in the classroom or composting in a work office. Some of the benefits of vermicomposting, compared to other methods, include; low startup costs, lots of DIY worm bin options, no yard waste needed, and the creation of a very high quality finished compost! A properly established worm bin requires very little maintenance! By learning a few simple tips and tricks, anyone can be successful at this method of indoor composting. This webinar will share everything you need to know to get started. This program is presented by guest speakers from the UCRRA Recycling Outreach Team; Angelina Brandt, Director of Sustainability & Tanesia White, Recycling Educator.



Tuesday, June 7, 2022

6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Online event

[Zoom link to online Meetup](#)



Further Reduce the Carbon Footprint of Your Yard

It was exciting to see so many people joining the No Mow May movement! For those who participated, you fed bees and other pollinators the whole month while also reducing your greenhouse gas emissions by not mowing for the month of May.



Gratitude to the Town and Village of New Paltz that passed No Mow May resolutions and suspended citations for not mowing during the month of May. Here is what else you can do to reduce the carbon footprint of your lawn the rest of the summer:

- Mow less frequently. Once growth slows, you may only need to mow every other week.
- Mow higher. It is actually better for your lawn too as it is less likely to dry out.
- Stop fertilizing. The manufacturing of synthetic fertilizers leaves a large carbon footprint leading to climate change. Carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrous oxide and methane are produced during the fabrication of fertilizers. Most conventional fertilizers are produced using ammonia, which is extracted from natural gas, and two-thirds of natural gas is obtained by fracking.
- Shrink the area you mow. Mow paths and perimeters. Replace some of the grass with perennials and pollinator plants or just let some of the grassy areas revert to meadow.
- Switch to an electric mower. The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates the average gas mower creates as much pollution as eight cars driving 55 miles per hour.

Climate Smart Tiffin Project Gaining Momentum

The Climate Smart Tiffin Project was recently featured in a restaurant industry trade magazine in an article about sustainable takeout. Our Tiffin Project was mentioned in the section about renewables. We have also been contacted by several area groups in other municipalities so we are excited that the scope of our project continues to expand.

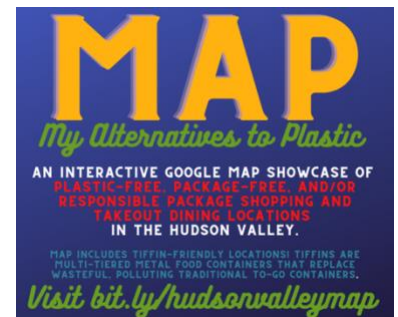


We were sold out of tiffins for a while as they have been very popular but have now received a new shipment. We have them available for individuals or in quantities for restaurants. Please email newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com if you would like to buy a 3 tier tiffin for the wholesale price of \$15. They are the perfect container to bring home take out or leftovers from your restaurant meal.

If you are the proud owner of a tiffin, what comes next?



- **Bring your tiffin when you order take out.** When you order, tell the restaurant that you will be bringing your own container. When you drop off your tiffin or come to pick up your food, be sure to check that the server knows how it opens & closes with the clamps.
- **Bring your tiffin in to a restaurant** where you dine in, just in case you order a meal that is too big and you want to bring home some food.
- **Share the facts:**
 - Bioplastics and compostable plastics sound good but they're filled with false promises.
 - Toxins in polystyrene readily leach into food and drinks, a process that is accelerated by heat and contact with fatty and acidic foods.
 - At least 15 million metric tons of plastic enter the ocean each year – much of it plastic that we thought was being recycled. By 2025, experts predict that there will be one pound of plastic in the ocean for every three pounds of fish.
 - Every year, plastics add as much greenhouse gases to the atmosphere as 189 new coal plants.
 - 91% of all plastics have not been and will never be recycled.
 - Molded fibers, containers like those brown cardboard-y bowls that look natural - like they should be better for you, often aren't. To make the paper water and oil resistant, they often use a highly fluorinated chemical, which isn't something we don't want in our bodies.
 - Tiffins are made of stainless steel, are 100% recyclable, easily cleaned and sterilized, and release no toxins in your food. They are safe to use even in this time of a pandemic.
- **Tell us your experience** with restaurants that you take your tiffin to. Email us at NewPaltzClimateSmart@gmail.com and let us know the name of the restaurant, where it is and if they are "tiffin friendly" so we can update the M.A.P.
- **Do social media posts.** Use the hashtag **#ClimateSmartTiffinProject**
- **Put your tiffin in your car.** We recommend putting your clean tiffin in your car so that when you go to a restaurant you always have it with you – much like many of us now leave our reusable shopping bags in the car for those unplanned stops at the market.



This project is co-sponsored by the New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force which meets the 4th Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm and the Climate Action Coalition which meets every Thursday from 5:00 – 6:30 pm. For more information about either of these organizations, contact Janelle Peotter at 920-883-1788 or by emailing newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com. We need all the help we can get!

June Climate Smart Book Club

The Journeys of Trees: A Story about Forests, People, and the Future

Every month **New Paltz Climate Smart** sponsors the Climate Smart Book Club. We select a climate-related book and then meet online to discuss the book and related topics. Join us this month for our discussion of *The Journeys of Trees: A Story about Forests, People, and the Future* by Zach St George.

What is the book about? Every time a tree dies or a new one sprouts, the forest that includes it has shifted. When new trees sprout in the same direction, the whole forest begins to migrate, sometimes at astonishing rates. Today, however, an array of obstacles - humans felling trees by the billions, invasive pests transported through global trade - threaten to overwhelm these vital movements. Worst of all, the climate is changing faster than ever before, and forests are struggling to keep up.

This book is a deft blend of science reporting and travel writing, *The Journeys of Trees* explores the evolving movements of forests by focusing on five trees: giant sequoia, ash, black spruce, Florida torreya, and Monterey pine. Journalist Zach St. George visits these trees in forests across continents, finding sequoias losing their needles in California, fossil records showing the paths of ancient forests in Alaska, domesticated pines in New Zealand, and tender new sprouts of blight-resistant American chestnuts in New Hampshire. Everywhere he goes, St. George meets lively people on conservation's front lines, from an ecologist studying droughts to an evolutionary evangelist with plans to save a dying species. He treks through the woods with activists, biologists, and foresters, each with their own role to play in the fight for the uncertain future of our environment.


Tuesday
June 21, 2022
7:00 PM to
8:30 PM
Online event

[Link to Book](#)
[Club Zoom](#)



New Paltz Climate Smart June Calendar

Tuesday June 7th at 6:00 – 7:30 pm Climate Solutions Meetup – Vermicomposting (composting with worms) [Zoom link to online Meetup](#)

Friday June 10th is the deadline for written comments on the Draft Scoping Plan for the CLCPA. Comments can be submitted via the [online public comment form](#) , via email to scopingplan@nyserda.ny.gov, or via U.S. Mail to Attention: Draft Scoping Plan Comments, NYSERDA, 17 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203-6399.

Tuesday June 21st at 7:00 pm Climate Smart Book Club: *The Journeys of Trees: A Story about Forests, People, and the Future*
[Link to Book Club Zoom](#)

Tuesday June 28th at 7:00 pm monthly Climate Smart Task Force meeting
[Link to Zoom Meeting of Task Force](#)

If you have any questions about anything in this newsletter, please contact Janelle Peotter, Climate Smart Coordinator at newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com



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