

Some Rhode Island Sierra Club History

The Rhode Island Chapter of the Sierra Club has a strong history of working to protect this beautiful state's natural places. In the early 1970s, we successfully fought a proposed new interstate highway across the Scituate watershed. We took the lead in the effort to restore the Lonsdale marsh, which had been developed as a drive-in. We worked on promoting a sound hazardous waste policy and were a significant part of coalitions formed to oppose proposed nuclear power plants and solid waste incinerators.

Perhaps our most successful and dramatic campaign was the one to "Keep Our Bay Blue," in which we defeated a proposed megaport at Quonset Point. Our involvement in transportation issues ever since have included campaigns for bike paths, pedestrian safety--especially to "walk to school"--keeping longer, heavier trucks off our roads, and preventing major cutbacks to our transit system.

We looked beyond our state borders and lobbied on many national environmental issues, most notably the long-term fight to save the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge, and the Clean Air Act revisions of 1991 that addressed acid rain. Due to their strong environmental records we actively campaigned for Senators John Chafee and Claiborne Pell when they had tough races. For a little state, we have a big impact.

Throughout our history, the Rhode Island Chapter has always sought to promote public participation in setting public policy, and member involvement through walks, lectures, and social events.