



Missouri Valley Sierran

P.O. Box 4664, Omaha, NE 68104

<http://sierraclub.org/nebraska>

www.facebook.com/NebraskaSierraClub

March 2016

Busy Session at Unicameral

This year The Sierra Club of Nebraska has a full agenda in the 2016 Nebraska Legislative Session, and here are a few of the bills we are acting on. Go to our web site for a complete list.

LB 799 (introduced by Sen. Bolz), Pro, Include capital acquisition costs in the Nebraska Public Transportation Acts Assistance Program

LB 802 (Haar), Pro, Create the Health and Climate Resiliency Task Force

LB 1012 (Mello), Pro, Adopt the Property Assessed Clean Energy Act

LB 1069 (Haar), Pro, Provide duties for the state investment officer relating to investment in energy-related companies or funds

LB 1071 (Haar), Pro, Adopt the Solar Energy Economic Development Act

New Sierra Club Lobbyist

These and a host of other measures will make for a very active year of advocacy for Sierra Club's new lobbyist James Cavanaugh.

Cavanaugh has joined the Nebraska Chapter of the Sierra Club as legislative counsel and registered lobbyist. He is a graduate of Creighton University, Creighton Law School, and is the founder and senior partner of the Cavanaugh Law Firm.

His focus of his practice includes government relations and social security law. He has represented a wide range of clients in Nebraska, including The Natural Resource Defense Council. He is an active and enthusiastic naturalist who prides himself on having camped and canoed on all of the major (and many of the minor) rivers in Nebraska.

You can contact Cavanaugh directly at Cavanaugh Law Firm, 6035 Binney St., Suite 100, Omaha, NE 68104. 402-341-2020 or 800-342-3352, F: 402-341-1851

Upcoming Programs

All of our programs are free and the general public welcome. We meet at First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street, Omaha -- Enter north side of building, "Education" wing and proceed to Room 112.

Thursday, March 24, 7 p.m. -- "Niobrara River and In-Stream Flow Legislation" with George Cunningham

Thursday, April 28, 7 p.m. -- "Paths of Discovery: Metro Area Trails" with Eric Williams (Papio-Missouri NRD) and Dennis Bryers (City of Omaha Parks Dept.)

Saturday, April 16 -- The annual Earth Day Omaha celebration will be held at Omaha's Elmwood Park from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Many environmental organizations including Sierra Club will be there!



MVG-Sponsored Tour of First Star Fiber

Plus Helpful Tips on Recycling



Missouri Valley Group sponsored an educational outing on February 13. Forty-three people came out in the bitter cold weather to tour the First Star Fiber plant located at 103rd and I Streets. CEO Dale Gubbels led the two-hour tour of this fascinating facility that processes all of the recyclables collected by local municipalities, including Omaha, and private waste collectors plus much of the recyclables generated by local industry and businesses. Dale had to call in additional employees to help lead the large group.

Participants had a lot of questions for Dale, and his answers provided several excellent tips on maximizing the value of recyclables and minimizing the volume going to the landfill:

- Glass can be recycled, but not in your recycle bins because the glass likely will break in the collection truck, ruining the value of other recyclables, especially the paper and cardboard. Instead, take your glass to one of the four collection centers. One of these centers is next to the First Star plant. Glass is taken to Kansas City where it is turned into fiberglass.
- Do not crush your cans and bottles. Crushing these items will increase the likelihood that they will not sort out correctly at the plant and wind up in the rubbish pile going to the landfill! For tin cans, put the lid inside and just squeeze the top enough so the lid won't fall out. Dale says to leave the paper labels on your cans!
- The value of paper and cardboard is much less if it arrives at First Star's plant wet. If you have the capacity to store these recyclables when rain is forecast, hold these materials until next week and just put out your plastics and metals.
- All hard plastics can be recycled, but the items must be large enough to get through the sorting process. For small items like plastic utensils, medicine bottles, and plastic straws, place them inside larger plastic containers like empty detergent bottles. Don't forget to save the plastic bottle tops and screw them on the bottles for recycling.
- Soft, light-weight plastics such as shopping bags cannot be handled by First Star's sorting system and must not be put in recycle bins. However, plastic bags and wrappers can be recycled, and many area grocery stores have collection bins for them. In case you have doubts, Dale says they do get recycled!
- Foam plastic items generally can't be recycled and go to the landfill. You can help by avoiding purchase and use of disposable foam plastic products.
- Items for recycling don't need to be "squeaky clean", but flush them out with water before putting them in the recycle bin.

Yes, cardboard pizza boxes can be recycled if there is only a small amount of grease or cheese on the box.

Interested in joining Sierra Club?

Go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/nebraska> and click on Join on the lower right