

Crossroad Group

Sierra Club

SPRING/SUMMER 2017



Conservation Issues Updates

ET Rover Pipeline

The ET Rover Pipeline has been approved and some construction has begun in Michigan. There is a tendency to quit fighting once the approval for a pipeline has been granted, however the Pinckney residents, “Over With Rover” have not quit. Check out their website and see where you can help out. <https://sites.google.com/view/overwithrover/home>. Their current campaign is to encourage Michigan residents to contact legislators and ask that FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) commissioner vacancies not be filled. Without a full commission, additional pipelines cannot be approved. An additional problem is that the foundation shipper for the Rover Pipeline, Ascent Resources, has had their credit rating downgraded below the required level.

Enbridge Line 5

To date over 60 municipalities have created resolutions asking Governor Snyder and the Attorney General to decommission Enbridge Line 5 under the Straits of Mackinac. The governor established the Pipeline Safety Advisory Board to determine if such decommissioning is practical. Two energy sector companies, including Enbridge, have been given seats on the advisory board. Enbridge Energy was also granted permission to hire a consulting firm to do a risk analysis of the pipeline. On March 13th at the Board meeting in Lansing, Sierra Club chairman David Holtz spoke and submitted a letter outlining the fallacies of some of the above issues. You can view that video on YouTube (search for “Holtz comments pipeline”).

Merit Energy’s Sulfolane Contamination

An update on the sulfolane contamination issue in Hartland Township can be found here:
<http://hartlandtwp.com/residents/roads-water-sewer/water/>

Working Towards the Common Good

The Crossroads Group Conservation Committee has made it a goal this year to attend as many Livingston County Commissioners meetings as we can. This will help us understand how the county makes policy, where the opportunities for engagement are, and get to know our elected Commissioners.

Ron Kardos, along with others at different times, has led this effort and has attended all of the evening meetings since January. We are coming to understand that there are issues that we all care deeply about such as water quality, preserving rural character, the health and safety of our citizens, and using our tax dollars efficiently. Understanding these shared values will help us in the future as we all work to make greater Livingston County a better place.

Check Us Out

Have you been wondering if there is a place for you to work on local environmental issues? It’s with us! The Crossroads Group Conservation Committee meets most months to discuss, investigate, and strategize around the environmental concerns confronting our community. We really need members from western Oakland County! Please send a message to cg.conservation@michigan.sierraclub.org and we will let you know where the next meeting is to be held.

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VISIT US AT:
www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads



Balloonfest Lemonade Stand

The annual Michigan Challenge Balloonfest, which will be June 23rd-25th in Howell, gives the Crossroads Group its greatest fundraising opportunity. For many years, we have been making hotdogs, brats, veggie burgers, and our trademark fresh squeezed lemonade to provide for the thirsty crowds that come each year to enjoy all the festivities of the event. Our lemonade stand can raise thousands of dollars over a single weekend and allows Crossroads Group to be one of the best financed groups anywhere, and provides the very necessary money for all our conservation efforts in our community.

But it does not happen without the help of all our Crossroads Group volunteers! By volunteering to help at the lemonade stand, members get a free pass into the event. It provides a great chance to get involved and meet other members of Sierra Club and see what cool people we are! We have shifts all weekend long to meet anyone's schedule, and people often come early or stay late to enjoy all the activities and spectacles surrounding the festival. And one cannot say enough about the site of dozens of hot air balloons lifting off into the summer sky....and there is no better vantage point than our booth which enjoys the best view of the launch field! Friday night has the fireworks and Saturday night the balloon-glow.

But the biggest reward is knowing that by only giving a few hours of your time, you make Crossroads Group such a great active force for local community environmental leadership. Suggested volunteer shifts are as follows but feel free to modify them as needed to fit your schedule:

Thursday setup: Evening
Friday: 12-6 PM, 4 PM until closing
Saturday: 10 AM-3 PM, 12 PM-6 PM, 5 PM until closing
Sunday: 10 AM- 3 PM, 12 PM-5 PM, 3 PM until closing

Anyone interested in volunteering or just learning more can contact me at 810-588-6077 or sierraclublemonade@hotmail.com. I look forward to seeing everyone in June!

--Paul Thielking, Fundraising Chair

Roundup: Not as Safe as Monsanto Claims

Roundup, with the active ingredient glyphosate, is the most widely used herbicide in the world. It has reached that level of widespread use among homeowners and farmers because it is reportedly relatively safe to use. But new studies by European agencies and the United Nations have reached a different conclusion, making claims that glyphosate coupled with its inert ingredients can cause a host of health problems. Below are some excerpts of an article written by Elizabeth Grossman for National Geographic.

Last month, an international agency declared glyphosate, the primary ingredient in the popular product Roundup, a "probable human carcinogen." The weed killer also has made recent headlines for its widespread use on genetically modified seeds and research that links it to antibiotics resistance and hormone disruption. Several national governments are planning to restrict its use, and some school districts are talking about banning it.

Now the EPA says it will analyze new findings by the UN's International Agency for Research on Cancer, which declared in March that glyphosate probably raises the risk of cancer in people exposed.

The UN studies found glyphosate in farmworkers' blood and urine, chromosomal damage in cells, increased risks of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in some people exposed, and tumor formation in some animal studies.

What should this mean to you? Use Roundup and other herbicides with glyphosate sparingly and carefully if not at all. Be particularly careful when using such products in environments where children frequent.

Building Bridges

One of the goals adopted by the Sierra Club is to connect with other organizations that are concerned about the environment. By partnering with other community groups we become stronger and more diverse. And, as a result, we also become more effective at protecting the environment.

In the past, the Crossroads Group has worked with a number of groups including the Friends of Island Lake Recreation Area, the Friends of Highland Recreation Area, Community Unitarian Universalists in Brighton, and Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

Recently, the Crossroads Group added Alexander Pushman to its leadership team. Alexander is the vice president of the Foguth Financial Group and a member of the Greater Brighton Area Chamber of Commerce. One might not think of the Chamber of Commerce as being a potential ally of an environmental organization such as the Sierra Club but in fact there are many ways we can work together.

Says Alexander: "I can't say enough good things about the Crossroads Group of the Sierra Club. As a local businessman I've gained great networking and client opportunities from my involvement in the group."

Alexander also serves as the board president for a local nature sanctuary and he says his connections in the business world allow him to create "multiple levels to partner and help out on projects that benefit us all as residents of Livingston County."

Business leaders in Livingston County understand the need to attract younger citizens to live and work here if the county is to continue to thrive. Many of the things that appeal to younger citizens looking to build a career are often the same things the Crossroads Group supports: clean air and water, mass transit to reduce roadway congestion, parks, bike trails and pedestrian-friendly cities. So what is good for the environment can also be good for the Chamber.

"Overall, my wife Tatiana and I have had great experiences of building relationships among folks who care about the environment and also understand the importance of economic development here in the community," said Alexander. "Good things have happened on all fronts from my involvement in the Crossroads Group of the Sierra Club."

Building bridges to organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce will can help us all make our community a better place to live. If you are part of an organization that would like to work with the Crossroads Group, we'd love to hear from you.

Crossroads Group Programs: Free Admission at Brighton District Library

Livingston County's Transportation Vision

Wednesday May 17th, 7:00 PM

Dr. Leo Hanifin, chairperson of the Livingston County Transportation Coalition, will present the county's transportation vision, information on the status and needs for transportation in the county, and the progress that the Coalition has made to advance transportation improvement here.



Michigan has Rattlesnakes

Wednesday, September 20th, 7:00 PM

PhD Candidate Stephanie Shaffer conducts research on the Massasauga Rattlesnake, Michigan's only venomous snake; including its habitat, movements, and our ability to locate them in their habitat. She will present the fascinating background and findings of her conservation-based research.

Crossroads Group Outings

Outings are subject to weather conditions. To check for cancellations or changes, or to find out more information about any outing, see our website (www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads) or contact John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or crossroadsoutings@michigan.sierraclub.org. All outings are open to Sierra Club members and non-members.

**** Please arrive 15 minutes early for sign in, outings will start promptly at the stated time**

Pinckney State Recreation Area Bird and Wildflower Hike - Saturday May 6th, 10:00 AM**

Location: Pinckney State Recreation Area, Cedar Lake Rd just south of M-36, Pinckney

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** easy to moderate; **Cost:** free

Join us on a scenic 2-3 mile hike through some beautiful wetlands and hilly terrain in Pinckney State Recreation Area. Our guides will point out birds and other interesting flora and fauna.

We will start where the Lakelands Trail crosses Cedar Lake Road just a short distance south of M-36. To get there, take M-36 1 mile west of downtown Pinckney and turn left on Cedar Lake Rd. Park at the trail crossing parking lot, or along Cedar Lake Rd.

Huron Meadows Wildflower and Nature Hike - Saturday May 20th, 1 PM**

Location: Huron Meadows Metropark, 8765 Hammel Rd, Brighton;

meet at the Cedar Ridge picnic area / boat launch parking lot

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** easy to moderate; **Cost:** free, but requires Metropark entry fee

We will hike approximately 3 miles on the scenic Moraine Fen and Hidden Lake Bend trails. Our knowledgeable guides will point out wildflowers and other examples of natural beauty along the way.

West River Trail Bike Ride & Optional Lunch - Sunday June 4th, 10 AM**

Location: Hudson Mills Metropark - 8801 N Territorial Rd, Dexter; meet at the Activity Center parking lot

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** moderate; **Cost:** free, but requires Metropark entry fee

Join us for an easy 15 mile pedal on the West River Trail along the Huron River. This is a beautiful paved trail surrounded by trees, wildflowers, and meadows. The trail runs along the west bank of the Huron River, and ends (with our turn-around point) at Dexter-Huron Metropark. **HELMETS ARE REQUIRED!** For anyone interested, we will have lunch at a local restaurant after our ride.

Island Lake Recreation Area Paddle & Pedal 2017 - Saturday June 17th, 12 PM to 4 PM

Location: Island Lake Recreation Area, 6301 Kensington Rd, Brighton; meeting details below

Skill Level: some experience; **Difficulty:** mild to moderate; family-friendly

Cost: Boat rental (if not bringing your own) – canoes \$20/kayaks \$10, plus state park entry fee or passport

Join the Friends of Island Lake Recreation Area on a paddling and pedaling day! Here's how it works: drop your bicycle at Riverbend in our attended bicycle storage area. Drive to the Kent Lake parking lot with your boat, or rent one there. Paddle on one of the finest natural stretches of the Huron River Water Trail, 1-1½ hours, to Riverbend. Bike back to your vehicle at Kent Lake on paved trails; 3, 5, and 12 mile options.

Kensington Metropark Summer Solstice Weeknight Hike - Wednesday June 21st, 7 PM**

Location: Kensington Metropark, park entrance is off Kensington Rd just north of I-96, Brighton;

meet at the Nature Center

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** easy to moderate; **Cost:** free, but requires Metropark entry fee

Join us to take advantage of the longest day of the year. This will be a 3 mile hike around Wildwing Lake and other trails.

Highland State Recreation Area Hike & Optional Lunch - Sunday July 9th, 10 AM**

Location: 5200 Highland Rd, White Lake;

meet at the trailhead parking area in front of the historic barn (follow main road from park entrance 1.4 miles).

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** moderate; **Cost:** free, but requires state park entry fee or passport

Join us for a 5 mile hike through hardwoods and wetlands in a park that is one of lower Michigan's best kept secrets. For anyone interested, we will have lunch at a local restaurant after our hike.

Outings (continued)

Island Lake Recreation Area Weeknight Hike - Wednesday July 26th, 7 PM**

Location: Island Lake Recreation Area, 6301 Kensington Rd, Brighton;

meet in the Kent Lake parking lot (go straight past toll booth, 1st lot on left) near the boat launch area (west side)

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** easy to moderate; **Cost:** free, but requires state park entry fee or passport

Join us for a 2 or 3 mile hike on the brand-new hikers-only Hickory Ridge trail.

Island Lake Recreation Area - Canoe / Kayak Outing on the Huron River –Saturday July 29th, 10 AM**

Location: Island Lake Recreation Area, 6301 Kensington Rd, Brighton;

meet at the boat launch/canoe rental area (Kent Lake beach parking lot)

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** moderate;

Cost: Boat rental (if not bringing your own), plus state park entry fee or passport

Join us for a 2-3 hour paddle on the national wild and scenic Huron River in Island Lake State Park. You do not need to bring your own canoe! For rental, reservations suggested - contact Heavner's Canoe Rental at 248-685-2379 or www.heavnercanoe.com. Reserve for 7/29, choose Island Lake Recreation, and mention the Sierra Club in the comment.

Pere Marquette Trail Bike Ride & Lunch - Clare MI - Sunday August 6th, 10:30 AM**

Location: parking lot behind Pere Marquette District Library, 185 East 4th Street, Clare, MI

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** moderate; **Cost:** free (buy your own lunch)

Please join us for a 20 mile bike ride along the scenic Pere Marquette Rail-trail between Clare and Coleman, Michigan. It is a flat and exceptionally smooth ride. We will stop halfway for lunch at one of the available restaurants. Rest rooms are available along the trail. Bring snacks if you would like, sunscreen, and water. **HELMETS ARE REQUIRED!** This outing is co-sponsored with northern Michigan's Sierra Club Clearwater Group, and is at a midway location, approximately 2 hours from our location.

Yoga on the Beach - Island Lake Recreation Area, Saturday August 19th, 9 AM**

Location: Island Lake Recreation Area, 6301 Kensington Rd, Brighton;

meet at the Kent Lake beach indoor bathroom building (go straight past toll booth, 1st lot on left), east side of lot

Skill Level: beginner to advanced; **Difficulty:** easy to moderate;

Cost: \$5, plus requires state park entry fee or passport.

Join us for yoga on the beach. Welcome your day with relaxing poses, stretches and meditation. Bring your own mat. All levels welcome. Lead by an experienced yoga instructor.

Brighton Recreation Area Hike - Sunday August 20th, 1 PM**

Location: Penosha Trail, Bishop Lake parking lot, Howell; meet at the trailhead parking lot: From the intersection of Bishop Lake Rd and Chilson Rd in Howell, go east on Bishop Lake Rd 1.4 miles, turn right into park entrance, then another quick right for the Bishop Lake parking lot.

GPS coordinates: 42.500786, -83.835020

Skill Level: beginner; **Difficulty:** moderate; **Cost:** free, but requires state park entry fee or passport

Join us for an afternoon hike on the Penosha Trail. The trail is 5 miles through woods and meadows. A great hike near our own backyard!

Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Annual Retreat - August 25th – 27th

An affordable all-inclusive weekend retreat at historic Camp Miniwanca, a private Lake Michigan gem just north of Muskegon. Located among 360 wooded acres on a stretch of gorgeous Lake Michigan beach front, Miniwanca offers lodging options from tent camping, to rooms located steps away from the beach, to cabins among the pines. A fun-filled weekend of activities, workshops, educational presentations, and our famous auction. Join us for swimming, hiking, campfires, kayaking, woodworking, ropes course, crafting, yoga, tubing, and more. See www.sierraclub.org/michigan/chapter-retreat for more information.

See our website www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads for additional outings including events sponsored by the Michigan Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Friends of Island Lake State Recreation Area.



Sierra Club—Crossroads Group
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