

# *Crossroads Group*

## *Sierra Club*

Spring/Summer 2019



### **Help Adopt the Livingston County Transportation Plan!**

After a 2-year effort, a detailed proposal to enhance Livingston County's transportation options has been completed. It includes costs, timing, and options for implementation. You can read the complete document at <https://www.livgov.com/lets/Pages/plan.aspx> .

Now we need to push the county commissioners to adopt this plan. We need our Livingston members to contact their commissioners, explain the plan to friends who would talk to commissioners, and speak at the county meetings call to the public, particularly 5/13, 5/28, 6/10 and 6/24. Here are some talking points:

- This is a **well-developed plan** based on extensive input from residents and stakeholder groups. It is **responsive to real needs** of our citizens. Based on past surveys and petitions, there is strong **public support** for the plan.
- There are **numerous benefits**, including
  - **Improved efficiencies** and better returns on existing transportation investments.
  - Collaboration for a shuttle to the **airport**.
  - Getting employees and customers to businesses improves the **business environment**.
  - Public and non-motorized transportation options **attract younger residents**, sustaining the vitality of our county.
  - Many residents **depend on public transportation**, (including people with physical and mental disabilities, addictions, those who can't afford a dependable auto, children who are too young to drive, and seniors who are too old to drive). The capacity of LETS (Livingston Essential Transportation Service) is inadequate to fulfill the needs of all of these people.
  - 75% of the county's working residents **commute** to work outside of the county, enduring long commutes in terrible traffic caused by congestion and weather. Many would prefer to take commuter buses to work, and relax or work on the way.
  - Quality public transportation improves **our environment** and the quality of **our lives**.
- This plan is **affordable**. If supported across the county, the full implementation of the plan would **cost the average homeowner about \$2 per month**.
- We strongly recommend that the Board of Commissioners initiate the necessary actions to **fund and implement the full plan's recommendations**.

**Don't let this plan sit on a shelf! Please actively support its adoption.**

Contact information for commissioners is on our website political page  
[www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads/political](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads/political)

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VISIT US AT:

www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads  
facebook.com/Crossroads.Group.Sierra.Club  
meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group



## Balloonfest Lemonade Stand

Once again the Crossroads Group will have its “world famous” lemonade stand at the annual Michigan Challenge Balloonfest in Howell. The dates are June 28-30.

For many years, we have been serving up hotdogs, brats, veggie burgers, chips and a variety of cold drinks. But what we are best known for is our trademark fresh squeezed lemonade that we offer to the thirsty crowds that come annually to enjoy all the festivities of the event.

The lemonade stand raises the money that allows us to bring so much value to our community. It funds all of our programs, our outings, our newsletters and our conservation and political work.

But it does not happen without our Crossroads Group supporters! Lemonade stand volunteers get a free pass into the event and the opportunity to meet other members of the Sierra Club and learn what friendly and dedicated people we are!

We have shifts all weekend long to meet your schedule, and people often come early or stay late to enjoy the activities and spectacles surrounding the festival. One cannot say enough about the sight of dozens of hot air balloons lifting off into the summer sky...and there is no better vantage point than our booth, which overlooks the launch field! Friday night has the fireworks and Saturday night the balloon-glow.

The biggest reward is knowing that by giving only a few hours of your time, you help make Crossroads Group a vital force for environmental leadership in our area. Suggested volunteer shifts are as follows but feel free to modify them as needed to fit your schedule.

- Thursday setup, June 27: Evening
- Friday, June 28: 12-6 PM, 4 PM until closing
- Saturday, June 29: 10 AM-3 PM, 12 PM-6 PM, 5 PM until closing
- Sunday, June 30: 10 AM-3 PM, 12 PM-5 PM, 3 PM until closing

If you are interested in volunteering or learning more about this event, please **call Paul Thielking at 810-588-6077 or send an email to [sierraclublemonade@hotmail.com](mailto:sierraclublemonade@hotmail.com)**

If you are volunteering, be sure to **include your phone number and mailing address** so you can receive a parking pass.

## Congresswoman Slotkin Listens

On March 9<sup>th</sup> of this year, five members of the Crossroads Group met with Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin to discuss H.R. 2044 America's Red Rock Wilderness Act and to request that she consider co-sponsoring the legislation. She listened intently as we spoke of the importance of protecting fragile ecosystems, preventing further oil and gas exploration which contributes to climate change, and preserving America's wilderness for future generations.

This important bill would protect as wilderness, 9.2 million acres of the stunning canyons, mesas and rivers of southern Utah. The lands in the bill are already owned and managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and belong to all Americans

Some of these iconic western landscapes include Desolation Canyon, Cedar Mesa, and Labyrinth Canyon, as well as lands within the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. This visionary legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives each year since 1989 and in the senate since 1996. Both Senators Debbie Stabenow and Gary Peters have signed on as cosponsors in recent years.

In October of 2009, America's Red Rock Wilderness Act received its first stand-alone hearing in the House Natural Resources Committee. The hearing showcased the support of prominent Utahns who all spoke passionately on the importance of protecting the Red Rock for the future of the state.

You can help protect these spectacular landscapes for future generations by becoming a member of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA.org).

**As of this writing, Congresswoman Slotkin has promised to look into the matter and get back with us. She intends to reach out to her fellow Representatives from Utah as part of her research and decision making.**

## Helping Crossroads...The Easy Way

People support the Sierra Club Crossroads Group in a variety of ways. Some folks join our leadership team and reap the rewards of camaraderie. Others find pleasure in volunteering at events such as our lemonade stand at the annual Howell Balloon Festival. Some donate money to Crossroads and for this, we express our gratitude.

There is another way to help Crossroads and it's quite easy to do. It has to do with the 1200 newsletters that we send out 3 times a year because we believe it is important to keep in touch with members like you.

But these newsletters cost us nearly \$3,000 a year - more than 60% of our annual expenditures. If you switch to electronic delivery of your newsletter, you will save us money, and help save some trees as well.

If enough of you switch, we will have a significant amount more to spend on programs and outings and conservation work and supporting environmentally-minded candidates. Important stuff, just like keeping in touch with you, but doing so electronically means we can do more of everything.

To switch to e-delivery, simply email us at [cg.webmaster@michigan.sierraclub.org](mailto:cg.webmaster@michigan.sierraclub.org) with the word "e-newsletter" as the subject and your full name and address in the body. Also include the email address you wish us to use for sending links to future newsletters.

Simple! But it will make a difference.

## Crossroads Group Outings, Spring/Summer 2019

**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](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads)) or Meetup page ([www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group)) or contact us at [crossroadsoutings@michigan.sierraclub.org](mailto:crossroadsoutings@michigan.sierraclub.org).

All outings are open to Sierra Club members and non-members. Bring water and snacks.

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

\*\*\*\*\*

**Yoga on the Beach - Island Lake Recreation Area – 9 AM\*\***, alternating weekends all summer:

Sunday 6/2, Saturday 6/15, Sunday 6/30, Saturday 7/13, Sunday 7/28, Saturday 8/10, Sunday 8/25, Sunday 9/8

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

meet near the Kent Lake beach bathhouse 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 yoga mat plus a towel to put under the mat. All levels welcome. Led by an experienced yoga instructor.

**Island Lake Recreation Area Hike - Saturday May 11, 1 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 3 to 5-mile hike on the hikers-only Hickory Ridge trail.

**Pinckney State Recreation Area Bird and Wildflower Hike - Saturday June 1, 10:00 AM\*\***

**Location:** meet at Lakelands Trail crossing parking lot, Cedar Lake Rd just south of M-36, Pinckney

From downtown Pinckney (M-36 & S. Howell St), go west on M-36 for 1 mile, turn left on Cedar Lake Rd.

Go 0.1 miles to trail parking lot on left. GPS: 42.4608, -83.9661

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

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

**Ann Arbor Saginaw Forest Weeknight Hike -Wednesday June 12, 7 PM\*\***

**Location:** Meet at parking lot for 2/42 Community Church: 648 S Wagner Road, Ann Arbor.

Saginaw Forest entrance is next to church.

**Skill Level:** beginner; **Difficulty:** easy; **Cost:** free.

Saginaw Forest is a nearly 80-acre parcel of land comprising roughly 55 acres of plantations, lakes, and wetlands. This University of Michigan property is used for forestry operations, research, and instruction. There are three trail loops allowing a leisurely 2 to 3 mile hike

**Park Lyndon Hike & Optional Picnic Lunch - Saturday June 15, 12 PM picnic, 1 PM hike\*\***

**Location:** 18236 N Territorial Rd, Chelsea - Meet at North Lyndon Unit

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

Bring your own lunch and join us under the covered picnic area at the north unit before the hike. At 1 PM we will hike 4 miles on hilly glacial terrain containing over 500 species of plants, and a complex wetland of fen, swamp, bogs and meadows. If you want to skip the picnic lunch, join us at 1 PM for the hike.

**Island Lake Recreation Area Paddle & Pedal 2019 - Saturday June 22, Noon 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. Boat reservations suggested at [www.heavnercanoe.com](http://www.heavnercanoe.com).

**Kensington Metropark Weeknight Hike - Thursday June 27, 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 Michigan's beautiful summer nights. This will be a 3 mile hike around Wildwing Lake and other trails.

**Huron Meadows Metropark Weeknight Hike – Wednesday July 10, 7 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 2 to 3 miles on the scenic Moraine Fen trail.

**Whitmore Lake Nature Preserve Hike & Optional Lunch - Sunday July 14, 10 AM\*\***

**Location:** north side of 7 Mile Rd, 1 mile east of East Shore Drive, Whitmore Lake; GPS: 42.4130, -83.7343

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

The 3 ½ miles of trails that we will hike wind through mature woodlots, wetlands, fielded areas, and have views of two small lakes. The Preserve is part of Washtenaw County Parks. Optional lunch at a nearby restaurant after the hike.

**Lakeland Trails Bike Ride and Optional Lunch - Saturday July 27, 10 AM\*\***

**Location:** Parking lot is across the street from Hamburg Pub, 10668 Hamburg Rd, Hamburg

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

Join us for a ride on the Lakeland Trail. We will ride from Hamburg to Pinckney and back, about 20 miles total (or you can turn around anytime for a shorter ride). This scenic trail is paved and partly shaded. Optional lunch at a nearby restaurant after the ride. Helmet required.

**Island Lake Recreation Area Weeknight Hike - Wednesday July 31, 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 3 or 5-mile hike on the Hickory Ridge trail. Bring a headlamp if doing the 5-mile hike.

**Highland State Recreation Area Hike - Sunday August 11, 1 PM\*\***

**Location:** 5200 Highland Rd, White Lake; meet at the trailhead parking area in front of the historic barn (go straight past toll booth 1.4 miles, look for barn on right side). GPS: 42.6345, -83.5510

**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 on the scenic "blue" trail.

**Brighton Recreation Area Hike - Saturday August 24, 1 PM\*\***

**Location:** Bishop Lake trailhead parking lot, Howell;

From the intersection of Bishop Lake Rd and Chilson Rd in Howell, go east on Bishop Lake Rd 1.4 miles, turn right at Bishop Lake Complex sign then quick right after toll booth into trailhead parking lot. GPS: 42.5008,-83.8350

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

Join us for an afternoon hike to enjoy the Penosha Trail (5 miles) or the Kahchin trail (2 miles). The Penosha Trail was voted one of the "Most Scenic Hiking Trails in Michigan" by Pure Michigan!

**Pinckney Recreation Area Hike - Saturday September 7, 10 AM\*\***

**Location:** Pinckney Recreation Area, 8555 Silver Hill Rd., Pinckney; meet at the trailhead parking lot for the Silver Lake, Potawatomi, and Crooked Lake trails. GPS: 42.4169, -83.9642

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

Join us for a hike on the Crooked Lake Trail (5 miles) or the Silver Lake Trail (2 miles). These trails are part of Michigan's premier trail systems, passing by glacial moraines, kettle lakes, and swampy lowlands.

**See our website [www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads) for additional outings including events sponsored by the Michigan Chapter of the Sierra Club.**

## Crossroads Group Programs

Crossroads Group Sierra Club presents these programs free to the public:

### In Your Backyard

Wednesday May 22, 7:00 PM  
Brighton District Library

The Howell Conference and Nature Center will be presenting “In Your Backyard”, an opportunity to appreciate and learn about the wildlife living in our own backyards. The presentation will include interactive demonstrations and examples of how to help your wild neighbors thrive.



### Orienteering

#### Part 1 - Class:

Wednesday September 18, 7:00 PM  
Hamburg Township Library

#### Part 2 – Field Trip:

Saturday September 21, 12 PM - 4 PM  
Brighton State Recreation Area

Michael Garnick is a Squad Leader within the 1776 Military Police Company. In 2012, he was the primary land navigation instructor for Michigan units deploying to Afghanistan. Mr. Garnick will first give us an indoor Orienteering lesson. This will be followed by a field trip – where we can practice our new skills!



## Upcoming Programs at the Brighton District Library

- Wednesday November 20: THE SECRET LIVES OF SKUNKS - Program by Laurel Zoet of *Nature on the Go!* Through a visual PowerPoint presentation, discover fun facts about this misunderstood mammal: where they live, how they survive, and ideas for minimizing conflict with humans. A LIVE skunk will be observed as part of this informative, one-hour program.
- Wednesday January 15: “LET THY FOOD BE THY MEDICINE” – Hippocrates  
A Presentation by Tatiana Pushman of W.I.T. Sanctuary. Ms. Pushman is a graduate of the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. Her presentation will focus on how the food we choose to eat not only affects our health but impacts our environment. Eating a more plant focused diet can improve our well-being AND reduce our environmental footprint. Tips, recipes and taste testing will be included.

## Guest Perspective: Kenaf: Nature's Carbon-Capturing Fiber

We have come to a point in time where the effects of climate change are nearly irreversible, and carbon emissions are at a critical level. How did we get to this point? We first need to take ownership. This carbon is largely due to our compulsive need to consume and create. We indulge in food grown and harvested by large industrial machines, we decorate our world with petroleum-based paint, play golf on toxic sanctuaries, and overindulge in consumer products which find their way into landfills.

How can we reverse this situation? It'd be nice if nature had a vacuum to suck the carbon out of the air. Although it is not quite that easy, there is a natural solution right in front of us...we can heal the planet with better materials.

In the past year, hemp has created quite the buzz. It produces fiber, paper, fuel, plastics and hundreds of other eco-conscious products. All this, while capturing carbon! Hemp is a wonderful plant with many benefits, but the real king of carbon-capture comes from kenaf, hemp's lesser-known cousin. Kenaf can produce the same products, without the federal regulations as hemp. Kenaf absorbs **30-40 tons** of CO<sub>2</sub> per 2.5 acres every 100-120 days!

Irontree Global Solutions is one of the companies trying to help be part of the solution. Our involvement with kenaf and bast fibers spans across the globe. We've partnered with existing operations overseas and are looking to develop new partnerships here domestically with local agricultural communities.

Our newest developments are in processing methods and equipment. In short, we have the ability to produce high grade textile fibers and cellulosic nano fibers at industrial scale, which has a vast potential in reducing single-use plastics and pollution of current textile production.

For more information, visit us online at [www.irontreeglobal.com](http://www.irontreeglobal.com) or email [info@irontreeglobal.com](mailto:info@irontreeglobal.com)

Mitchell Tucker

*If you are interested in contributing a "Guest Perspective" article to future newsletters, please contact us at [cg.pubs@michigan.sierraclub.org](mailto:cg.pubs@michigan.sierraclub.org). Our newsletters are published in May, September, and January.*



**Carbon Conundrum**



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## What is PFAS? Is my family at risk?



**PFAS** substances are used in Teflon, Gore-Tex and Scotchgard products, fast-food wrappers and microwave popcorn bags, firefighting foams, and chrome plating. PFOA, PFOS, PFNA, PFHxA, PFHxS, PFBS, and Gen-X are well-known PFAS compounds.

It is likely that everyone in the country has some level of PFAS chemicals in their blood.

**Health effects** from PFAS chemicals include infertility, thyroid disease, immune system problems, high cholesterol, & cancers.

**Limit exposure** - especially pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children - because safe levels are not yet determined.



## Is my water safe?

These sites are comprehensive & report the latest findings.



Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy is a good resource.

<https://www.michigan.gov/PFASresponse>

The Huron River Watershed Council has quality information as well.

<https://www.hrwc.org/our-watershed/threats/pfas-and-the-huron-river/> You can sign



up with them and they will send you emails on information as it becomes available.

## What Can I do TODAY?

- Don't eat fish from the Huron River.
- Don't touch foam in the Huron River as the chemicals concentrate in it.
- Filter your water. Check out the links above for recommendations.
- Call your elected officials and voice your concerns.



[www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads](http://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads)

