

Crossroads Sierra Club

Spring 2014



Balloonfest Lemonade Stand

Once again the Crossroads Group will set up its ever-popular lemonade stand at the annual Michigan Challenge Balloonfest to be held the weekend of June 27-29 in Howell. Our stand at this event provides funding for all the activities that make our group such an important part of the community including our outings, programs, newsletters and our political and conservation work.

For many years, we have been preparing hotdogs, brats and our trademark fresh-squeezed lemonade for the crowds that come each year to enjoy the festival. It is generally our only fundraiser of the year. But it does not happen without the help of all of our Crossroads supporters!



By volunteering to help at the lemonade stand, members get a free pass to the festival. It provides a great chance to get involved and meet other members of Sierra Club, to make new friends and support our important work.

We have shifts all weekend long to meet anyone's schedule, and people often come early or stay late to enjoy all the activities surrounding the festival. Shifts take place during the following time periods: Thursday setup: 7-8:30 PM Friday: 12-6 PM, 4 PM until closing Saturday: 10 AM- 3 PM, 12 noon-6 PM, 5 PM until closing Sunday: 10 AM- 3 PM, 12 noon-5 PM, 3 PM until closing. Shifts are flexible and can be adjusted to fit your schedule.



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. It enjoys the best view of the launch field! But the biggest reward is knowing that by giving even a few hours of your time, you help make Crossroads an active voice for a better environment and a better community.

Anyone interested in volunteering or just learning more can call or email Paul Thielking, our fundraising chair. We look forward to seeing you in June! Phone: 810-588-6077 Email: sierraclublemonade@hotmail.com

Executive Committee, Committee Chairs

Chairperson: Lee Burton
Lee.Burton@michigan.sierraclub.org,

Vice Chairperson: Sue Kelly
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Webmaster: Laurie Mercure,
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Conservation: Sue Kelly (acting)
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*Visit us on the Web at Michigan.
SierraClub.org/Crossroads*



Focus on Western Oakland County!

The Crossroads Group is usually identified with Livingston County, but in fact we have over 300 members in the western half of Oakland County. We have significant numbers in Waterford, Clarkston, Milford, White Lake, Commerce Township, Highland and South Lyon. So, we'd like to see more of you folks! We're looking for ways to make our activities more inclusive and representative for all of our members, and would like your suggestions.

Some thoughts we have are:

- What are your suggestions for favorite hikes in Western Oakland County?
- What are your conservation/environmental issues of concern?
- Are there political races in your area where we could make a difference and support a good environmental candidate?
- How could we facilitate your participation in Livingston County area activities (hikes, meetings, etc.)?
- Anything else, too!

Please send us any ideas you have, and introduce yourself regarding your interests, background, expertise, etc.! You can send your comments to cg@michigan.sierraclub.org. We're hoping to hear from you!

Newsletter E-Delivery: Help us reduce costs and save some trees!

If you would like to sign up for electronic delivery of our quarterly newsletters, please contact our webmaster at cg.webmaster@michigan.sierraclub.org. If you sign up for e-delivery, you will be notified via email when a new newsletter is available to view on our website and we will stop sending you the paper copies of the newsletters unless you specifically request to receive both. See our website Michigan.SierraClub.org/Crossroads (click "Newsletters" tab) for more information.



Conservation Issue Round-Up

The Conservation Committee met on March 19 and discussed several topics that confront our area at this time.

Hydraulic Fracturing: The majority of our attention is on “fracking” in the Crossroads area. We are keeping a close eye on the DEQ calendar for announcements of new or altered drilling permits, tracking leases in our area and supporting the communities with our resources that are dealing with this issue. Several of us will attend a Chapter workshop on understanding gas and oil drilling permits in May. Educating the public on this issue is another focus and we will be hosting showings of Gasland II and holding summer programs on the topic. Check out the calendar dates and times.

Other issues brought to our attention:

Milford oil & gas sweetening plant: It was brought to our attention that there is an ongoing air quality issue with the Merit plant in Milford on Lone Tree Rd. Apparently the DEQ is investigating. More to come as we become familiar with this issue.

Wetlands delineation issue in Brighton Township: According to Sierra Club members in the area, the plans for the proposed subdivision at Woodland Lake has underestimated the size of the wetlands that this development will be impacting. The Woodland Lake residents are keeping abreast of this issue.

Are you interested in working on environmental issues with a group of dedicated activists? Email Sue at sue.kelly@

PEAS Hotline 800-292-4706

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Pollution Emergency Alerting System (PEAS) hotline number is **800-292-4706**. Call this number without hesitation if you have any pollution issues with air, land, water, wetlands, dams or public drinking water supplies. Suggestion: put it into your contacts in your cell phone so you have it to share with others.

From the DEQ website, “*The PEAS hotline should be used to report environmental pollution emergencies such as tanker accidents, pipeline breaks, and releases of reportable quantities of hazardous substances as well as other types of environmental emergencies for which the DEQ has jurisdiction, including: wetland disturbances, incidents involving compromised integrity of dams, and incidents involving public drinking water supplies, nuclear power plants, mines and oil & gas wells.*”

Newsletter E-Delivery: Help us reduce costs and save some trees!

If you would like to sign up for electronic delivery of our quarterly newsletters, please contact our webmaster at cg.webmaster@michigan.sierraclub.org. If you sign up for e-delivery, you will be notified via email when a new newsletter is available to view on our website and we will stop sending you the paper copies of the newsletters unless you specifically request to receive both. See our website Michigan.SierraClub.org/Crossroads (click “Newsletters” tab) for more information.

Crossroads Spring and Summer Outings

General Outing Notice

All Sierra Club outings start at the trail head, and some include fees to cover expenses. Sierra Club outing participants are required to sign the standard liability waiver found on our website. Outings are subject to conditions. Always check the Crossroads group website for latest information, or check with trip leader for cancellations or changes.

Volunteer opportunity, North Country Trail

Chief Baw Bees Chapter, North County Trail Association
Hillsdale County
Second Saturday of every month, 9:30 AM

Join other Sierra Club members (and non members) doing rewarding trail work on the North Country Trail, in and around the Lost Nation State Game area in Hillsdale County. Contact Kevin Bell at kfb@provide.net or call for information at 734-913-4764

Kensington Spring Bird Count

Kensington Metropark
Saturday May 10, 7 AM
Skill Level: easy, no experience necessary

Bring binoculars to help conduct a census of Kensington's spring birds. Everyone will be part of a team led by an experienced birder. No particular expertise is required. Participants should dress for the weather. **FREE.** Meet at the Nature Center Building to join a group that will explore the woods and fields around the Farm Center. The count leaders will help the members of their group, whatever their level of birding knowledge. For information contact Kensington Metropark or John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or john.wilson@michigan.sierraclub.org

Spring Tree and Wildflower identification Hike

Island Lake Recreation Area
Saturday May 17, 1 PM
Skill Level: easy, no experience necessary

Join the Crossroads Group of the Sierra Club for a leisurely hike at Island Lake Recreation Area. Identify trees and spring wildflowers on the wooded trails with knowledgeable outing leaders. Hike could be 2-5 miles depending on group desire. Slower pace hike, as the emphasis will be on trees and wildflowers. Meet at the Riverbend Picnic area, Saturday May 17, 1 PM. Contact John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or john.wilson@michigan.sierraclub.org

Huron Meadows Metropark to Zukey Lake Paddle Trip

Huron Meadows Metropark
Sunday, June 1, 10 AM
Skill level: Intermediate to expert, Difficulty: Easy to Moderate

Join the Crossroads Group of the Sierra Club for the annual Zukey Lake paddle trip. Sunday, June 1. Meet at 10 AM at the boat launch parking lot, Huron Meadows Metropark. This is a scenic trip down the Huron River past Ore Lake, through Strawberry Lake, to Zukey Lake. Lunch at Zukey Lake Tavern (not provided). Some paddling experience required. For more information contact John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or john.wilson@michigan.sierraclub.org or Gary Neumeier at Gerry.neumeier@avl.com.
Argo Cascades Water Park

Argo Canoe Livery, 1055 Longshore Dr. Ann Arbor, MI
Saturday July 19, 1PM
Skill Level: beginner Difficulty: Easy to Moderate. Family Friendly.

Join the Crossroads Group of the Sierra Club for a Family Friendly afternoon. Paddle down the new Argo Cascades through a series of nine drops and pools for people in tubes, rafts, canoes and kayaks to enjoy. We have new river recreation opportunities with tubes, rafts and sit-on-top kayaks available to rent! Float down the Argo Cascades, walk back to the top and repeat the fun! One-person per tube, 8 years and above, shoes required and no coolers. People average three to four tube rides down the Cascades in a two hour rental. Open to members and nonmembers, families, and beginners. Saturday, July 19, meet at the Argo Canoe Livery. For information call John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or john.wilson@michigan.sierraclub.org

Crossroads Spring and Summer Outings *Continued*

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Recreation Area Hike

Highland State Recreation Area, Oakland County
Sunday, July 27, 1PM
Skill Level: beginner Difficulty: Easy to Moderate

Join the Crossroads Group of the Sierra Club for an afternoon hike in Oakland County's, Highland State Recreation Area. This was the former country retreat of Edsel and Eleanor Ford in the 1920/30s. The artificial Haven Hill Lake and grounds surrounding the nature center were designed by noted Landscape Architect, Jens Jensen. The Nature Center is the highest point in Oakland County. The park entrance is 1 mile east of Duck Lake Rd on M59. Meet at Haven Hill Lake trailhead parking lot, near the entrance, at 1 PM for a hike of 2-5 miles around Haven Hill Lake. The outing is free but requires an annual or daily Michigan State Parks pass (or passport pass) for entry. Open to members and nonmembers, families, and beginners who can hike this distance. A great hike for our Oakland County members! For information call John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or john.wilson@michigan.sierraclub.org

West River Trail Bike Ride

From Hudson Mills to Dexter MI along the Huron River
Saturday, August 16, 1PM
Skill level: novice, Difficulty: Easy. Family Friendly.

Dust off your bike and join us for an easy pedal from Hudson Mills to Dexter, on the new West River Trail along the Huron River. We will make frequent stops to examine the various habitats that we pass through on our journey. Meet at the Hudson Mills Metropark Activity Center Saturday, August 16, at 1PM.

The trail runs along the west bank of the Huron River about 5 miles, and ends at Mill Creek Park (formerly known as Warrior Creek Park), behind the fire station on Main Street in Dexter. Open to members and nonmembers. Outing is free, but requires paid entrance to the Metropark. Contact John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or john.wilson@michigan.sierraclub.org.

SUP (Stand Up Paddleboard) Outing

Pinckney Recreation Area, Halfmoon Lake
Sunday, August 24, 11 AM
Skill Level: beginner Difficulty: Moderate

Stand up paddling (SUP) is the fastest growing water sport in Michigan. Have you ever wanted to try it out? Find out what it is all about? Try out equipment? Here is your chance. Come join us with the leading SUP Company and outfitter in the State. Paddle the Mitten is pioneering the stand up paddleboard business throughout Michigan. PTM offers a variety of instruction, classes, board sales and adventures. This will be a Paddle Technique and Safety outing - 2 hours with instruction 15 min prior to the 2 hours, \$40 per person. Meet at 11 AM at the Halfmoon Lake Boat Launch Parking lot, Pinckney Recreation Area. You can get information and sign up at Paddlethemittensup.com under classes/training – events. For information call John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or john.wilson@michigan.sierraclub.org

Outings Initiative and Volunteer Opportunity

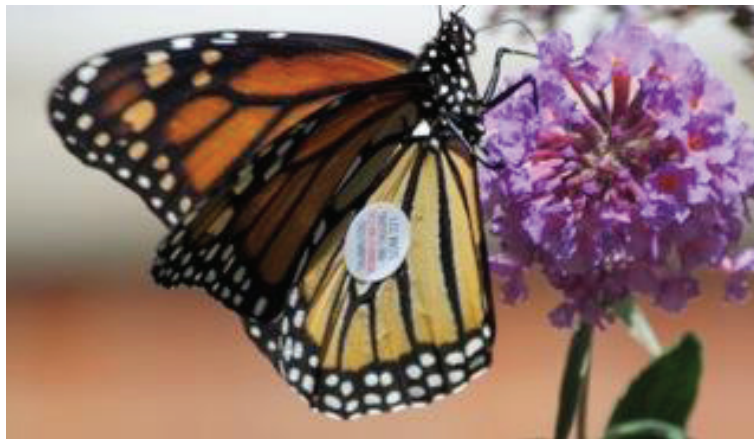
Saturday, August 2, 2-4 PM
Outings Committee
No experience required

The outings committee wants to add new leaders to sustain a wider variety of outdoor activities. To learn more about this opportunity, please join the Outings Committee Sat. August 2, 2-4 PM in Pinckney. Learn more about committee functioning, training requirements, leader expectations, and Q & A. We will be planning outing for Fall newsletter and would like to hear from YOU. Call or email for directions. John Wilson at 734-355-3822 or john.wilson@michigan.sierraclub.org

Crossroads Sierra Club Presents

Monarch Butterflies

A Program by Diane Pruden



Our presenter, Diane Pruden, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist, has been raising and releasing monarchs in Milford and visiting them in their Mexican winter homes for many years. During her presentation, we will learn about monarch migration and tagging, the monarch life cycle, monarch conservation, and Monarch Waystations. AND - Diane will even have live monarch caterpillars and their food for anyone who would like to take one or two home to raise and release. She will have milkweed plant plugs available for purchase. Her program is suitable for children. Come join us!

Wednesday, May 21 at 7:00 PM
Brighton District Library, Free Admission

For more information on the Crossroads Sierra Club go to: Michigan.SierraClub.org/Crossroads

Crossroads and the Sierra Club Present

Monarch Butterflies

Wednesday, May 21, 7 pm to 9 pm
Brighton District Library
100 Library Drive, Brighton, MI 48116.

Gasland II screening:

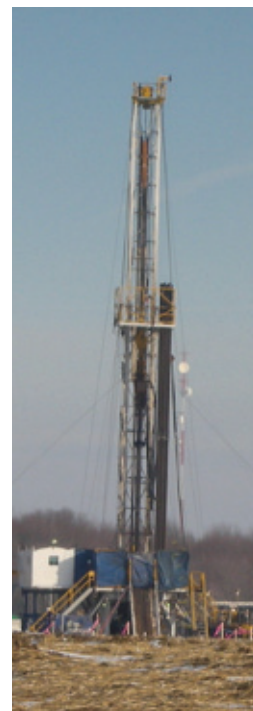
Wednesday, July 23, 2014, 6 pm – 9 pm
Salem-South Lyon District Library
9800 Pontiac Trail, South Lyon, MI 48178.

Don't Frack Up Our Future

Wednesday, August 27, 7 pm to 9 pm,
Brighton District Library
100 Library Drive, Brighton, MI 48116.

Politics of the Environment

Wednesday, September 17, 7 pm to 9 pm,
Brighton District Library
100 Library Drive, Brighton, MI 48116.



U.S. Becomes a Climate Champ?

As natural gas has replaced coal for U.S. energy supplies, carbon dioxide emissions have plummeted to 20 year lows, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Notes Associated Press: “The drop-off is due mainly to low-priced natural gas, the agency said. A frenzy of shale gas drilling in the Northeast’s Marcellus Shale and in Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana has caused the wholesale price of natural gas to plummet from \$7 or \$8 per unit to about \$3 over the past four years, making it cheaper to burn than coal for a given amount of energy produced. As a result, utilities are relying more than ever on gas-fired generating plants.” In 2005, half of U.S. electricity came from coal plants; today that’s down to 34 percent.

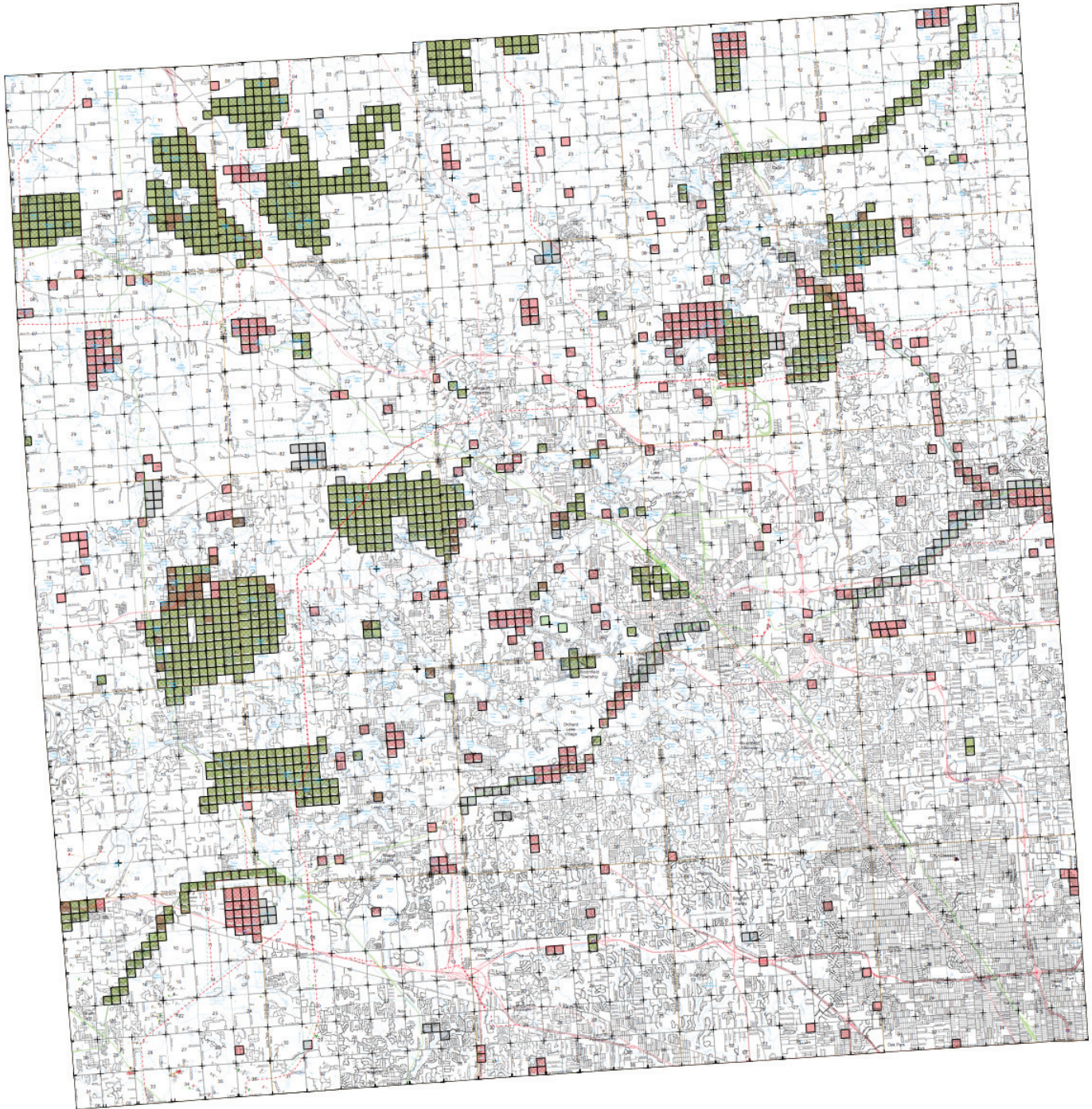
Michael Mann, director of the Earth System Science Center at Penn State University, told AP it was “ironic” that the shift has brought the U.S. closer to meeting the greenhouse gas targets of the 1997 Kyoto treaty on global warming, which the United States never ratified.

Few environmentalists are popping corks over the news, however. That’s because of concerns that hydraulic fracturing of natural gas pollutes groundwater supplies and, without proper restrictions, releases methane, a gas whose global-warming potential is 25 times that of carbon dioxide. Read more about a fossil fuel that’s “dirty, dangerous, and run amok” at the Sierra Club’s Beyond Natural Gas site, and Sierra’s July/August feature story “Fractured Lives.”

Reed McManus, senior editor at Sierra.



Sierra Club—Crossroads Group
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Mineral Lease Information and DNR Ownership
from DNR website. Green squares are potential fracking locations.