



The *Muir* VIEW

NEWS OF THE SIERRA CLUB IN WISCONSIN | JOHN MUIR CHAPTER

2018 Year in Review

2018 brought countless environmental challenges and barriers to progress. And yet, the Sierra Club - John Muir Chapter continued to work with dedication and determination. Because of the leadership of our volunteers and the support from our members, we achieved many victories for our planet and its people.

VICTORIES IN OUR CAMPAIGNS!

ARRIVE TOGETHER AND TRANSPORTATION TEAM CREATION

In October, the Chapter and several of our allies released a report titled *Arrive Together: Transportation Access and Equity in Wisconsin*. A first of its kind report, *Arrive Together* shows how people's needs are not being met by Wisconsin's transportation system, as it examines the effectiveness of public transit access to major employers and other areas of interest in nine cities and regions across Wisconsin. It highlights stories from transit riders, opportunities for improvement within transit systems, and the serious barriers and needs for improvement at the state level. Among other things, the report found:

- Every region faces unique challenges, but one thing is common across all of the places surveyed: there is a lack of investment in public transportation and significant barriers to coordinating transit across city and county lines, and that's hurting our communities.
- We need more investment in a transportation system that works for everyone.



- We need a transportation system that works regionally because Wisconsin's lives don't stop at county lines.

The report, co-authored by many Sierra Club members around the state, was released with six press conferences on one day. The members of our reinvigorated transportation team are excited to continue this advocacy for better transportation options in our state. If you would like to join the transportation team, contact Katie Hogan at kathryn.hogan@sierraclub.org.

FOXCONN: FINDING THE SILVER LINING

Most of us first heard of the new Foxconn development when its details were unclear, except that it was tied to a massive incentive package that, among other things, exempted it from

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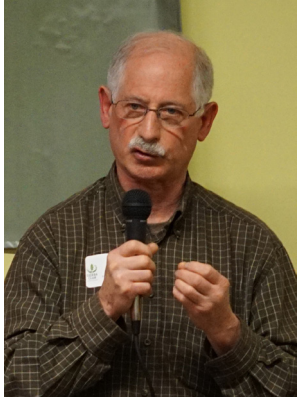
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Doors Open



On Tuesday, November 6, the actions you took opened doors. What once seemed to be a dark and solid wall, now appears to be a ray of light and hope. That day, you chose to reject a system that put the influence of money over equal access, polluters over protections, and profits over people in favor of a more progressive view of democracy, elevating the rights of people, and caring for our lands and waters.

The last eight years in particular saw our once progressive traditions decimated, natural resources degraded, citizens' voices and rights diminished, and people's well-being put at risk. The boxes you checked on November 6 created openings to march through to create the change we want.

The Sierra Club has been advocating and fighting for change and new leaders who will help get us there. I want to offer a big thanks to all the great Sierra Club leaders and volunteers who turned out by canvassing, making phone calls and sending texts, participating in postcard parties and helping to get out the vote. You, and our members and supporters, helped make the next steps possible.

But just as potential energy does not equal action, kinetic energy is needed to effect change. What we started by hand-checking ballot boxes, we must now finish by using our feet and our voices if we are to restore Wisconsin's environmental leadership and heritage.

You support the Sierra Club because you know we are a leading voice in having government, an environment and an economy that serves all people. As a grassroots organization,

our power comes not just from your financial contributions, but from you speaking up, engaging on issues, organizing, and working in unison with other like-minded people.

The Chapter only has 4.5 full time staff. It is with the 18,000 members and 68,000 supporters throughout Wisconsin that we hold the greatest power. With 99 Assembly districts, 33 Senate districts, 72 counties, and many more local units of government, it is our members and supporters throughout the state who are most in tune with local issues. Your ears, your connections and your voices are powerful assets in bringing issues forward and standing up for people and the environment.

What the John Muir Chapter's staff and our leaders offer is additional perspective, expertise and organizing skills. We can connect you with others who share your concerns, assist with organizing and help map out strategies, elevate your voices, and raise awareness of your issues. You have - and are - the power we need.

We have members and supporters all over Wisconsin. Spring means local elections - a critical next step in protecting rights and restoring our environment, and an added opportunity to influence local elections and elected officials. Some races are uncontested or don't even have enough people run for office! Some Sierrans have run for office, and local officials not only have significant local impacts, but those positions are a training ground for many for state or federal offices. Who you elect locally matters!

There will be those attempting to close the doors we opened on November 6. By stepping through those doorways, you can continue the progress we made and lead us to a brighter future.

Don Ferber
Chapter Chair

THE MUIR VIEW

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Please submit articles by mail or email to:
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Please include the author's first and last names, and day and evening phone numbers at the top. Acceptance of submission contingent upon availability of space and must meet Sierra Club guidelines.

Advertising Coordinator:

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Current advertising rates may be found on the JMC website: sierraclub.org/wisconsin

Deadline:

The deadline for submission of articles to the April - June issue is midnight on February 15, 2019.

Change of Address:

Send old and new addresses with mailing label (or member number) to:
Sierra Club - Member Care
2101 Webster St., Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

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many of our environmental rules and regulations. While the Chapter and our partners were not able to stop the terrible incentive package, we have influenced its operating procedures as the project moves forward. We worked to prevent Foxconn from diverting large quantities of water from Lake Michigan, advocated for it to be powered by clean energy, urged the reduction of negative impacts on wetlands and advocated for connections to public transit, among other things. While the state decided not to force Foxconn to meet Wisconsin's standards, we collected petitions, spoke out, took out a full-page ad in the *Racine Journal Times*, and even sent letters to their major customers, including Amazon, Google, and Hewlett-Packard, asking them to call on Foxconn to live up to these standards.

It worked! In spring, Foxconn announced it would take much less water from Lake Michigan than originally proposed. Foxconn expressed interest in figuring out how to create a transit line to the development. Finally, they've expressed interest in using solar energy to power the facility. While we're still unhappy about the incentive package, especially the new precedent for exemptions from environmental safeguards, we need to celebrate that the project would be significantly worse without the intervention of the thousands of Sierra Club members and partners who spoke out.

TAR SANDS: VIDEOS AND COALITION

In June, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission approved moving the Line 3 pipeline forward, despite overwhelming, unprecedented opposition. Line 3 would carry tar sands oil from Canada to Wisconsin. Approving this pipeline creates momentum for Enbridge's Line 61-twin pipeline, that would carry the tar sands oil through Wisconsin towards the gulf for export. In response, a number of groups and organizations worked together to respond and decry the decision, including environmental, indigenous rights, community-based, and landowner groups! Together, we are more powerful and aren't backing down.

In September, Sierra Club helped the WiSE Alliance and 80 Feet is Enough! launch a series of videos with different landowners telling their stories about what it's like to live under the threat of another pipeline. The videos are excellently done and have been very well received. From the Klopfers' story about what it was like to be across the street from a pipeline spill that 'erupted like a geyser,' to the Reisner's story of coming home and seeing their backyard torn down, the videos have gotten over 25,000 views! You can check them out at wisconsinsafeenergy.org or on WiSE's facebook page at [facebook.com/wisafeenergyalliance](https://www.facebook.com/wisafeenergyalliance).

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

While the election results were a mixed bag, there are certainly some huge wins, including Governor-elect Tony Evers.

The Chapter's engagement in the elections produced a lot of successes as well! While not every candidate we worked for won, we shaped the conversation. More and more, the importance of supporting family farms over massive factory farms, ensuring clean, drinkable water across the state, getting to 100% clean energy, and expanding transit access were talked about during debates, in campaign literature, and at speeches from Republican, Democratic, and Independent candidates. Additionally, Sierra Club supported our partners, Protect The Willow and the Oneida County Clean Waters Action, in getting our members to vote on a mining referendum. With a 2-1 margin, Oneida County residents opposed mining in the county!

SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN GROUNDWATER STUDY

In the last year we have seen the power of solid, science based information. While we have known about the serious contamination of private wells in Kewaunee County for years, it was not until a scientific study incontrovertibly showing the sources of the contamination, that Governor Walker and the Republican legislature allowed modest rules to be put in place to begin to address the problem. All this time we have strongly suspected that there are similar problems in other areas of the state that have the same geology as Kewaunee County such as Southwest Wisconsin. Grant, Iowa and Lafayette counties have expressed interest in conducting a groundwater study similar to the one done in Kewaunee. Along with other allied groups we have been encouraging those counties to appropriate funds for such further studies.

PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MARCH

On September 8, Wisconsinites rallied together across the state to take part in the People's Climate Movement Day of Action: Rise for Climate, Jobs, and Justice. Empowered and united as one, each march served to demonstrate the large, broad, and powerful demand for bold climate action. Throughout the Wisconsin events, a multitude of speeches were given by leaders on a broad range of issues, all reinforcing the central belief that we need to embrace bold action to address climate change and work toward environmental justice. Across the state, hundreds of people attended events in Appleton, La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Minocqua, Monona, Platteville, and Wauwatosa. Wisconsin's events were among more than 730 such events across the world, in more than 89 countries.

CLEAN ENERGY BOOMING IN WISCONSIN

2019 could be the year of solar! There are more than 3,400 megawatts (mw) of solar projects planned for Wisconsin, out-producing the set of coal plants in Oak Creek that make only 2,508 mw. This includes what would become the Midwest's largest solar farm in Cobb, Wisconsin, known as the Badger Hollow solar project. Sierra Club members across Wisconsin in the communities where these projects are proposed worked to support them at local zoning events, spoke in

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favor throughout Public Service Commission processes and more. Wisconsin now produces less than 100 mw of solar, so this could plunge us into the clean energy economy that our surrounding states are already enjoying.

100% RESOLUTIONS

While we see inaction on climate change at the national and state levels and by the utilities, cities are not sitting back. Instead, across America, cities are calling for 100% clean energy and charting paths to get their cities there. In Wisconsin, the cities of Madison, Eau Claire, and Middleton have passed resolutions. Currently, Sierra Club is working to get resolutions passed in Fitchburg, La Crosse, and Milwaukee. An exciting coalition, the Milwaukee Economic and Economic Justice Coalition, is working to get Milwaukee to pass a resolution to create a plan to achieve 100 percent clean, renewable energy—similar to the resolutions passed in many other municipalities across the country. In addition, the resolution calls for the plan to include a jobs program that would ensure the economic benefits of the transition to clean energy (stable electricity rates, jobs in clean energy and energy efficiency, etc) are kept in Milwaukee, especially the most economically distressed neighborhoods.

BEYOND COAL CAMPAIGN PROGRESS

The climate crisis requires that we move off of our dirtiest forms of energy as immediately as possible. In Madison and in Oak Creek, the Beyond Coal Campaign continues to push utilities including Madison Gas and Electric, Alliant and We Energies to move entirely off of coal and to replace that power with clean energy. This is especially urgent as residents near the Oak Creek/Elm Road coal plant continue to face serious coal dust problems.

SOLAR HOMES PROGRAM SHINES

In April, the chapter launched a solar homes partnership with SunVest Solar, Inc. The program added another component to the Sierra Club's efforts to move Wisconsin toward clean energy and off of climate disrupting coal. At the same time, it offered home and business owners an opportunity to have a positive impact on our climate while taking advantage of volume discounts and group rebates. Sierra Club members and supporters responded enthusiastically with over 200 signing up for a free assessment and more than 100 attending educational events to learn more about solar installations and the chapter's clean energy work.

IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS

This year we took several leaps in improving our communications platforms so that our members have the most up-to-date information about environmental issues and opportunities to take action. We know our members bring the positive change that we are working towards, and so we want to continue to strengthen the ways we communicate with you and vice versa.

- We continue to post regular updates on our blog, which you can view at sierraclub.org/wisconsin under the "blog" tab in our menu.
- Our social media presence has grown and improved. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to get regular information about our campaigns. We also maintain the hashtag #BrightMomentMonday where we post an (almost) weekly piece of good news on our various social media platforms.

- We introduced several other digital tools including an improved email platform that will bring you monthly electronic newsletters via email and a peer to peer texting app that allows us to text you information about events in your area.



STRATEGIC PLAN COMPLETED!

The John Muir Chapter adopted a new strategic plan that covers the next three years. The goal of the plan is build power throughout the state so we can protect and enhance the environment and our quality of life.

CHECK OUT OUR RE-ENERGIZED

TEAMS!

Since starting in June, Apprentice Katie Hogan has spent much of her time focusing on rebuilding and rejuvenating some of the Chapter's conservation issue teams. Working closely with the Forests & Wildlife and Transportation teams, both have new members and statewide projects planned for 2019.

Despite challenges that come our way, Sierra Club - through our staff, members, and supporters - is achieving great victories across the state! Thank you to everyone who has helped make these accomplishments possible.

Bill Davis, Cassie Steiner, Jacinda Tessmann, Elizabeth Ward, Katie Hogan
John Muir Chapter Staff

STRENGTHENING OUR ORGANIZATION

Victories for Wisconsin's Environment in November Elections

One of the biggest winners in Wisconsin's November elections was the environment! All of the statewide races were won by pro-environment candidates and in Oneida County, we won the mining referendum. That is because of the tireless efforts of countless volunteers including many, many Sierra Club members who helped register voters and turn out folks to the polls. Thank you for voting, and all the other hard work you did during the election!

Two Groups – the Fox Valley and Four Lakes – were especially active organizing their members to volunteer for campaigns and to help turn out our members and the public to vote.

One downside is the effect of gerrymandered districts in Wisconsin. At the same time that environmental candidates won all the statewide elections, we lost one state Senate seat held by an environmental candidate. Note that while we're officially a non-partisan organization, the partisan election results illustrate the effects of unfairly drawn districts. Assembly Democrats received 54% of votes statewide while GOP candidates took 46% and the net effect was that the balance of power in that house was virtually unchanged.

However, with Tony Evers as our new Governor, we know that we'll see a stop to the environmental onslaught of the last eight years. We can once again look forward instead of just trying to protect what we have. Environmental decisions will be made on scientific grounds and not greed. The rights of all will be respected and protected and not just those of wealthy

campaign contributors and the privileged few.

Another win for Wisconsin's environment was the election of Josh Kaul as Attorney General. This means there will be no more tortured legal opinions that inappropriately undercut the ability of the Department of Natural Resources to do its job. Outgoing AG Schimel's opinion on high capacity wells did exactly that. It also means that our environmental laws will be enforced, helping to protect human health and our environment.

Finally, while Wisconsin's congressional delegation did not change, the House of Representatives did. This means we no longer have the threat of cuts to EPA or the Great Lakes, or bills that would undermine the Endangered Species Act and/or other important federal environmental laws.

Along with our great staff, I'm looking forward to working with each of the Groups to continue to build on these successes before the 2020 elections.

Dave Blouin
Chapter Political Chair

Editor's Note: Since this article was written, the Republican-controlled legislature pushed through a series of bills that limit the authority of the Governor and Attorney General. These power-grabbing bills are one more example of how our work must continue. Our Legislative Committee will be working hard to fight bills like this over the coming months.

Thank You to Our Donors

Your generous contributions-above and beyond your membership dues-provided crucial support for our local grassroots campaigns to protect Wisconsin's water, land and wildlife.

A

Phil & Loraine Adkins; Seymour J Adler; Barbara Agness; Amy L Ahrens; Lavern Akins; Michael Alber; Richard A Albert; Col. J Adridge & Dr. D Muri; Vicki Alldritt; Brenner Allen; Margaret Lebrun & David Allen; Lucia Allen-Voreis; Todd Amb; Thomas Amenson; Richard Ames; Suzanne Ammerman; Joseph E Ancel;

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B

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Looking Forward: Ways to Get Involved in 2019

There are countless ways to get involved with the Sierra Club in Wisconsin. Here are just a few opportunities!

ALL PROGRESS IS LOCAL: GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB GROUP

Our current political situation provides a clear example of why we need to stay involved at the local level. One catastrophic election can erase so much progress, change the political discourse and dynamics, and take us backwards. Progress at the local level is a lot harder to undo, and puts pressure on state and federal leaders. Sierra Club's biggest strengths are our grassroots leadership and ability to be nimble. Our local groups are the clearest example of this. While President Trump was pulling out of climate agreements, our groups across the country worked with mayors and city councils to pass resolutions and plans to get to 100 percent clean energy.

Our local groups are integral parts of our Beyond Coal campaigns. Our local groups are the experts on local issues like proposed mines and other developments.

We are lucky to have local groups through most of Wisconsin.

The best place to learn about our issues and get involved is with your local group! To learn more about what the local groups have accomplished this year, see our group updates in Issues at a Glance on pages 8-9 of this Muir View.



in wild spaces, building media awareness, and mobilizing turnout across the state. This event is in the beginning planning stages, and we would love your help! If you are passionate about our wild spaces and want to protect them, get involved with this team!

- In the upcoming legislative session there will be a focus on public lands. In particular, the change in Governor affords some new opportunities. For example, we will be working to restore operation funding to our state parks that was cut three years ago, and we will be working with many other organizations to re-authorize the Stewardship Fund, which is used to purchase lands for the public, before it expires in 2020. Additionally, we will be advocating for better transportation priorities in the transportation budget this year. It's a perfect time to join our transportation team if you're passionate about walking, biking and transit! Join our **Legislative Committee** to advocate for policies that protect our environment or join our **Transportation Team** to advocate for better transportation in Wisconsin.

Keep an eye on your social media and email accounts for even more volunteer opportunities, check out our Volunteer Page of the website <https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/volunteer>, or email kathryn.hogan@sierraclub.org.

VOLUNTEER WITH THE CHAPTER

Looking for new ways to get involved with Sierra Club in Wisconsin? Search no more! We are recruiting for positions and teams across the organization and would love for you to join us. Here are a few of our current opportunities:

- **Website Volunteers:** Do you read websites and think 'why don't they get an editor'? Or 'update the website, people!?' Then be part of the solution! We're looking for people to help us update and redesign our Chapter website!
- **Join our Water Enforcement Squad:** Are you the only person you know who LOVES charts and fine print? Are you willing to learn to love charts if it means protecting our water? Join our Water Enforcement team!
- In 2019, our **State Parks Funding Protection Team** will host a statewide day of action in Wisconsin's state parks. This is our chance to show our legislators how many Wisconsinites believe in protecting our natural spaces for generations to come. We can make our voices heard through public testimonies of formative memories

NEW VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK!

The John Muir Chapter is happy to provide a new resource, an updated Volunteer Handbook! Whether you are a member of the Executive Committee, a team or local leader, or a new volunteer just starting out, this handbook is a great resource. It covers how to onboard volunteers, write the perfect blog, plan a successful event, and much more! Both print and digital copies are available, contact kathryn.hogan@sierraclub.org if you are interested.

Celebrating our Volunteers

As we celebrate the accomplishments of the past year and look ahead to the next, it is only fitting that we acknowledge the contributions of the many volunteers who are the driving force behind the Sierra Club. As you read this newsletter, it is easy to see the breadth of the chapter's work in Wisconsin, but what isn't always obvious is the amount of volunteer power it takes to accomplish this work.

On November 17, the Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter celebrated the many volunteers who have contributed to our efforts to explore, enjoy and protect in 2018. We also took the opportunity to recognize a handful of individuals and organizations, from new activists to lifetime achievers. We are honored to acknowledge the efforts and accomplishments of our amazing volunteers and 2018 award winners. Photos from the event can be found on the Sierra Club Wisconsin facebook page.

THIS YEAR'S AWARD WINNERS

Dennis Grzezinski, Legal Chair of the Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter was recipient of the *JJ & Pat Werner* award given to Sierra Club leaders in the John Muir Chapter who show an undying commitment to the goals and missions of the chapter. He was honored for his many accomplishments

in environmental law over the course of his career, with a focus on his recent transportation and equity work in the Milwaukee area.

Fox Valley Group of the Sierra Club received the *LD Rockwell* award for their strategic engagement on political issues in the Fox Valley region.

Paul DeMain, Publisher and Editor of *News from Indian Country* and *IndianCountryTV*, was presented the *Torchbearer* award for his efforts to raise awareness about the threats that tar sands pipeline expansion and the Penokee mine pose to Wisconsin's waters and environment.

Midwest Environmental Advocates received the *Good Citizen Award* for their efforts in protecting Wisconsin's environment and the people who live here, especially in rural areas impacted by frac-sand mines, CAFOs or tar sands pipelines.

Madison West High School Green Club was awarded the *Good Citizen Award* for their successful, student-led campaign to have solar installed at their school and other sustainability initiatives implemented. Several of these innovative students are also members of the Sierra Club Beyond Coal Campaign team.

Mary Beth Elliott was recognized with the *Merit Award* for her exceptional work as a Tar Sands team leader. Elliott has played an integral role in steering this joint 350 Madison and Sierra Club campaign since it launched in 2014 from strategic planning and team building to outreach and education.

Abby Lois was recipient of this year's *Wildflower Award* given to Sierra Club leaders in the John Muir Chapter. Abby was recognized for



Dennis Grzezinski accepts his award.

all of her efforts including mentoring new and existing activists and bringing positivity, strategic thinking and a warm, welcoming attitude to her leadership role in the club.

Brooke Bowser was presented with the *New Activist Award*. Since becoming active in the club Brooke has taken on a leadership role in managing the chapter's social media accounts. She is also involved with the Sierra Student Coalition, Wisconsin Youth Network and the Madison Gas and Electric Beyond Coal Team.

If you are interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities with the John Muir Chapter contact Katie Hogan kathryn.hogan@sierraclub.org or complete the online volunteer form at www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/volunteer

Do you know of an environmental champion who deserves recognition? Nominate them for a 2019 award <https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/awards>

Save the Date:
THE BIG SHARE
MARCH 5, 2019

The Big Share is a single day of online giving hosted by Community Shares of Wisconsin to raise funds and support local nonprofits like the Sierra Club Foundation-John Muir Chapter. Mark your calendar, and consider showing your support with a donation!

Meet your new Executive Committee!

Thank you to everyone who voted and to everyone who ran for the Executive Committee. At this time, we have two appointments for terms that end in 2019 and the election of three candidates for at large seats ending in 2021.

2019 APPOINTMENTS:

Harrison Chalnack found the Sierra Club through the Chapter intern program. He looks forward to learning the behind the scenes operation of an advocacy organization. He started educating himself on environmental issues in middle school, where he created a Citizens' Climate Lobby club for his school and led a group of his peers to congress to lobby. He is most interested in the Club's Moving Beyond Oil campaign.

Denise DeMarb served for five years as an Alder for Madison's City Council where she championed work on racial and social equity and sustainability. She also served on Madison's Sustainability Committee and attended Edgewood College's Sustainability Leadership Program. She is currently retired and has a background in finance and accounting and a passion for politics. She joined the Sierra Club because of its social activism and issue-based lobbying.

3-YEAR AT LARGE ELECTED SEATS:

Laura Donovan, from Platteville, began engaging with the Sierra Club and creating change while at University. Laura attended SPROG the Sierra Student Coalition's week long summer training program on advocacy, leadership and equity, is a founding member of Wisconsin Youth Network and is interested in clean transportation and accessibility – financial, physical, cultural, etc.

Andrew Knutson, from Madison, is a bike enthusiast who became motivated to leave a better world when he had children and has been engaged in conservation and environmental issues since. He has skills in communication, marketing and lobbying, as well as business management. He recognizes the importance of local action teams that will build the Club's credibility in rural areas and is very interested in transportation and access.

Steve Bower, from Lake Mills, is a retired teacher who joined the Sierra Club many years ago. He wrote grants including ones to get renewable energy installations at schools. He is passionate about clean energy and getting members of the Club to contact elected officials and hold them accountable.

2019 Muir View Timeline

Look for the Muir View in your mailbox or online in January, April and October 2019! To stay up to date on all things Sierra Club, follow our blog at sierraclub.org/wisconsin and our social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

BUILD 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY WITH 21ST CENTURY ENERGY

Foxconn and We Energies have an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the health and sustainability of our community by using wind and solar

NOT FOSSIL FUELS

SIGN THE PETITION: cleanpowerwi.org/foxconnssolar

Greening Greater Racine

SIERRA CLUB
JOHN MUIR CHAPTER

CLEAN POWER COALITION

Updates from our Local Groups

FOUR LAKES GROUP

When you get to know a candidate like Kriss Marion, active campaigning just seems like the right thing to do! So when the Four Lakes Group decided to focus on Senate District 17 (SD17) in the southwestern corner of the state, we got to work!

We developed a plan that included regular emails, canvassing, and letters to the editor, We organized postcard evenings where volunteers addressed and personalized a postcard to every Sierra Club member in SD17. Over 20 people representing multiple generations participated. Our candidate did not win the race in SD17 but we did meet a lot of people and members who care about the area and its rich variety of natural resources.

This is an excerpt from the blog “Out of the Comfort Zone” by Four Lakes Group member Liz Wessel. View the full article on our blog, found at sierraclub.org/wisconsin.

FOX VALLEY GROUP

The Fox Valley Group has been organizing a monthly public educational meeting nine times a year for 30+ years. The meetings generally focus on environmental issues, endangered species and adventure travel. In March of 2019, the meeting will focus on an adventure organized by Team River Runner, a non-profit established in 2005 at Walter Reid Hospital. Team River Runner uses kayaking to help veterans recover from debilitating injuries suffered in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. In September 2018, Team River Runner undertook



a first-of-its-kind adventure with five visually impaired veterans and their guides down the Colorado River. These veterans,

who lost their vision in combat, paddled 226 miles in solo kayaks on the Colorado River through the rapids in the Grand Canyon. Join Team River Runner safety kayaker Ken Braband at our March meeting to hear stories of determination, apprehension, distress, joy, camaraderie and triumph as the team succeeded in their quest.

COULEE REGION GROUP

Energy has been a hot topic in the Coulee Region! Our members are leading a growing “Ready for 100” campaign in La Crosse, where Mayor Tim Kabat has signed the “Mayors for Clean Energy” pledge, and the joint city-county

Sustainable La Crosse Commission recently recommended that the city and county pursue 100 percent renewable energy resolutions. In August, we toured Chrysalis Farm in Vernon County, including their sustainably-built and powered home. Our September program featured a presentation on the City and County of La Crosse’s progress towards their joint sustainability goals, which include reducing energy use 25 percent by 2025.

SOUTHEAST GATEWAY GROUP

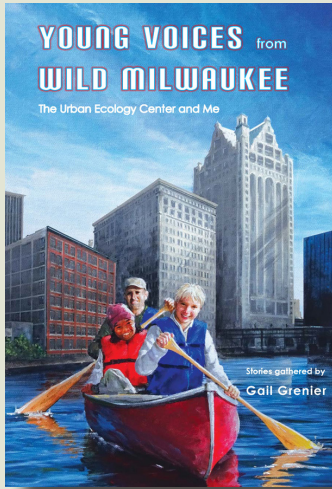
In October a petition calling on We Energies and Foxconn to power their new facility with on-site solar installations was delivered to We Energies. Sierra Club - Southeast Gateway Group, along with Greening Greater Racine and the Clean Power Coalition, began the campaign with the full page ad show on page 8, which was printed in the *Racine Journal Times*. The Foxconn campus is expected to have an initial demand of 200 megawatts, six times greater than the next-largest manufacturing plant in the state.

GREAT WATERS GROUP

In 2018, the Great Waters Group accepted a grant to start a “Nearby Nature” program as part of a justice, equity and inclusion effort of Sierra Club Outdoors. Our goal is to build relationships and develop programs in urban neighborhoods affected by poverty and racial injustice. The target area is Milwaukee’s 30th Street Corridor and Lincoln Creek Greenway. Our principal success was setting up an environmental education program at three youth-serving agencies with the help of the Urban Ecology Center. Other initiatives included joining an Adopt-A-River program in the central city, organizing neighborhood cleanup efforts, supporting a campout for a summer youth employment program and backing Milwaukee’s “Complete Streets” initiative. We hope to continue working in the neighborhood to build relationships that will guide environmental justice work in years to come.

CHIPPEWA VALLEY GROUP

When President Trump announced his intention to pull the U.S. from the Paris Climate Accord in June 2017, local club members helped push the City of Eau Claire to step up on the local level in the absence of federal leadership on climate change. With assistance from the city’s Sustainability Advisory Committee, in March 2018 the Eau Claire City Council committed to 100 percent renewable energy and carbon neutrality by the year 2050, both for city operations and community-wide. In November 2018 the city accepted a \$180,000 grant from the Wisconsin Public Service Commission to create a Renewable Energy Action Plan. Locals interested in getting involved in the planning process can email organizers here: eauclairecan@gmail.com



GREEN REVIEW

Young Voices from Wild Milwaukee:

THE URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER AND ME

STORIES GATHERED BY GAIL GRENIER, HENSCHELHAUS PUBLISHING, INC., 2018, 220 PAGES (review copy provided by the publisher).

Young Voices from Wild Milwaukee offers personal tribute to the Urban Ecology Center (UEC) branches of Milwaukee from the people (mostly kids) who joined the UEC community of those who:

- “Provide outdoor science education for urban youth.
- Protect and use public natural areas, making them safe, accessible, and vibrant.
- Preserve and protect these natural areas and their surrounding waters
- Promote community by offering resources that support learning, volunteering, stewardship, recreation and camaraderie.
- Practice and model environmentally responsible behaviors.”

In their own words, 15 personal accounts narrate transformations from isolation, anger, or austerity to a richness offered and earned by joining a working community of kind environ-

mentalists acting for the natural and social community. These are not literary essays, yet the accounts absolutely captivate with their authenticity.

Shawn Office describes movement from anger and deprivation to connection to resources in Milwaukee that he had never experienced. Shocked that he could hang out for free at a UEC, he accessed his own ability to contribute to his neighborhood and world. He soon learned to kayak and became a volunteer, then a paid leader.

Katrina Young Harris came to the UEC by way of her sons. After being victimized by crime, she’d shut herself up in a rented home that she despised. Depressed and literally barricaded in a dark house, she couldn’t see a path to a better life, until the boys dragged her to the UEC. Eventually, she quit her job at a drugstore to work at the UEC. The center employees live and teach values, including growing and eating locally; Harris sees the connection to her own heritage and even shares her great-grandmother’s collard green recipe. The pride she feels in contributing to the community through her work for UEC rings loud on the page.

Each story includes surprising reaction to the kindness tandem to the environmental values alive at each branch. Members and participants not only learn to care for the natural world, they seem to extract the best in each other. The values in action create an alchemy that engages and shapes community. Grenier’s collected stories leave a lingering wish that every child and every neighborhood could be served by an UEC. Whether readers live near Milwaukee or not, they will likely feel the urge to support the Urban Ecology Center (<https://urbanecologycenter.org/>). This book oozes with love.

Amy Lou Jenkins is the editor of the new anthology *Corners: Voices on Change*. If you have a book for possible review, contact her through JackWalkerPress.com.

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A successful year of outings!

The chapter offered two Quetico trips this past summer. Janet Clear led the chapter's second women's trip looping from the south-central part of Quetico into beautiful Agnes Lake. There is a special camaraderie built on these women's trips and we hope to offer more in the future. This year's

group was ambitious and enjoyed paddling and portaging beyond what they had planned for the week. Highlights included a visit to Louisa Falls and the Agnes Lake pictographs. They enjoyed delicious meals including freshly picked blueberries and lake trout for dinner on a layover day.



For the seventh straight year, Nancy McDermott and Will Stahl led a fishing-oriented trip to Quetico. The group explored the east side of the park for the first time and went through the Falls chain to Kawnipi Lake. The fishing was excellent and the group enjoyed five delicious fish dinners of walleye and pike. In mid-August of 2019, Nancy and Will will lead another fishing trip in the northern part of Quetico starting at French Lake. The group will set the itinerary which will include a three-to-four night base camp for fishing. This area of the park has long east/west lakes and fewer portages.

Vicki Christianson and Nancy McDermott led the ever-popular women's trip on the Namekagon River in July 2018. In 2019, the trip will be in mid-September to enjoy cooler weather and fall colors. We will do the same route as usual (County Road K to Riverside), but the trip will be two nights (Friday-Sunday) instead of three. Plan to register early for this trip because it always has a waiting list. Visit sierraclub.org/wisconsin/outings-events for a list of 2019 trips and to register.

2018 TRIP REPORT – WOMEN’S QUETICO TRIP

Trips to the Quetico begin long before the paddle first hits the water. Often, trip planning for next year begins while we are still on the water the previous summer. What would we do differently? How can we replicate the best of the past, moving ever closer to our vision of “the perfect trip”? While we were still on the water in 2017, I was already thinking about “next year.” Here’s a walk through my trip planning year.

In February or March, I plan a route, arrange with an outfitter to pull permits for the summer trip dates, and advertise the trip in the newsletter and online. A few sign up, then a few more, and eventually a crew forms. Some are new to Quetico and need help finding the right boots or other gear. One of the fun parts of leading is getting to know people by email as their excitement builds for the trip.

Over the winter, many happy hours are spent scouring my basement stash of camping equipment and thinking about the nuts and bolts of the trip. I don’t want to be the leader who brought cooking pots but forgot about silverware, or a tarp but no ropes!

In early summer, menu planning takes shape. People love to eat food that tastes like home on trips, and that means bringing lots of home-dehydrated food. Home dehydrating isn’t hard, but it does take advance planning because you need to know every ingredient on your menu before you start dehydrating. My dehydrator hums away in the kitchen many nights in June and July, reducing green beans, applesauce, and even angel food cake to weird, crusty husks of their former glory.

A week or so before the trip comes food-prep day. Every meal for the week is assembled, vacuum sealed, and packed up in the food barrel. Three meals a day, for eight people, for eight days – almost 200 meals packed in one big barrel! This is when I know the trip is really happening. I pack and re-pack my personal gear. Weigh it once, twice, again – couldn’t I fit just one more thing in? No, the gear is already at the maximum allowed weight. Either swap that one more thing for something else, or do without.

Finally, it’s travel day. We pack all the gear in the cars, and drive all day to Ely wondering: what if I forgot something? Will the weather be OK? Will the group get along? Time to start letting go of the things you can’t control.

Then the first trip day dawns, sunny and warm. The water on the lake sparkles, inviting us to explore. We lay our maps in front of us and set a course. Dip our paddles in, again and again. Breathe in the blue of sky and water and green of pines. Stop for a while to watch tuxedoed loons dive, surface, watch us with their red eyes as we peer at them from our yellow canoes, glancing at each other in silent excitement. Today, in this moment, we pause. We are here, we are present, we are on the perfect trip. There is nowhere else we need to be. Soon, the first day of planning for the next trip begins.

Janet Clear
Outing Trip Leader



2019 OUTINGS

Take time to experience the outdoors with a trained outings leader. The JMC Outings program will again lead trips into the International Boundary Waters Wilderness area, including a paddle in the Wabakimi. Find out more and register at sierraclub.org/wisconsin/outings-events as we plan and post new opportunities. Look into all the offerings from the River Touring Section or any of the group outing offerings as well. Get out, explore, enjoy and help protect the outdoors by being an outdoor enthusiast!!

LEADERSHIP STARTS OUTDOORS

A critical aspect of conservation involves giving future generations the ability to explore and enjoy the outdoors, starting with places that deserve our respect and special protection. Become a John Muir Chapter Outings leader and help provide that opportunity! Contact your local Sierra Club group for information about outings leader trainings: sierraclub.org/wisconsin/local-groups.

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JOHN MUIR CHAPTER

754 Williamson Street
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CALENDAR

WEEKLY ON WEDNESDAYS

Enbridge Pipeline Video premiere
wisconsinsafeenergy.org

JANUARY 12

River Touring Section Annual Meeting
11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
First United Methodist Church, 615 Broadway St, Baraboo
Contact Kevin Olson: 608-963-2678, olsonfam44@centurytel.net

FEBRUARY 2

World Wetlands Day

FEBRUARY 8 - 10

WHA Garden Expo
Alliant Energy Center, Madison

FEBRUARY 19

Spring Primary Elections
myvote.wi.gov

MARCH 5

The Big Share, an online day of giving

MARCH 8 - 10

Canoeconopia
Alliant Energy Center, Madison

MARCH 22

World Water Day

VOLUME 57 / NUMBER 1 JANUARY - MARCH 2019

Algunos artículos del Muir View están disponibles en español.

Se sitúan en la red:

sierraclub.org/wisconsin/muir-view-newsletter

Select articles from The Muir View are available in Spanish. They are found online:

sierraclub.org/wisconsin/muir-view-newsletter

APRIL 2

Nonpartisan Spring Elections
myvote.wi.gov

APRIL 8

Conservation Congress Spring Hearings
dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc

APRIL 22

Earth Day

MAY 11

Statewide Day of Action for State Parks!
Contact kathryn.hogan@sierraclub.org for more information



OUR MEMBERS IN ACTION

Sierra Club members and our allies across the state released the report Arrive Together: Transportation Access and Equity in Wisconsin with six press conferences in one day! Thank you to everyone who helped make this a successful day.

On the left, Denise Jess of the Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired talks at the Madison press conference while Sierra Club members and other organizational allies stand in support.

On the right, the organizers of the Appleton press conference gather for a picture after a successful release!

