



# Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group  
JUNE 2019

*"The planetary slogan for the 21st century should be 'Faster Than Expected.'" - Bill McKibben*

## **NEXT MEETING: POTLUCK! 6 pm Tuesday, June 25 ROWE PARK SHELTER #2 Onalaska**

Join Sierra Club friends for food and fun at **6 p.m. on Tuesday, June 25 at ONALASKA'S ROWE PARK, Shelter #2**. From La Crosse, drive north on Rose Street (Hwy 35) to Onalaska. Turn right onto Oak Forest Drive (by the Kwik Trip). At the second intersection, turn left onto Hilltopper Drive and then stay right onto Park Drive. Continue to the large stone shelter at the top of the hill. The park is easily accessible from the interstate (La Crosse Exit 3 north to Onalaska) and from the north as well.

Please bring a dish to pass AND, TO REDUCE WASTE, PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN TABLE SERVICE - PLATE, UTENSILS, DRINKING CUP. Some beverages will be provided. Bring a guest! Contact us at [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com) or call 608-315-2693 with questions. (For a map of the park, visit <https://tinyurl.com/RowePk-Two> )

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## **Communicating about the Climate Crisis**

In April, Public Citizen reported that the national media is failing to cover the severity of the climate crisis. They found that in 2018, only 3.5 percent of segments mentioning climate change referred to it as a crisis or emergency. The situation improved temporarily at the beginning of 2019, but most segments, "merely discussed the hypothetical designation of climate change as a national emergency by a future president." Sign the petition demanding better reporting at [actionnetwork.org/petitions/call-it-a-climate-crisis](https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/call-it-a-climate-crisis). One positive change: the Guardian (UK) has updated its style guidelines and will now refer to "climate emergency, crisis or breakdown" and "global heating."

On Thursday, May 7, the Coulee Region Sierra Club and La Crosse People's Food Co-op co-sponsored a Green New Deal Town Hall in support of the Green New Deal Tour. The tour and town halls were organized by the Sunrise Movement. The group's next goal is to ensure that the climate crisis is a top issue in presidential candidate debates. Their #ChangeTheDebate initiative is encouraging debate watch parties on June 26 (Miami debate) and is asking those who can to attend the debates in Detroit on July 30 and 31. Read more at [sunrisemovement.org/changethedebate](https://sunrisemovement.org/changethedebate).

On Saturday, May 18, Casey Meehan, PhD, Director of the Sustainability Institute at Western Technical College led a TEDxUWLaCrosse salon program on talking about climate change. The event included two TED talk videos and a participant discussion. The TED talk by Per Espen Stoknes, "How to transform apocalypse fatigue into action on global warming," ([tinyurl.com/Per.Espen.Stoknes-ClimateTalk](https://tinyurl.com/Per.Espen.Stoknes-ClimateTalk)) gives clear, useful ideas for talking to others about the issue.

### **WATCHDOG**

What if reporters covered the climate crisis like Edward R. Murrow covered the start of World War II?

Studies continue to show that previous climate predictions have been too conservative, but governments and businesses are still planning expansion of drilling, fracking, plastic production, and even fossil fuel exports. Personal action is required, including talking with everyone we know. Climate activists are also ensuring the issue remains in the news by holding Climate Strikes, challenging fossil fuel supporting businesses at shareholders' meetings, personally divesting from fossil fuels, lobbying local and state governments to pledge local climate action (like Ready For 100 resolutions), and interacting with local media.

A world-wide Climate Strike is being planned for September 20. Keep up on that event and other Coulee Region group actions at our blog: [cr-sierra.blogspot.com](https://cr-sierra.blogspot.com).

**By Bill Moyers**

MAY 22, 2019

## Black River Family Canoe Camping Trip July 13-14

This kid-friendly trip is offered to encourage young families, adults with kids and the young-at-heart to join us on the water. We'll stop to play and explore, cook out and sleep in tents on a sandbar. There is NO CHARGE for the trip, but you must provide your own boat, gear, food, and transportation. Sign up by contacting co-leaders Kevin and Carol Olson: 608-356-8992 or 608-963-2678 or [olsonfam44@centurytel.net](mailto:olsonfam44@centurytel.net) or Pat and Bobbie Wilson at [pbwilson@centurytel.net](mailto:pbwilson@centurytel.net) or 608-788-8831. Online details at [tinyurl.com/wiscwater](http://tinyurl.com/wiscwater)



## Help Wanted! 🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋🙋

We are seeking members who live outside of the La Crosse/Onalaska area to submit a blog post and/or an article about an environmental or outdoor activity happening in your area of the Coulee Region. We can include your event in our calendar, note your issue in a blog post, include a report in our newsletter, or set you up as a regional correspondent for our blog site and monthly newsletter. Please email!

## Communications Update

This is one of four newsletters that we mail annually to members who don't receive electronic communication. Some people do not "do" online and for them, the paper newsletter is the only way to learn what the Coulee Region group is doing.

If you do use a computer and have an email address, consider that paper newsletters cost money, resources, and time spent by a few volunteers copying, collating, taping, labeling, transporting, and mailing.

**If you can switch to online only, PLEASE DO!** Email us at [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com) or call Pat at 608-788-8831 We'll send you one email per month, letting you know when the new newsletter is available. You can print your own hard copy if you need one.

Online resources include our Twitter account, [@CRSierraClub](https://twitter.com/CRSierraClub), web page, [www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee](http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee), and blog site, [cr-sierra.blogspot.com](http://cr-sierra.blogspot.com). Subscribe to the blog to get new posts automatically emailed to you. Our newsletter is published online every month at the blog site and is available to download from our web page.

## Ready for 100 Team Update

A resolution pledging a move to renewable energy in the city of La Crosse will be taken up this summer by the city council. The CRSC Ready for 100 teams will call upon city residents to show support at committee and council meetings when the schedule is finalized.

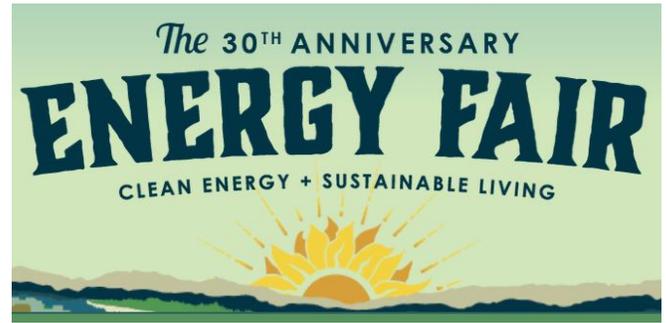
The Sustainable La Crosse Commission will work on a similar recommendation for La Crosse County. Other communities in the Coulee Region group are encouraged to start a Ready for 100 push. The John Muir Chapter Sierra Club and Wisconsin Conservation Voters plan to introduce a toolkit for communities this month. In the meantime, the Sierra Club's Ready for 100 site has many links, templates, and suggested actions. Read more at [sierraclub.org/ready-for-100](http://sierraclub.org/ready-for-100).

## Water Quality Task Force

Assembly Speaker Robin Vos' Task Force on Water Quality, a 16 member bi-partisan group, was launched in January, shortly after the Southwest Wisconsin Groundwater and Geology Study (SWIGGS) found high levels of contamination in Grant, Lafayette, and Iowa county wells. The task force is supposed to investigate and come up with solutions. They will hold hearings around the state. Groups, businesses and individuals may comment at the hearings or online. **We believe there will be a hearing in La Crosse on Thursday, June 13.** If you or your business, organization, family or neighbors are experiencing troubles because of contaminated or polluted ground or surface water, please plan to make a statement. If you plan to testify, please email [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com) so we can let the local organizer know. Keep up on the Task Force schedule and submit comments at [legis.wisconsin.gov/2019/committees/assembly/STF-WQ](http://legis.wisconsin.gov/2019/committees/assembly/STF-WQ)

## 30th Annual Energy Fair

The 30th annual Midwest Renewable Energy Fair will be held in Custer, Wisconsin (near Stevens Point) from June 21 through June 23. More than 250 workshops will be offered on renewables, jobs and businesses, government relations, new ideas, climate crisis, and more. CRSC member Pete Gruendeman will present on Photovoltaics for Domestic Hot Water at 10 a.m. on Saturday. This year's special programming will include a screening of the documentary, Solar Roots - The



Pioneers of PV and speakers, Rosa Clemente, Naomi Oreskes, Curt Meine and Bethany McLean. Vendors, activities, solar tours, tiny homes, demonstration vehicles, and more round out the full weekend of renewable education and motivation. Information about tickets and a schedule of workshops are available at [www.theenergyfair.org](http://www.theenergyfair.org).

**TRANSPORTATION:** Xcel Energy is sponsoring a free bus on Saturday from Eau Claire with a stop in Osseo at 7:15 a.m. (returns to Osseo at 9:30 p.m.) Sign up online at [www.theenergyfair.org/ec-bus-registration](http://www.theenergyfair.org/ec-bus-registration). In addition, the Energy Fair is hosting an online ride share tool to help connect those driving to the fair with those who need a ride ([share.TheEnergyFair.org](http://share.TheEnergyFair.org)) and there is a shuttle that runs regularly from lots in Stevens Point to the fair grounds.

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## June 1 - 8: Wisconsin Bike Week

The Wisconsin Bike Fed, in cooperation with dozens of state and local organizations and businesses, is sponsoring **Wisconsin Bike Week from June 1 through June 8.** ([bikeweek.wisconsinbikefed.org](http://bikeweek.wisconsinbikefed.org)) Many communities will host special rides, promotions and events to celebrate the wonderful bicycle - an efficient and clean method of transportation, a family friendly recreation vector, and a health-improving, fun, amazing way to spend time.

La Crosse is a hub for many activities which will kick off on June 1 with a Caledonia Street Block Party and continue with group rides, ride promotions, ride workshops, games and activities (see link for full schedule).



On **Tuesday, June 4**, you can **Ride with the Mayor**, a chance to see new infrastructure, learn about planned updates, meet up with other bicycle advocates, and talk with elected leaders and planners. This year's ride begins at Green Island Ice Arena (2312 7th St S) at 9:45 a.m. Everyone is welcome. On **Saturday, June 8**, a **Bicycle Benefits Ride** will introduce participants to "Bicycle Benefits" businesses in the city which offer discounts and benefits to those who arrive by bike and have a \$5 Bike Benefits sticker on their helmets. The ride starts at 1 p.m. at Cameron Park.

In addition, the annual **OPEN STREETS block party will be held on Sunday, June 9 from 1 to 4 p.m.** along Main Street from 9th Street to Fifth

Avenue South. The Coulee Region Sierra Club will have a table at this community event (if you would like to help staff the table please sign up at [tinyurl.com/crsc-openstreets19](http://tinyurl.com/crsc-openstreets19). 🚲

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## Program Ideas?

Our Sierra Club hosts four programs per year but we are interested in doing more if members wish. Do you have an idea for a program, speaker, film or field trip? If so, please contact us with more details. Right now we are looking for program ideas for our September meeting. We would especially welcome opportunities to connect outside of the La Crosse/ Onalaska area. Email us with your ideas!

**Boomerang Bags** ([boomerangbags.org](http://boomerangbags.org)) is a worldwide initiative to make reusable shopping bags from existing fabric items. If you would like to help start a La Crosse area bag-making group, please email [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com) (subject: bags)

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### **DATES TO REMEMBER! (see more at [cr-sierra.blogspot.com](http://cr-sierra.blogspot.com))**

**June 1-8: Wisconsin Bike Week** ([bikeweek.wisconsinbikefed.org/](http://bikeweek.wisconsinbikefed.org/))

**June 4: Bike with La Crosse Leaders** 9:45 a.m. Green Island Ice Area, 2312 7th St. S., La Crosse

**June 9: Open Streets Block Party** 1-4 p.m. along Main Street, La Crosse

**June 10: Monarchs & the Holland Sand Prairie, Part 1** 12:30 p.m. Holmen Public Library

**June 13: Water Quality Task Force Public Hearing** in La Crosse (details will be at [cr-sierra.blogspot.com](http://cr-sierra.blogspot.com))

**June 15: Monarchs & the Holland Sand Prairie, Part 2 (Guided Hike)** 10 a.m. W7781 Cty MH, Holmen

**June 18: UN Sustainability Goals**, 6 p.m. Southside Neighborhood Ctr, La Crosse ([tinyurl.com/laxparkbk](http://tinyurl.com/laxparkbk) p 36)

**June 21-23: Midwest Renewable Energy Association Energy Fair**, Custer, WI ([www.theenergyfair.org](http://www.theenergyfair.org))

**June 22: Prairie Pollinators Walk** 10 a.m. Borah Creek Prairie, 11949 Mt Ridge Rd, Fennimore

**June 25: CR Sierra Club summer picnic**, 6 p.m., Shelter #2, Rowe Park, Onalaska

**June 26 & 27: Democratic Presidential Primary Candidates' Debates**

**July 2: CR Sierra Club Highway Clean Up** 6 p.m. Pumping station near Gillette and River Vly Drive, La Crosse

**July 13-14: Sierra Club Kayak/Canoe FAMILY Outing** on the Black River ([tinyurl.com/wiscwater](http://tinyurl.com/wiscwater))

## **Beyond Natural Gas**

2019 is a critical year for Minnesota and Wisconsin as our states work together to grow renewable energy and reduce pollution from fossil fuels.

Dairyland Power in Wisconsin and Minnesota Power in Minnesota are asking regulators for permission to build a new fracked gas power plant in northern Wisconsin. Fracked gas is a danger to our health and environment across its entire life cycle, and it's a major source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The science is very clear that in order to mitigate the worst effects of climate change, we need to move toward 100% clean energy as quickly as possible, not invest in more fossil fuels.

Right now Wisconsin's Public Service Commission is accepting public comments and the Sierra Club is collecting petition signatures. Please take a few minutes to fight this fossil fuel plan. Visit [tinyurl.com/JMC-nogas](http://tinyurl.com/JMC-nogas)

## **Highway Cleanup**

Our summer cleanup of River Valley Drive will be on **Tuesday, July 2 beginning at 6:00 p.m.** Meet at the pumping station just northwest of the Gillette Street intersection. Vests, gloves, and bags will be provided. Consider applying bug and sun protection. For more info, contact Pat or Bobbie at 608-788-8831 or [pbwilson@centurytel.net](mailto:pbwilson@centurytel.net). **MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!** ♥