



# Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group  
**FEBRUARY 2017**

"Our national parks are a testament to the reality of climate change." - [www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/effectsinparks.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/effectsinparks.htm)



Please plan to join fellow Sierra Club members at the **PROGRESSTIVAL** on Saturday, February 4 from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Concordia Ballroom in La Crosse (1129 La Crosse Street). Entrance is by donation (\$0 - \$10 - no one turned away for lack of funds). In addition to lots of information and many opportunities to network and share ideas

with others in our community, there will be food and music. At 7:30 p.m. Mike McCabe, director of Blue Jean Nation (formerly director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign) will talk about a way forward.

As the Walker and Trump administrations work to remove a century of environmental and civil protections and programs, those of us concerned about a sustainable positive future must come together and plan a united front.

For more information, including a list of the many organizations and agencies tabling at the event, please visit [tinyurl.com/progresstival](http://tinyurl.com/progresstival).

Please attend the first annual **Citizen Water Lobby Day** hosted by the Sustain Rural Wisconsin Network on Wednesday, February 8. The event begins at 11 a.m. in the State Capitol. Organizations and grassroots groups will network and share ideas with others about water quality issues with speakers at 1 p.m. Arrangements are being made to meet with state legislators during the day.

According to organizers, "This event could quite possibly be the 'Game Changer' for water policy in Wisconsin. It is essential that we leverage this event to the fullest and demand elected officials sit up and take notice."

**FREE buses** will transport participants from various **Locations** (including La Crosse) but you **MUST** sign up immediately at [tinyurl.com/h2obus](http://tinyurl.com/h2obus)

More info at [tinyurl.com/wicwld](http://tinyurl.com/wicwld)



## Friends of the Blufflands

**Friends of the Blufflands First Annual Meeting** is on Wednesday, February 8 from 7 to 8 p.m. at Myrick Park Center. Come and find out about this newly formed group working with the City and County of La Crosse on implementation of their Bluffland Management Plans. The goal is to be a voice for people who value area blufflands for their environmental, scenic, and nature based recreation values.

## January Film and Discussion

**DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS, WE HAVE SUBSTITUTED A SHORTER FILM FOR THIS EVENT.** Sierra Club board member Bill Katra will host a film and discussion evening on **Tuesday, January 31, 2017 at 6 p.m.** We will show the new film from 350.org, **DISOBEDIENCE: The Rise of the Global Fossil Fuel Resistance** ([watchdisobedience.com](http://watchdisobedience.com)) This film is about 40 minutes long. We'll have discussion and refreshments (provided) after the screening. The address is 1008 Avon Street, La Crosse. You don't need to be a Sierra Club member to attend! RSVP please! [tinyurl.com/crscrsvp](http://tinyurl.com/crscrsvp)

Read more about the film at [watchdisobedience.com/](http://watchdisobedience.com/)

DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS?

Email us at [CRSierraClub@gmail.com](mailto:CRSierraClub@gmail.com)

## DATES TO REMEMBER!

- Tues., Jan. 31** - FILM & talk - **DISOBEDIENCE: Rise of Fossil Fuel Resistance** (open to all) - 6 pm (see p. 1)
- Wed., Feb. 1** - Sustainability Showcase - 7:30 to 10 a.m., Western TC ([tinyurl.com/sus0201](http://tinyurl.com/sus0201))
- Wed., Feb. 1** - Friends of the LaX Rvr Marsh Annual Meeting, 7 pm, Myrick Park Center ([tinyurl.com/folxrm](http://tinyurl.com/folxrm))
- Sat., Feb. 4** - PROGRESSTIVAL! 6 to 10 pm Concordia Ballroom, 1129 La Crosse St ([tinyurl.com/progresstival](http://tinyurl.com/progresstival))
- Wed., Feb. 8** - Friends of the Blufflands First Annual Meeting, 7 pm, Myrick Park Center ([tinyurl.com/folxbl](http://tinyurl.com/folxbl))
- Thur., Feb 16** - Best Habitat Practices for Driftless Region 6:30 pm Myrick Center ([tinyurl.com/laxpr0216](http://tinyurl.com/laxpr0216))
- Sat., Feb. 25** - La Crosse Parks & Rec Habitat Improvement Volunteer Day ([tinyurl.com/laxpr0225](http://tinyurl.com/laxpr0225))
- Tues., Feb. 28** - Club sponsored tour of eco features of UWL Student Center 7 pm [tinyurl.com/uwlstutour](http://tinyurl.com/uwlstutour)
- Sat., Mar. 5** - Coulee Region Climate Alliance 2nd Annual Climate Action Fair
- Tues., Mar. 28** - Coulee Region Sierra Club meeting (board elections) 7 pm, Ho-Chunk House, 8th & Main

## February Tour at UWL

On Tuesday, February 28, Sierra Club members and friends will have the chance to tour UWL's new student center with special emphasis on its sustainability features. The tour will begin at 7 p.m. Meet at the building's info counter. Parking in most campus lots is free after 7 p.m. The MTU #4 goes through campus as well. You don't need to be a Sierra Club member to attend! RSVP by February 20: [tinyurl.com/uwlstutour](http://tinyurl.com/uwlstutour)

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## Welcome, New Members!

The Coulee Region Group got 36 new memberships / 41 new members in December, and we hope that rate of new members will continue if President Trump's environmental policies continue to be as destructive as the first week's seem to be. Thank you all for joining the Sierra Club!

Megan Bain, Frances Ball, Dale Bernett, Lynette Dettinger, Steven Fisher, Paul & Bonnie Jancik, Heather Jett, JM Johnson & A Wandling, Joshua Krzych, Ed & Luke Schmidt in La Crosse; Connie Cardy, Susan Chace, Rock Riedle, Jeffrey Rolwes, Wayne Schambow in Platteville; Alex Aakre, Mike Holler, John Knecht, Gerald Weigel in Onalaska; Julie & John Marquardt, Pamela Taliafero, Jennifer Wastlick in Richland Center; Dave & Joy Fossum in Black River Falls; Louise Anderson - Holmen; Isabell Braun - Sparta; Janet Brown - Lone Rock; Marsha Ellefson - Ferryville; Mary Goodman - Sparta; William Howe - Prairie du Chien; Daniel Icenogle - Readstown; William Kappler - La Farge; Nick Mcaleer - Westby; Lyle Rognholt - Blue River; Sharon Schindler - Trempealeau; Bonnie Staff - Whitehall; Julie Stohr - Viroqua

## Transportation update

The Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau released a State Highway Program report this month that was critical of the Wisconsin DOT in many areas, as documented in the La Crosse Tribune Jan. 27 issue. The full report can be viewed at Legislative Audit Bureau Highway Report. Some of the criticisms were:

- \* The Wisconsin state highway system is deteriorating, and is in far worse condition than our closest six Midwestern states. Southwest Wisconsin has some of the worst roads in the state.
- \* The DOT did not take public opinion into account when determining the community input scores for the six of eleven potential major projects suggested to the Transportation Projects Commission in 2010 and 2014, though the guidelines require 50% of the score be based on public opinion.
- \* The DOT has not updated the cost estimates for Major Highway Projects based on inflation and other changing factors, resulting in estimates that are currently half of what they should be.
- \* The DOT has not consistently documented assumptions made when calculating traffic volume projections.

This report helps justify John Muir Chapter transportation goals of stopping unnecessary highway projects and using the money instead for improving mass transit and for maintenance and repair of our existing roads.

**Please consider running for the CR Sierra Club board!** We will produce a ballot in our (mailed) March newsletter, so those interested should email [CRSierraClub@gmail.com](mailto:CRSierraClub@gmail.com) by Feb. 20. Meet once per month (sometimes online).