

Measuring Success for our Utilities

If you have something important you need to accomplish, wouldn't you set a benchmark or goal for what you want to achieve? When something requires a major expenditure of time, money or effort, you want to know it will function well and meet all expectations. Completion is based on when you have reached that goal. That measure of success is 100%.

Climate change is a highly critical issue where we're slipping further behind where we need to be – 100% renewable energy now. Currently, we are heavily dependent on fossil fuels, relying *far* too much on coal and natural gas for electricity and heat. Our vehicles, agricultural equipment, and lawn tools are powered by gas and oil that comes from tar sands and other sources that use toxic extraction, shipping and refining processes. When burned, they cause further harm. At every stage, these fuels threaten human health and the stability of the planet.

With the urgency of our climate breakdown, we can't settle for partial resolution or slow action. We're already suffering from climatic effects which continue to worsen. We already have the technology and capabilities to replace all fossil fuels with efficiency and clean, renewable energy. We can't settle for being less than 100% clean. Yet MGE's Energy 2030 plan's goal could still leave us as a community with 70% dirty energy.

Knowing the need to go all out, have you ever heard a coach give an inspirational speech to a team before the big game, and say "Go out there, and give 30%!" What about a road crew who was building a bridge, got to the 30% mark, and said, "We're done"? Would you bake a cake for 30% of the time needed? How about an astronaut bragging that they made it 30% of the way to the moon?

Would you settle for 30%?

So why settle for a local utility such as MGE having a goal that would mean less than 1/3 of their energy would be renewable? And that's in 2030, which is still 13 years away. They currently have about 13% renewable energy. At a time when other states have much higher renewable energy standards, Wisconsin is stuck at a

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Chair's Column

Dave Blouin

Let me start off this issue of the Sierran with belated but hearty congratulations to Sierra Club Life Member and long-time local member-activist Don Ferber. Don has been elected Chair of our state John Muir Chapter and deserves our thanks for taking on a challenging and rewarding volunteer position guiding our state-level arm of the Club. Many local members know Don for his boundless energy and determination to work on our important conservation issues and goals. We're also lucky to have him stay on board with us on your Four Lakes Group Executive Committee. Thanks Don!

Your Four Lakes Group sponsored a bus to and from the Midwest Renewable Energy Association Fair again in June. Over 40 area Sierra Club members and supporters of clean and renewable energy kept dozens of extra cars off the road by riding the Fair bus. The Energy Fair is a fantastic annual event with

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educational workshops, hands-on demos, music, great food and more that imparts practical info about solar and wind systems, sustainable building practices, clean energy cars, local food production and much more. Watch for our bus next year and consider going if you haven't before.

We hosted a nice outing to see the Madison Mallards baseball team in early August. Four Lakes Group members attending included Erik Pettersen, Bill and Liz Wessel, and Phil Fransen and his family. We were treated to a perfect summer night and a win against the Kenosha Kingfish in extra innings. Please join us next year if you can.

I want to recognize two volunteers who have recently taken on big jobs for us: Rachel Margis who is helping with our social media profile and postings, and Mary Reames, a Beyond Coal team who is working with our Four Lakes Group as well. A big thanks to Rachel and Mary for keeping us up to date on the social media trends and helping our Group with our efforts!

We are already seeing the ramp up for the fall 2018 elections. Up first next year will be local municipal, county and other local elections. Members interested in Sierra Club political involvement are invited to join our Political Committee. Many candidates seek our endorsement, but only those who are strong environmental advocates receive Sierra Club approval. Once endorsed, we work to help elect these candidates so they can make a difference while in public office. Contact me to help the Sierra Club make a difference in our elections.

Please fill out your Executive Committee election ballot on page 7. The ballot includes two returning Committee members in Beverly Speer and me. You may also write in candidates as we need another committee member and are seeking strong and effective leaders interested in furthering the goals of the Sierra Club in southern Wisconsin. We are looking for people with a passion for the environment, and an ability to work with others to provide solutions and increase our capacity.

The Executive Committee is a working board and meets monthly though much of our work is conducted via email. Committee members are

expected to devote sufficient time and energy to accomplish our goals and are elected for two year terms. The Sierra Club is committed to seeking a diverse pool of candidates that is inclusive of geography, race, urban and rural interests, gender and age. Interested Club members are encouraged to apply. Please contact me at 608-233-8455 or burroak15@gmail.com if you are interested or wish to learn more.

See you on the trails!

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miserly 10%. Yet both California and New York, states with high populations, have goals of 50% renewables by 2030, and Hawaii 100% by 2045.

Further evidence of this shortfall is that many cities are either on 100% renewable power or have that as a goal. The City of Madison recently passed a resolution for the community to move to 100% renewable energy. For a utility that calls itself "Your Community Energy Company", shouldn't they be following suit to move to all clean energy? How can a utility brag that 13 years from now, they'll still be 70% dirty?

In 13 years, a 4th grader will have graduated from grade school, middle school, high school, and perhaps college, and be transitioning into a new life. In 13 years, MGE's proposal would just over double their renewable energy. At that rate, they will reach 100% renewables by 2084. What sort of future will that 4th grader have if other utilities or communities moved at MGE's snail's pace?

Fortunately there are youth of today who are receiving a real education and can speak to this concern. Just entering high school, student Maya Shaffer wrote "Being 30 percent right is still 70 percent wrong, and as any high school student like myself can tell you, that is not a passing grade."

If you won't settle for 30% renewable energy by 2030 that leaves us 70% dirty, no need to stay on the sidelines or keep silent. On page 7 of this newsletter, you will see some opportunities to speak up and help us move beyond coal, whether it be organizing in your neighborhood, or joining our campaign. Or contact our Beyond Coal Organizer, Devin Martin at devin.martin@sierraclub.org, to learn more.

Water Sentinels Update

In August, Water Sentinels participated in the First Unitarian Society's Service Saturday by leading two activities:

Storm drain labeling. Madison's storm sewers flow directly to the local lakes and streams carrying pollutants washed down the drain from our roads, sidewalks and landscapes. A small multi-age group labeled 35 drains and also delivered educational materials along the way, and engaged about ten neighbors directly about what goes down the drain.

Back Forty Mine and the Menominee River. The proposed Back Forty Mine project, currently in the permitting process, threatens the Menominee River. Menominee Nation's creation story starts at the mouth of the River and over 20 identified cultural sites lie within the project area including burial mounds, ancient gardens and village sites. In addition, over \$26 million has been invested in cleaning up the Menominee River which is showing signs of recovery.

Activists wrote letters supporting the Menominee Nation's request to remove the state of Michigan's permitting authority and place it with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers. We wrote a total of 13 letters on the Back Forty Mine project: 9 to Senator Johnson; 2 to Congressman Ryan; 1 to Congressman Pocan; and 1 to Senator Baldwin.

Dane County Parks and Open Space Five Year Plan

The Four Lakes Group submitted comments to the Dane County Parks Division regarding the next five year plan. The Four Lakes Group has a broad interest in the parks and open space lands of Dane County as natural resource protection areas, recreational/hunting areas, and as assets that enhance the quality of life and improve human and environmental health. Some of the highlights included:

- The plan needs to prioritize the role of these lands as natural resource areas and green infrastructure. We recognize that our parks and open spaces provide much more than recreational opportunities.
- The plan needs to include a goal that embraces the findings in the Dane County Racial and Equity Report.
- The Group supports improving transportation access to parks and open space lands. Public lands need to be accessible to people with disabilities and those who can or do not drive.
- Consider the impacts, positive and negative, of the parks and open space lands and uses on the County's climate change initiative. Identify and enhance transportation options that reduce the reliance on private automobiles. Recognize the role that parks and open space lands can play in creating carbon sinks and absorbing greenhouse gases.
- Continue to build on the youth education programs that have been launched throughout the county and look across the country for model programs that can be replicated.
- Provide additional intimate experiences with nature. Dane County Parks has done a great job providing mountain bike single tracks. Create more narrow hiking trails that can double as snowshoe trails in winter.

If you would like a copy of the comments that were submitted or would like to know more, contact Liz Wessel, lizard59sc@yahoo.com or 608.238.9934.

Outings Leaders needed

Nature nourishes us all and provides a place to restore and maintain our balance. If you have a love for nature and the outdoors, and would like to share it with others, being an outings leader is a great way to do that. Take a simple online leader training course and a first aid course (that we'll pay for), and co-lead an outing with an experienced leader, and you'll be set to go and share what you love with others. Contact Kathy Mulbrandon at kmulbrandon@gmail.com.

Fall/winter 2017 Outings

For all outings, wear weather and activity appropriate clothing, and good footwear. For work outings, wear work clothes and gloves. Bring fluids to drink, and a snack or food, and sunscreen, a hat, and insect repellent if needed. If carpooling, please be a little early. Please contact the leader to RSVP, if you have questions, or with concerns about weather or to cancel. Check the Four Lakes Group web site or Facebook page for updates or added events.

Leader Contact Info

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Alex Singer, alexcsinger@gmail.com or 608-395-1417

David Smith, smithdc75@yahoo.com or 608-233-1210

Saturday, October 28, 10 - 11:30 am – Bird and Nature Outing - Edna Taylor Conservation Park

Join a naturalist for an easy family friendly walk from the Aldo Leopold Nature Center into beautiful Edna Taylor Conservation Park and enjoy a bit of nature education along the way. Co-sponsored by Madison Friends of Urban Nature, Madison Audubon, and Aldo Leopold Nature Center. 330 Femrite Drive, park in the first lot on right, meet in the Aldo Leopold Nature Center lobby area. RSVP to Alex Singer.

Friday, November 3, 2017, 6 pm – Evening Hike on Ice Age Trail - Verona Segment

Enjoy a full moon evening fall hike north from the Military Ridge Trailhead through Badger Prairie Park traversing through prairies. Families welcome. Meet at the Verona Park & Ride adjacent to the Military Ridge Trail. From Madison, take Hwy. 18/151 to Verona exit 81, and turn left at the stoplight to the parking lot on Hwy PB. Bring a flashlight or headlamp. RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon.

Sunday, November 5, 1:30 - 3 pm – Bird and Nature Outing at Cherokee Marsh

Enjoy a family-friendly stroll on beautiful trails through Cherokee Marsh woodlands, wetlands and prairies along the Yahara River. A naturalist will provide a bit of nature education along the way. Co-sponsored by Madison Friends of Urban Nature, Madison Audubon

and Friends of Cherokee Marsh. 6098 N Sherman Ave, North Unit main parking lot at end of curved gravel entry road. RSVP to Alex Singer.

Sunday November 19, 1:30 - 3 pm – Bird and Nature Outing at Warner Park

Join a naturalist to learn about the wetlands, woods and prairie of Warner Park, and the birds and other creatures that call it home. This is an informal family-friendly nature walk around the scenic Warner Pond lagoon and across Castle Creek. Co-sponsored by Madison Friends of Urban Nature, Madison Audubon and Wild Warner. 2930 N. Sherman Ave, Rainbow Shelter by the Warner Pond lagoon. RSVP to Alex Singer.

Sunday, December 17th, 6:30 pm – Annual Winter Bonfire at Picnic Point

Join us for our annual celebratory Winter Bonfire to share good cheer and enjoy a crisp earlier winter evening with fellow Sierrans and other outdoor lovers. Bring beverages (warm or otherwise) and a snack to share (or something to roast on the fire), and stories to share or holiday songs, and we'll have a merry old time! Picnic Point is off University Bay Drive with free parking in the parking lot. Walk approximately 1 mile to the farthest fire pit #6. Wear a warm hat, gloves or mittens, and boots! RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon.

Saturday, January 6, 2018, 10:00 am – Snowshoe hike. Prairie Moraine County Park

Enjoy a snowshoe hike at Prairie Moraine County Park southeast of Verona. We'll snowshoe or hike through prairies and woods where you can enjoy Dane County's most visible section of the glacial terminal moraine. Families welcome. Take Hwy 18/151 southwest of Madison to exit 79 (Cty PB). Turn left on PB and go .7 miles south to Prairie Moraine parking lot on the left. Meet by the IAT kiosk. RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon.

Saturday, January 13, 2018, 2:30 - 4 pm – Bird and Nature Outing at Owen Conservation Park

Enjoy a bit of nature education on a naturalist led walk to learn about seasonal activities like nesting birds, prairies in bloom, fall leaves and winter tracks. This family-friendly hike through oak openings and restored prairies features easy trails and beautiful vistas overlooking Madison's west side. Co-sponsored by Madison Friends of Urban Nature, Madison Audubon and Owen Conservation Park supporters. 6021 Old Sauk Road, main parking lot at end of entry road. RSVP to Alex Singer.

Cruisin' for Cuisine

Cruisin is a casual dinner group that meets monthly at a locally owned Madison area restaurant. We order off the menu, everyone gets their own check, and non-members are welcome to join us. This fall's selection includes some new spots on the Madison dining scene, so we hope you will join us! Please RSVP to the leader at least 2 days prior to dinner for the meeting time.

Wednesday, November 8 – Fuegos – 904 Williamson St.

This fine new eatery features a varied menu with innovative tapas and more that caters to vegetarians, vegans and carnivores alike. They especially showcase locally grown and organic ingredients. RSVP to Janine Melrose.

Thursday, December 14 – Bandung – 600 Williamson St (in the Gateway Mall)

This noted Indonesian restaurant is a long time favorite for those who appreciate southeast Asian cuisine. It has a casual atmosphere and reasonable prices, and features house-made tempeh. RSVP to Lacinda Athen.

Wisconsin Youth Network

If you're despairing about our directions, many of today's youth are more active than ever in creating a sustainable future and a just world. The article "Measuring Success for our Utilities" on page 1 provides an example of a young person who is impacting her and our future. But there are many more, as the Wisconsin Youth Network (WiYN) can attest, who are providing hope for us all.

Led by Cassie Steiner, The Chapter's PR and Outreach Associate, WiYN is off and rolling in a big way with members from a number of college campuses, including 10 of 13 UW campuses. They also have high school students who are involved as well in helping determine what they want their future to look like.

At a recent statewide meeting 35 attendees ranging from 13 - 24 years old camped just north of Green Bay. They held learning sessions on a number of topics, and developed plans for two different campaigns, one on energy democracy called Seize the Grid, and the other on resisting oil pipelines.

You can find WiYN on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinYouthNetwork/>, or contact Cassie Steiner at cassandra.steiner@sierraclub.org to find out more about joining this group of young activists.



Four Lakes Group Sierra Club Contacts

<http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/four-lakes>

Like us on Facebook

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The Enbridge fight carries on

The good and bad news is that there is much uncertainty as to the future of Enbridge's tar sands pipelines. While it's likely the flow in current Line 61 from Superior to Delevan will increase to 1.2 million barrels per day based on completing the Dane County pump station, the fate of a potential future twin pipeline, Line 66, is far more uncertain.

Depending on what statements Enbridge makes where and when, even their intent to build Line 66 is in question. However, aside from telling their shareholders they intend to build it, that they obtained eminent domain to take land, and that they've made some landowner contacts, they have not applied for any permits and claim they currently have no plan to build it.

Equally suspect is that they are applying for permits in Minnesota, which would increase the flow of tar sands oil to Superior. That begs the question, what will they do if they can get more tar sands to Superior. There is little added capability to move oil through rail or via ships – plus they wouldn't profit from those means of shipment. But challenges in Minnesota means approval is not at all certain there.

More challenges

In addition, the current Line 5 from Superior to Michigan is incurring challenges to its continued operation. The Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians in northern Wisconsin voted not to renew an easement and want the line removed. The state of Michigan is also scrutinizing the risks to the Straights of Mackinac from the eroding 64-year old pipeline. An under water spill there would be extremely problematic and potentially put Lakes Michigan, Superior and Huron at risk.

Even if the Minnesota pipeline expansion does occur, or if line 5 were to be shut down, Enbridge doesn't control the price of oil. While Enbridge could care less directly – they make their money by transporting oil – it makes a difference to Canadian tar sands producers. Tar sands oil is very costly to extract and process (let alone highly carbon intensive), and if the price of a barrel of oil stays low or drops further, extracting and processing it

may become even less economically viable. No supply, no transport.

Plus, cars and other motorized equipment are quickly moving to electrification as battery technology improves and becomes cost effective. Sales of battery-powered lawn mowers for instance, are growing rapidly. Electric motors don't pollute, are quieter, and have lower operating costs. No wonder they're taking off! But, along with the concerns over fossil fuels and climate change, it also spells a significant reduction in demand for gas and oil.

It's not only Enbridge and the tar sands producers who are worried. Some major investment firms are refusing to invest in companies that do not acknowledge climate change in their operations, and many investment companies and banks are no longer willing to incur the risks of further investments in fossil fuels.

Taking action here

We're not waiting for outside forces or events to make any decisions for us. Together with 350 Madison and the WiSE (Wisconsin Safe Energy) Alliance, we're continuing to organize along the pipeline with communities and landowners to push back on Enbridge. Wood County even passed a resolution opposing eminent domain for Enbridge!

If you live or have property along the pipeline, or know someone who does, please let us know. Or if you just care about ending our use of one of the worst climate disrupting fossil fuels, and protecting our precious Wisconsin rivers and landscapes, please consider joining our team. Contact Elizabeth Ward at elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org.

Environmental Reporter

We looking for people to track and report what is going on in your county or community in the Four Lakes Group area, so we and our members are aware of what's occurring in our region. Whether it's a CAFO, runoff problems from agricultural or urban areas, drinking water concerns, clean energy developments, or something else, keeping us informed helps us help you. Contact Don Ferber at d_ferber@sbcglobal.net.

Four Lakes Group 2016 Executive Committee Election Ballot

Please read the candidate statements for election to the Executive Committee and select your choices by putting an "X" before the name. Select up to two candidates. If your ballot is not from a Four Lakes Sierran mailed copy, please write your membership number on the back. Only ballots with active membership numbers will be valid, so please cut the portion of the back page with your name and number on it. Please mail ballots to: Lacinda Athen, 4909 Sherwood, Madison, WI 53711 by December 1, 2017.

Voter 1: Dave Blouin Beverly Speer

Write In _____

Voter 2: Dave Blouin Beverly Speer

Write In _____

Candidate's statements

Dave Blouin

This year marks 24 years of activism by me in the Sierra Club that began in 1993 with activism opposing the Crandon mine proposal. I served on the Four Lakes Group and John Muir Chapter Executive Committees in the 1990's. I continue to serve as Political Committee Chair to both entities as well as Mining Committee Chair for the Chapter. In an effort to revitalize our local activism, I became Four Lakes Group Chair in 2010. I'm proud of the work that we're doing locally and wish to continue the progress we've made and tackle new challenges in 2015.

Beverly Speer

I have been a member of the Sierra Club for more than 25 years. I have served in a leadership capacity at the local and state levels off and on since 1992. I am particularly interested in resource recovery. I am chair of the Dane County Solid Waste and Recycling Commission and have been involved with the Four Lakes Group's efforts to encourage and enable waste reduction and recycling out in the community through the group's Recycling Away from Home initiative. As a member of the executive committee, I need to do a better job of helping the group seek input from members and community organizers on ways to recruit new local volunteers and leaders to secure its purpose and viability. I will also continue to encourage that the Sierra Club remain committed to building democracy, open government and getting the influence of moneyed interests out of politics.

Beyond Coal – What you can do

- The City of Madison is holding meetings to get your feedback on their goal to move to 100% renewable energy. It's your opportunity to tell the City what you would like to see them do, and that they need to create a plan for the entire community, not just city operations, to be fossil fuel free.
- Join our merry band of Beyond Coal volunteers to help organize events, people, media and communications, outreach, or other roles. From youth to retirees, all ages and skills accepted. We generally meet every other Thursday at 7 pm at 754 Williamson St.
- We are asking neighborhood associations, businesses and other organizations to sign a climate pledge asking MGE to get off coal and move to 100% renewable energy. We'll give you talking points to take to any entities you think might be interested. Or provide us with contact info for us to talk with them.
- Are you in another community with another utility you think isn't moving fast enough to renewable energy? Contact us to talk about how we can help you to take action and organize citizens in your community.
- Is your community engaged in renewable energy or energy savings efforts? Can you attend meetings to let us know what's occurring? By collaborating and sharing ideas, together we can make progress.

For more information, contact Don Ferber at d_ferber@sbcglobal.net, or Devin Martin at devin.martin@sierraclub.org.



FourLakesGroup Sierra Club

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<http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/four-lakes>



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Newsletter Mailing

Our goal is environmentally friendly, cost effective communication with our members. Our primary modes of communication are this newsletter, the Four Lakes Enews and our web site. We mail a hard copy if we don't have your email or you request one. Otherwise, members receive an email letting you know when the newsletter is available to download.

Please consider sending your email address to d_ferber@sbcglobal.net if we don't have it to save paper and the cost of mailing. Plus we can also send you our Enews to keep you better informed.

RAH for our RAH team!

The Sierra Club, Four Lakes Group completed a very successful weekend recycling effort at the Orton Park Festival, August 25 – 27, ensuring that all recyclable materials ended up at the recycling center, with only waste going to the landfill. Our **Recycling Away from Home (RAH)** team's work was exemplary as they checked and sorted materials as needed, and then hauled full bags to the dumpsters for the City to take to the appropriate place.

We received many thanks from attendees as well as the gratitude of the Orton Park Festival organizers who recognized the contribution we make to their neighborhood festival – a festival that provides funds for the Wilmar Neighborhood Center that so many in the Marquette neighborhood and beyond benefit from.

Thanks to Gretta, Erik, Susan, Lynn, Terry, Larry, Joanne, Billy, Luke, Judi, Mary, Jesse, Andy, Bruce and Karen for their great work at the Festival. Thanks also to the organizers and Wilmar for making sure our volunteers stayed hydrated and fed.

But we didn't rest on our laurels. We ended the festival season in style by taking on the Willy St Fair, September 16 & 17. This is a bigger festival, especially on Sunday, but our volunteers were up to the task. Much gratitude to Gretta, Erik, Larry, Judi, Mary, Jesse, Alex, Cathie, Judy, Kirsten, Brian, Scott, Kris, Ben, and Nadine for staying on top of the recycling at this busy event.