



The Newsletter of the Four Lakes Group Sierra Club Summer 2016

The Climate Change Imperative

No time like the present

Madison Gas & Electric’s community engagement process has been underway for nearly a year in Madison, and was capped off with a Community Energy Workshop on April 19 with a wide range of leaders from the community. Given the central issue is our energy future and its impacts, a focus on climate change is notably missing.

In a community such as Madison, shouldn’t that matter? We know the bad news – climate change is here now. However, the good news is many communities and utilities elsewhere in this country are showing great leadership by taking strong proactive steps to move away from fossil fuel to clean energy solutions.

The convergence of so many international leaders in Paris for the Climate Accord reflects the urgency that dramatic action is needed to forestall a future that could otherwise have our descendants asking, “Why didn’t you do more?” These leaders recognized that we have a shared responsibility to people and the planet to take immediate and decisive action now.

Pope Francis has also been very clear about the moral imperative to take swift and dramatic action to slow down and reverse our deadly atmospheric emissions. It is in good part the poor in underdeveloped countries who contributed least to climate change who will be the

most impacted by those far richer who have used the atmosphere as a waste dump for their emissions. To create justice and share in a brighter future, and for those who stand to lose their home or even country, Pope Francis has called on us to act now.

The right stuff

The cry for clean energy has been heard by many of our communities to do the right thing, not only for the planet, but for their customers. Aspen, CO, Burlington, VT, and Greensburg,

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Chair’s Column

Belated Happy Earth Day to everyone! I hope you were able to take part in the many events that both celebrate Earth Day but also to learn more about the many ways that we can help protect our precious environment. I’m proud that the Sierra Club leaders and members continuously work to help bring those opportunities to the public via our outings, presentations, and activism.

We have a busy summer planned so please check the calendar in this issue and check our website (4lakes.org) regularly.

We’re partnering again this year with the Madison Mallards for a Conservation Night benefit on Monday, August 8. The Mallards baseball team and management emphasize making the games a fun and entertaining night out.

This will be a great opportunity to meet some fellow members and to help raise some needed funds for work on our priority issues. Your \$15 ticket supports our fund-raising plus you get admission to the game v. the Willmar (MN) Stingers and a Mallards ball cap. The year’s outing will be much bigger as we’re joining with the River Alliance of Wisconsin, Madison Audubon Society, Natural Heritage Land Trust, and Gathering Waters for the

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KS, already get 100% of their electricity from renewable energy. They are making a clear statement that our future depends upon all of us taking action to care for our community and our shared future.

Other communities, including some major cities, are following suit with plans to get off fossil fuels. San Jose, CA's goal is 100% renewables by 2022, and San Diego plans to achieve the same by 2035. Even in a state known for fossil fuels and conservatism, Georgetown, TX is on track to reach that goal in 2017. Austin plans to get to 100% renewables by 2030.

Entire states are getting on the bandwagon too. California and New York have goals of 50% renewables by 2030, Vermont 75% by 2032, Hawaii 100% by 2045, Maine 40% by 2017, and Colorado 30% by 2020. By comparison, Wisconsin sits at a paltry 10% as of 2015, with no further goals planned.

Where do we go from here?

Forward looking communities are taking responsibility for their role in climate change, and creating a sustainable climate that rewards customers for saving energy, provides good jobs in solar and energy services, and attracts businesses with renewable energy. They realized that we created this problem, and we are responsible for resolving it.

What will it take to manage emissions and keep climate change in effect? According to scientists, the emission reduction goals from the Paris Climate Accord are only half what is needed if we are to keep climate change to 2° Celsius – more than the stated 1.5° goal. With the U.S. goal being ~ 28% emission reduction in 9 years, to meet the 2° limit means our goal should be a ~ 60% reduction by 2025.

Madison prides itself on being a leader. Yet, where is MGE? Their goal from the Energy 2030 plan is 40% reduction by 2030 from 2005, or another 20% from current levels. 20% equates to ~ 1/3 of what the U.S. needs to do in 9 years, not 14. Further, this reduction is only for electricity, not natural gas for heating. With MGE's stated desire to be a utility of the future, this seems more mired in the past.

Our local communities hardly have more progressive goals. Madison's once laudable aim of 80% emission reduction by 2050 lacks specific measures. Monona, Middleton and Fitchburg are also far from having strong goals tied to solutions. Our local renewable energy goals pale in comparison to leading communities elsewhere, with MGE proposing by 2030, and our local cities goals of 25% by 2025. Only Dane County may perhaps currently be charting a path that will create goals consistent with the climate change mandate.

Madison, Dane County, and beyond, have many challenges. These challenges pale in comparison to what we all face if we do not act responsibly on climate change. We have one planet and are one species whose fate is tied to being accountable to our common interests. In a state whose heritage includes John Muir, Aldo Leopold and Gaylord Nelson, this is a lesson that should not be lost on us.

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National Park Service Centennial Celebration



August 6 John Muir Park Marquette County

Perhaps John Muir's 3 days alone with President Theodore Roosevelt at Yosemite in 1903 laid the foundation, but in 1916 President Woodrow Wilson signed the act creating the National Park Service (NPS). 100 years later, we'll fittingly celebrate that centennial at the site of Muir's boyhood home in Marquette County.

We invite you to come get the glad tidings of the place that stimulated Muir's early love of nature. While perhaps not as wild as in Muir's time, the spirit of Muir lives on in that special place that now includes a portion of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, and has been trodden by many since Muir was last there.

In 2011, NPS' *A Call to Action* beckoned us to plan towards the 2016 centennial and reflect on our heritage and accomplishments. We can now look forward to the next 100 years of connecting people to nature.

For more info on the event, watch our 4 Lakes or Chapter web sites or go to <http://www.johnmuir.org/wisconsin/>.

See you at Muir Park August 6!

Enbridge Spilleth Forth!

The Wrong Path

Can't we leave fossil fuels in the ground, put solar panels and wind turbines in the air, and retain a livable planet for future generations? Enbridge's answer is NO! In addition to increasing the flow of toxic sludge in tar sands line 61 that puts people and our precious lands and waters at risk, they are still planning new and expanded pipelines in the Midwest, including a new line 66 in Wisconsin.

It's not like Enbridge doesn't know better. At a time when renewable energy has become cost competitive (even without externality costs), and is what people want, and our future demands, the vast majority of their investments – \$40 billion – is in dangerous fossil fuels. Renewable energy creates a sustainable future for the economy, not just for people and the planet. Innovation, renewable energy and energy reduction measures create far more jobs than fossil fuels.

Awareness of the dangers is not new. A recent Guardian report revealed that the petroleum industry knew as far back as 1968 of climate risks from fossil fuels. Since 1981, Exxon Mobil has spent millions of dollars – at our expense – to deny what they knew then. Apparently Enbridge's interests in green only extend as far as their wallet, not to the planet.

Sludging On

The Sierra Club, 350 Madison and the Wise (Wisconsin Safe Energy) Alliance are continuing to oppose Enbridge and stop tar sands expansion and the pipeline. Enbridge sued Dane County to rescind their pipeline environmental liability insurance requirement even though the subsequent state law prevents County enforcement. Meanwhile, nearby landowners are suing Enbridge to have the requirement enforced. A judge decided to combine the two cases, which will likely be heard this July.

Though Republicans supposedly champion local control, our state legislature abandoned this, providing Enbridge eminent domain authority to take private landowners property for line 66. (Eminent domain is based on a public interest – but the added product is only for use overseas. Should we put our families and lands at risk for the sake of Enbridge's profits?)

Despite Enbridge's efforts to assuage concerns by offering some communities safety trinkets to serve understaffed emergency response personnel, alarm is growing as people see through their slick PR offerings. People continue to understand that we have a common

interest, a right to clean air, water and land, and to a safe future rooted to the Wisconsin we love, and landowners, communities and Native American tribes are up in arms over Enbridge's proposed plans.

Plugging the Pipeline

Fossil Free Midwest is planning a May 15 rally in Whiting, IN as an opportunity to show solidarity for keeping fossil fuels in the ground. Watch for other actions and events that occur from time to time where you can learn more or show support.

Do you own land along the pipeline or know someone who does? Are you concerned about the waterways that could be impacted by a pipeline spill, or have a connection to natural areas the pipeline runs through? There are many reasons the pipeline can impact you or others you know, or activities or areas you enjoy. Sharing your concerns and raising your voice is an important part of shedding light on the risks.

We urge you to get more involved locally in our pipeline opposition efforts. Thanks to the great leadership of Elizabeth Ward, and many dedicated volunteers, we are making real headway in coalition with our partners. But we need yours and many more voices to head off Enbridge's threats, especially as we face their plans to build line 66 in Wisconsin.

Four Lakes Group Sierra Club Contacts

on the web: [www. http://4lakes.org](http://4lakes.org)

Like us on Facebook

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Spring Summer 2016 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

Lacinda Athen, lacinda.athen@gmail.com or 608-274-7870

Don Ferber, d_ferber@sbcglobal.net or 608-222-9376

Kathy Mulbrandon, kmulbrandon@gmail.com

Saturday May 14, 9 am - noon – Streambank Restoration on the Sugar River

Join Trout Unlimited to remove invasive vegetation on a new Sugar River property acquired recently by Dane County. Learn why this property was acquired, how it will serve Dane County residents, and about the habitat and restoration efforts planned. Tools and training provided. From Madison, take Hwy 18/151 west to Hwy 69 south of Verona. Take Hwy 69 south for ~ 4.5 miles to Ann St, just before Henry Rd. Parking area will be on the right. Contact Don Ferber for more info.

Tuesday, May 17, 6:30 pm – Evening Hike, Ice Age Trail-Verona

Join us at 6:30pm for an easy 4 mile hike through mostly prairie on the Ice Age Trail in Verona. This is an out and back route with option to add on additional length. If the weather cooperates, we should be hiking with a lovely moonlight. It's a great time to learn about prairie plants and see the prairies and woods in bloom pre mosquitoes. Take Hwy PD (McKee Rd) west of Verona Rd toward Hwy M. The parking lot is on the left just past the High Point Rd stoplight, near the top of the hill on the south side of PD. Bring a flashlight or headlamp. Contact Kathy Mulbrandon for more info.

Saturday, June 11, 10 am – Devil's Lake State Park Rim Hike



Take the scenic rim hike around both the east and west bluffs that surround Devil's Lake. Learn about the powerful plate tectonics, volcanism and massive glaciers that shaped Devil's Lake over the last 2 billion years. The hiking varies from easy to moderate with some rocky, steep and potentially slippery trails with an elevation change of ~ 600 feet. Meet at 10 am at the South Shore parking lot by the concessions. At Devil's Lake, take the S. Lake Rd. entrance off Hwy 113. A state park sticker or day pass is required for cars. Dogs allowed on leash. RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon.

Tuesday, June 14, 6:30 pm – Nighttime Hike, Ice Age Trail University Ridge Golf Course

Join us for a 3-mile hike on a unique section of the Ice Age Trail. The hike begins at the Ice Age Junction and goes northwest through the UW golf course. We'll probably use a shuttle to make this a one-way hike. Take Hwy PD west off Verona Rd. The parking lot is on the south side of PD just past High Point Rd. Bring a flashlight or headlamp. Contact Kathy Mulbrandon for more info.

Tuesday, June 28, 5:30 - 8 pm – Dinner at Sala Thai and music at Olbrich Gardens

An evening of dining and delight. Enjoy some of the best Thai food in Madison and then luxuriate at Olbrich Gardens for the acoustic blues and rock of Award-winning vocalist Sena Ehrhardt and guitarist Cole Allen. RSVP to Don Ferber.

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Growing Power – Conserving space and water, maximizing food and satisfaction

Liz Wessel, Water Sentinels

As you walk into the greenhouse space, the first thing that hits you is the warmth and the second is that plants are growing everywhere in all sorts of containers. The first greenhouse contains microgreens and sprouts. Sprouts can be found in hundreds of trays and to maximize space are stacked upon one another until the small plants need more space to grow.

The floors, lined with wood chips, also have pots and the pots are planted with small lettuces, arugula and other edible greens that you might want in a fresh salad. As you move further into the complex, you find the simple elegance of the fish production. Fish “beds” stretch along the bottom level and gravel beds above grow water cress. Growing Power currently raises tilapia and yellow perch for market. By looping the water through the system, water is conserved and nutrients are reused. And pots as well as mushroom bags hang from the frames for the fish culture and from the roof.

Outside you are introduced to the secret weapon for much of the productivity in the operation, the worm beds. The worms eat through a variety of waste including the mash from local breweries. Steam rises from this living pile of compost. Chickens have their own hoop house and eat the remaining germ and stem from the trimmed sprouts. Goats eat a variety of by products from the site and other recovered products.

And all of this exists as well as a retail store and summer plant market on the 3 acre site that Will Allen found on the north side of Milwaukee. It was the last site zoned for agriculture within the city of Milwaukee.

On Saturday March 19th, twenty Sierrans, Unitarians and friends dressed in layers of coats and even hats and gloves arrived at Growing Power for a tour of the urban farm. Participants enjoyed the greenhouses where the ambient temperature supported good conversation, lots of questions and of course lots of food products. Some of us left with food but all of us left with a much greater appreciation and admiration for Growing Power’s leadership and innovation in urban agriculture.

Growing Powers primary goals:

To support the development and sustainability of community-based food systems

To offer hands-on training and technical assistance in sustainable agricultural techniques

To develop Community Food Centers

For more information:

<http://www.growingpower.org/>

New Dane County Solar/Renewable Energy project

The Four Lakes Group commends Dane County for its new 222 kw solar project at the Highway Garage/Medical Examiner buildings on County Hwy AB. It will also take advantage of waste heat from the landfill’s electricity generated from methane, making that a more efficient co-generation plant.

Dane County will now be home to the two largest municipal-owned solar installations in Wisconsin, and a leading edge renewable energy powered co-generation plant. The landfill also generates natural gas that powers many county vehicles. These are win-win-win projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, provide cheap power and heat, and provide cost efficient public services to taxpayers.

Dane County is showing the leadership our community values in moving off of coal as quickly as possible to stop the worst effects of climate change and ensure clean air and water. This project triples Dane County’s solar capacity, and the co-generation project will help move us off coal.



Mark Redsten, Clean Wisconsin, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi, Tyler Huebner, Renew Wisconsin, at new Dane County facility.

Chair's Column – continued from page 1

Conservation Night benefit for all of our organizations. Buy tickets today by going to our website and join in the fun!

We're busy making plans for more public education on important issues via regular tabling at the Farmers Market and other events this summer. The Recycling Away From Home (RAH) will continue to divert wastes from our landfills at area outdoor festivals and concerts. Your help is needed at these fun events; please contact our tireless organizer and conservation chair, Don Ferber for more information or go to our 4lakes.org website.

We held our annual Volunteer Recognition event at the downtown Madison Brocach Pub and Restaurant back February. We reviewed the successful campaign work from the previous year and hope we motivated many of you to help continue and build on that work throughout this year. The Recognition event is a fun mix of social outing and activism just like the fall Volunteer Kickoff and the Cruisin' For Cuisine Dinner series hosted by our own Lacinda Athen. We'd love to have you join in any of these events to meet fellow member activists and learn more about our work.

It will not have escaped anyone's notice that 2016 is a major election year for state and federal elections and members interested in Sierra Club involvement in the political process are invited to help out by joining our Political Committee. The Sierra Club endorsement is an important honor sought after by many candidates and only those who are strong advocates for the environment will receive Sierra Club approval. Once endorsed, we work to help elect these candidates so they can make a difference in public policy. Please contact me if you're interested.

Finally, I'm pleased to report the results of our 2016 Executive Committee elections. Erik Pettersen, Don Ferber, and Liz Wessel were each elected to the two-year terms. The Executive Committee generally meets once a month and is responsible for oversight of the activities of members and committees of the Group. We're always interested in your input and feedback and also recruiting members interested in serving on committees including the Executive Committee.

Midwest Renewable Energy Fair bus – June 18



Hopefully you already have the Midwest Renewable Energy Association's Energy Fair from June 17 - 19 on your calendar.

If not, please do so. Each year, the Fair provides a wealth of knowledge not only on renewable energy and efficiency for your home or business or car, but it offers a huge range of workshops with opportunities to live green and be sustainable.

Special keynote speakers this year include Director of Democratic Energy, John Farrell, and political-financial expert, Nomi Prins. More information on the Energy Fair can be found at <https://www.theenergyfair.org>.

Thanks to our Four Lakes Group sponsored bus, keeping your carbon footprint low in getting there and back is easy. We provide a great option to ride in the comfort of a luxurious Van Galder bus on Saturday, June 18 and enjoy the Fair for the day. Sign up for the bus at <http://vols.pt/L88Shg>. No charge, but donations are much appreciated!

The bus schedule is as follows:

- 7 am - leaves from Willy St Coop West, 6825 University Ave in Middleton. Riders should find street parking and not park in the lot.
- 7:15 – pick up at the Hilldale parking ramp entrance (park on the top floor) opposite the Great Dane
- 7:30 am – pick up at the UW Chazen Museum, University Ave
- 7:45 am – pick up behind Hawthorne Library at 2707 Hermina
- 8:30 am – optional pick up in Portage
- 6:15 pm – leave MREA to return to Madison. Will be at Willy St West Coop at ~ 9 pm.

Outings, continued from page 4

Sunday, July 17, 10 am - 3 pm – Summer Soiree and Picnic at Mendota County Park

Join the Four Lakes crew for our annual summer outing and picnic. Bring your swim suit or a boat to paddle. Grill items and refreshments are provided for the picnic, but please bring a side dish or dessert to share. RSVP to Don Ferber.

10 am – Park clean up

Noon – Picnic

Saturday, August 6 – 7 am – 4 pm – National Park Service Centennial Celebration

John Muir Memorial Park, Marquette County
(See article on page 2)

Monday, August 8 – Mallards baseball game, Warner Park, 7 pm



It's Conservation Night at the Duck Pond! Join the Sierra Club, Madison Audubon, Gathering Waters, Natural Heritage Land Trust and the River Alliance to help promote conservation in

our state. You'll be amongst friends to enjoy an evening with the Mallards. Your \$15 ticket includes a Mallards cap, and \$5 will go to support the above organizations. Go to mallardsbaseball.com, click Buy Tickets in the upper right corner, enter "conservation" in the promotions box, and then buy your tickets that you can pick up at the Will Call window. Questions? Contact Don Ferber.

Cruisin' for Cuisine

Thursday, May 26, 6:30 pm - Kabul, 540 State St

Another highly requested dinner spot from our Fall Dining Survey, we'll check out Kabul's new 2nd floor location above State Street. After losing their previous location, the venerable Afghan restaurant is thriving across the street. Join us for conversation and an exciting meal! RSVP to Lacinda at 274-7870 or lacinda.athen@gmail.com to reserve a spot.

Cruisin' usually takes a break for the summer, but to get your name on the list for future gastronomic adventures, or if you would like to lead any such outings, email lacinda.athen@gmail.com.

Climate Change – continued from page 2

For a better world

If we are to leave a better world for our children and our children's children, we must demand that our leaders and our energy company stand up for our community and our values. To help enable this future, please consider the following actions:

- Contact your local city and county elected officials. Tell them you want your community to be an energy leader and take action consistent with our climate change imperative.
- Contact MGE (or your utility) and ask them to set emissions and renewable energy goals for both power and heat that deal effectively with our climate change threat.
- Ask your church or other community group to create a resolution or statement in support of effective climate change action.
- Write a letter to the editor demanding action consistent with the Paris Climate Accord temperature goals.
- Contact Don Ferber (Four Lakes Group) at d_ferber@sbcglobal.net or Elizabeth Ward (John Muir Chapter) at elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org to become more involved in the Sierra Club's efforts to stop climate change and create a sustainable future.

Autumn Assembly – Save the Date October 7 – 9, 2016 Bethel Horizons, Dodgeville

This year's Autumn Assembly will be held near Dodgeville and is a great opportunity to come explore some of Wisconsin's wonderful driftless region and convene with fellow Sierrans to learn what we can do to restore our state's environment.

The Autumn Assembly will be geared towards building skills that we can use as Sierra Club activists and leaders both locally and in our statewide campaign work. We already have some excellent speakers lined to provide insights and offer workshops on improving our capacity

Stay tuned for updates in the Muir View newsletter and on our Chapter web site at <http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin>.



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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.

Volunteer Opportunities

Graphic Design Volunteer Needed

We're looking for a volunteer with an eye for design and excellent layout skills to take over production of the quarterly *Muir View* newsletter and help with other design projects. Experience with Adobe InDesign and Photoshop software required. Interested? Email Jacinda Tessmann at jacinda.tessmann@sierraclub.org and include at least three samples of your design work. For more details call 608-256-0565

Recycling Away from Home (RAH)

Summer! That means another round of outdoor festivals and events in the Madison area. The Four Lakes Group RAH program has been working with a number of events and festivals to reduce landfill waste. We've also been collaborating with Joanne Tooley of Earthstew in Fitchburg to expand our reach and have more events do responsible waste

management. This summer's RAH events aren't set yet, but it's likely we'll at least be at Atwoodfest, July 30 – 31, and the Orton Park Festival, August 26 – 28. For more info, contact Gretchen Westphal at gwestphal@westphalec.com or Don Ferber at d_ferber@sbcglobal.net.

Tabling Outreach

Another wonderful summer opportunity is being at special events such as the Dane County Farmers Market or a variety of festivals sharing what you know and wish to engage folks about regarding the Sierra Club and our issues. These are already fun events to be at where you can also partake in the festivities, and where we provide you a prime spot to hang out. No training required, just a willingness to engage people. All materials are provided, and we're happy to provide you with any orientation you may need or a buddy to table with. (Or bring your own!) For more info, contact Don Ferber at d_ferber@sbcglobal.net.