



HEART of ILLINOIS

Sierra Club

HAPPY EASTER!

APRIL 1992

P. O. Box 3593 Peoria, IL 61612

# TALLGRASS SIERRAN

## MASON CO.'S BATTLE (AND OURS) AGAINST A MASS BURN INCINERATOR AT HAVANA IS APRIL PROGRAM

Ken Hartke is the speaker. He is in charge of the incinerator at St. Francis Hospital, where he is assistant administrator. He'll tell us <sup>now</sup> he is switching St. Francis to re-cycling as much as possible, the ills of incineration -- and why, from his experience, he is a leader of the campaign to prevent a mass burn incinerator to burn Chicago & other waste in Mason Co. at Havana, as once proposed at Pekin. Hartke lives near Manito. --T.E.

## EAST PEORIA FILES FOR PERMIT TO BUILD 600-BOAT MARINA

The City of East Peoria has filed application for a permit to build a breakwater, fill wetland, & do some of the dredging for the 600-boat private marina proposed by Raymond Becker a year ago, & now called "Eastport Marina." The city made the application Feb. 3, & public notice of it was jointly announced Mar. 27 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Ill. Div. of Water Resources, & the Illinois EPA.

The notice gives the public until April 24 to submit comments. The request asks the following:

--Permission to construct a concrete "rubble" breakwater enclosure 3,075 ft. in length (3 1/5 mile). It would encompass 24.5 acres of Lower Peoria Lake, & jut 900 feet out from shore. Concrete riprap would also be placed along 1,200 ft. of the harbor shore.

--Permission to fill 16.9 acres of wetland included in the 27 acres of lakeside "land" involved, with 330,000 cubic yards of fill. East Peoria would "mitigate" this wetland loss by "wetland remediation" at an unspecified site in Fulton County.

--Permission to dredge a 100-ft. wide channel 3,700 feet to the main channel of the Ill. River, & dredge the harbor area, to a water depth of 8 feet.

Also, a side channel would be dredged along the outside of the harbor breakwater to a public boat ramp slated on adjoining Fondulac Park Dist. land.

Total dredged material is estimated at 411,500 cu. yards & would be put on the CILCO site along I-74.

The breakwater would be built with an estimated 127,500 cu. yards of small chunk rubble, & surfaced with 29,100 yards of standard concrete riprap.

--Tom Edwards

## GOV. EDGAR ANTES \$5 MILLION FOR RIPRAP IN LAKE

East Peoria City Council's estimated cost to build just the concrete riprap breakwater for its proposed 600-boat marina, & doing some (up to \$250,000 worth) of the dredging, is \$5 million.

All of the \$5 million would come from the state via an appropriation Gov. Edgar included in his budget specifically for that purpose, though disavowed by 3 local legislators.

E. Peoria officials say another \$5 million is needed to build the boat slips, parking lot, access roads, etc., to prepare the site for hoped for development. This money will come from development income, they say.

The 27 acres of land was brought last year from developer Ray Becker by the city with a \$2 million loan from Community Bank in which Becker is co-owner. The Journal Star reported. Interest is 8% per year.

But the bed of the lake is owned by the state & is "held in trust for the benefit of all the people of the state," according to a 1974 state legal study. --T.E.

## THE FORESTS NEED OUR LETTERS: THE BEARS CAN'T VOTE AND THE OWLS DON'T WRITE!

We brought Lou Gold to Peoria to provide inspiration. Now it is time for a little perspiration.

1) If you are concerned about intensive logging in our own Shawnee National Forest, write your 2 Senators and Congressman and tell them.  
2) To stop the Forest Service and BLM from logging the last of the ancient forests in our NW, ask your Congressman to support the Ancient Forest Protection Act, HR 842 & the Bryant Forest Biodiversity & Clearcutting Prohibition Act, HR 1969. Ask him to reduce exports of raw logs & create jobs in forest restoration. Oppose the timber industry bill, HR 2463 & any bill which limits citizen access to the courts or weakens environmental protection laws.

3) Ask Senators Dixon & Simon to cosponsor S 1536, The Pacific Northwest Community Recovery & Ecosystem Conservation Act. Oppose S 1156 which is the timber industry bill. Include the points in #2 above.

4) Montana Wilderness: Ask your Senators to oppose the Montana National Forest Management Act, S. 1696. It opens 4 million acres of wildlands to logging, mining, & roads and fails to protect elk, grizzly bears, & wolves. It exempts parts of the forest plan from judicial review!

Zip code for U.S. Senate is 20510 & Congress is 20515. Send copies of letters to Rep. Vento, Chairman, Nat'l. Parks & Public Lands Subcommittee; Rep. Sid Yates, Chairman, Interior Appropriations Subcommittee; Sen. Pat Leahy, Chairman, Agriculture Committee. S. O'Connell, Group Chair

Exemptions to the Endangered Species Act are currently being considered to allow 44 timber sales on federally owned land in western Oregon. You can help save the northern spotted owl and old growth forest by writing the Endangered Species Committee, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, DC 20240. Ask them to deny the exemptions. L. Railsback

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OPENING

Lucia Miller has resigned from Ex-Com. If interested in finishing her term, contact Shirley O'Connell, 1609 N. Knollwood Ct., Peoria, 61604. phone 676-5479



HEART OF ILLINOIS

Sierra Club

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To explore, enjoy and preserve the nation's forests, waters, wildlife and wilderness

A RESPONSE TO TOM EDWARDS' ARTICLE IN THE TALLGRASS SIERRAN (March, '92)  
ENTITLED "WHAT IN HEAVENS NAME ARE WE DOING TO THE WEB OF LIFE IN OUR WOODLANDS???"

By Dale Goodner

This question appeared in the recent issue of the newsletter of the Heart of Illinois Sierra Club. Ironically it is the question which has motivated us to become involved in research and ultimately in restoration. As in most things, ecological problems can be more complex than they appear on the surface. The general public, for instance, have little knowledge of exotic invasive species: why they can be a problem; how pervasive they are; why they can threaten "natural systems;" why some experts refer to a few species as "biological pollution;" and so on. (*The Nature Center will feature Dr. Schwegman addressing this topic on the first Wed. in June at 7:30 pm.*) We are coming to view nature not as a "thing" but as a process, in which we, for better or for worse, are participants.

Our challenge is to make our influence a positive one.

**Contrary to the statements in Tallgrass Sierran:**

1. Objectives of restoration are not to convert woodland to prairie, nor to eliminate shrubs. Indeed the shrub layer is necessary to many species of both vertebrates and invertebrates.
2. We've gradually come to understand the concept of savannah. This once important part of the Illinois landscape now consists of some three remaining acres in the entire state. What we need is to locate appropriate sites and set out on yet another impossible dream, to resurrect examples of the spirit of this once magnificent habitat. The suggestion related in "Tallgrass Sierran" that we have some plan to do this at the oak/hickory forest near Singing Woods Road is erroneous. This site was likely never a "savannah." Restoration, as the name implies, is a process of promoting healing in a beleaguered ecosystem, not changing it to something totally different.
3. Non oak trees are not a "target" of the axe and saw. One of our concerns is that oaks and white walnuts are the targets of encroaching shade almost everywhere. To characterize the efforts to promote regeneration of these species in select areas, by opening the canopy, as 'tree killing' is akin to calling heart surgery "slashing with a knife." There is some truth, but such a perspective is hypercritical.
4. Wildflowers are disappearing in many park locations, not expanding... this is one of the many issues not addressed in Tallgrass Sierran.
5. "Hatred" is hardly an appropriate objective of stewardship. At best this accusation is irresponsible (if not mystifying).
6. Forest fragmentation is, in fact, a successional issue, and a significant threat to the integrity and stability of the land organism.
7. The maple/elm issue is not relevant to oak regeneration.
8. Tree growth under some circumstances can contribute to soil instability, as we have measured and photographed at the Singing Woods site. The problem is in reduced light below a critical level for floral survival and regeneration.
9. There is no connection between 'timber management' and habitat restoration. These are entirely separate issues. It requires an incredible stretch to connect 'board feet' productivity to protection and survival of an endangered species of butterfly.

Suggestions that oak trees and other plants be propagated in agricultural fields, utility rights of way, etc., have merit. But let's not confuse this with stewardship of **existing** oak/hickory forests or prairie openings. The intricate environment of microflora and fauna in the soil is virtually irreplaceable. This is why its loss is of such concern. The oak in and of itself is not the issue, any more than the spotted owl can be considered the basis of the ecological crises in the Pacific northwest.

In the 'conservation priorities' article the definition of woodland and prairie restoration is listed as:

1. cutting larger openings in woodlands for prairie; and
  2. converting existing woodlands to prairie-oak savannahs.
- This is misleading.

If I were to define restoration it would go something like... reestablishing of a natural condition or context under which the native flora and fauna existed and evolved, ie: a pre-European condition. It is not an attempt to hold the natural process to a past condition, but rather return it to a point where natural processes can continue. Is this to imply every acre? No! Does this imply that some species are bad? No! Does it suggest that there is some value in maintaining examples of the native flora as a living museum? Yes! Does it suggest that we can offer the world a good example of loving and caring for our local biodiversity? Yes!

Even the vegetation map depicted in the newsletter is off base; the one dated 1620 seems to show that our prairie was a forest, and that someone knew the extent relative to Illinois' state boundary. Included here is an accurate pre-European settlement vegetation map of Illinois (based on actual survey notes).

Notice the extent of prairie. Recent documentation including pollen samples from 8,300 years of stratigraphic "records," ratios of fossil Mammoths (prairie grazers) to Mastodons (woodland browsers) and other pollen studies, have convincingly shown that the ancient landscape we call Illinois was an extensive and unique ecosystem characterized by vast Prairies with relatively small wooded glades dominated by 'fire-tolerant' trees (we are in one). As you may imagine the native flora in such a place is quite special. Learning about this uniqueness is what it means to live in Illinois and stop pretending it's someplace else.

There is inherent value in the natural flora which we have not begun to comprehend. On this 500th Columbian anniversary, let's make it our business to discover America for the first time.

(Editor's note: Dale Goodner is the chief naturalist at Forest Park Nature Center, Peoria Park District. He joined Sierra Club Jan., '92)





Letter to the Editor: As a reader of the Tallgrass Sierran I have become increasingly concerned over the recent dominance of one-sided editorials questioning the management efforts to maintain oak-hickory forest. Presettlement records clearly indicate the dominance of oak and hickory trees on dry uplands before European settlement. Several studies have indicated the role of fire in preventing shade-tolerant species such as sugar maple, white ash and ironwood from advancing from sheltered locations onto dry upland areas and shading out the oaks and hickories. I would appreciate a fair presentation of other opinions concerning this subject. Renee Thomas, Biology Instructor, ICC.



(Editor's note: The only article in TGS' objecting to your management concept was one last month by T. Edwards. A response is on opposite page by Dale Goodner, who has also expressed those views in a video presentation to HoI, plus 2 verbal presentations at later member meetings, plus passing out literature at still others on his position. Also, HoI has had 2 meeting programs by "professionals" for such management, & 3 recent newsletter pieces (one by you) on your perception of sketchy & differing pioneer records, and of what should be now. Another side was overdue.)

Letter to Editor: After reading the March issue of Tallgrass Sierran, I called each ExCom members with two concerns: 1) More than 1/2 the space was devoted to opinions expressed by Tom Edwards which gave the impression that he spoke for the HoI Sierra Club. 2) At a critical time, when so many vital environmental issues prevail, why is Tom Edwards fighting the Nature Conservancy?

During my phone calls, I learned that: 1) Edwards had "found a donor" to have the two extra pages of his personal views printed, 2) during the Jan. ExCom meeting, the decision was made to have a team/group of people edit and put together the Tall grass Sierran in response to some complaints about the newsletter, 3) Edwards' opinions in the March issue were added after the Tallgrass Sierran was put together by this group. (How was Edwards able to get his articles into the Tallgrass Sierran after the newsletter was completed? Abuses of one's position and preferential treatment makes me feel untrusting. In my opinion, Edwards wants everyone to be accountable but himself. -Kay Helms)

Editor's Note: 1) The Jan. TGS states that all articles "are opinions of the writer unless otherwise stated." HoI Conservation chr. Tom Edwards raises the local environmental consciousness on many issues (thank goodness), & does not fight a person or groups per se. He does not have any outside ties or influences. The March newsletter was deliberately not "put to bed" that evening because of some stories we knew would not be ready due to time consuming work Edwards was doing for the Lou Gold ancient forest program. Because of budget problems we had limited the newsletter to 2-pages. He donated the money to expand to 4-pages. Thank you for your letter, & the opportunity to let the sun shine (truth) in to dispel clouds (illusions). K. Berry

To the Editor: I support the methods of prairie restoration and forest management that are practiced at the Forest Park Nature Center woodlands and at Singing Woods. I feel that Dale Goodner and his staff of professional naturalists are acting responsibly and I have confidence in and agree with their decisions and actions. -Dave Peterson

THANK YOU for being a part of bringing Lou Gold to Peoria! He is an excellent spokesperson for his message, "Lessons From the Ancient Forest". My teenage daughter and I thoroughly enjoyed the program and intend to pass on his knowledge to other groups. We have supported him by sending letters to those Senators and Representatives recommended by the Bald Mountain Alert (Winter, 1992) and by supporting him financially. We urge all of you to do what you can and to encourage others to view the video when it is shown on Ch. 47 in the spring. Grayce Haworth

(Ed. note: Grace also sent \$75 for HoI's treasury.)

Dear Editor:

March 31, 1992

I am involved in the Peoria Bluffs Restoration Project as the editor of the *Oak Friends*, a newsletter of this volunteer project, and also as a volunteer steward at the Singing Woods site that has been the subject of recent interest. I am also a founding member of the newly formed *Sierrans for Restoration*, the current Membership Chairman of the HOI Sierra Club, and a member of the Conservation Committee. As such, I believe that I have earned the right to comment on an increasingly discussed subject.

The essential goal of the Peoria effort is to save rare and endangered native species. Several local ecological studies have proven beyond a doubt that unless we act quickly, many species will *perish*, never to be seen again.

My commitment to this project began and continues solely because I strongly believe that this generation has a responsibility to future generations to at least attempt to save a portion of these vanishing native species. I consider our local stewards and volunteers working towards this goal to be modern day unsung heroes.

Quoting from a Sierra Club, Illinois State Chapter letter on this very subject dated October 8, 1990 written by then State Chairman John Helfrich, and Conservation leadership: "There can be no doubt that the Sierra Club supports the use of natural area preservation techniques, including control of species that do not live in healthy prairies, and the burning of prairies... Prior to Illinois extensive development, the prairies and savannas did not require any help from man. Exotic species could not get started and fires from natural sources swept the prairies allowing the fire dependent species to prosper. Now however, if we want to maintain the small portion of native Illinois that has survived, it is necessary that people supply some of the forces that used to be present in nature."

I believe that this State letter might help to clear up confusion on Sierra philosophy, and I am willing to share copies with interested individuals. Call me at 694-2732, or pick up *Oak Friends* at Forest Park. J an Hoyer

#### IS ANOTHER GOLF COURSE A PEORIA NEED?

The HoI ExCom has forwarded the following letter to the Peoria Park Board:

"We are concerned about your study proposal for construction of a 6th golf course in the Peo. Park Dist., which would be a very costly undertaking."

"We question 1) the need for another such facility, and 2) the priority for another golf course in the light of the many environmental exigencies facing this community along with the nation and world, and also the overall recreational needs of our society."

"And we are deeply concerned about the highly toxic pesticides that are routinely applied to golf courses. We think a priority overdue for major attention is eliminating pesticide use on the park district's existing courses."

"We need to look at the total environmental and recreational picture of this region in regard to any facility and activity."

"The HoI Sierra wants to be involved in, and fully apprised of, all considerations in your golf course study." - ExCom letter delivered 3-11-92

(A "championship course" is being considered either abutting & into Singing Woods, or Sommer Park.)

OUTINGS: 4-18 Sat. Wild nocturnal hike! Meet 7 pm @ Forest Park Nature Cnt. Mark 579-3206 4-25 Sat. Canoe trip! We have been invited by the Mackinaw Canoe Club to join them on one of Illinois' scenic waterways - the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River. For details - Mark McClintick, Outings Ch. 579-3206. 5-8/9/10 Shawnee Ntl. Forest. Due to the weather this has been rescheduled. It should be nicer weather in May, so join us for a refreshing mini vacation. 20 person limit & advance notification required. Eric 694-2732.

Fred Small Concert - 5-21-92 Thurs. @ 7:30 pm BU Student Center, Marty Auditorium. Who is Fred Small? He is active in the environmental movement and sings songs of conscience. Adv. tickets \$6/\$8 at door. Luan R. 685-2866/682-8830.

NATURE CENTER WORK DAYS - Sierrans who volunteer at the Nature Center gift shop or other jobs can have their hours credited to the club. Volunteers are needed, too, for a trail work day Sat. 4-25 @ 9 a.m. Wear work gloves and enjoy Earth Day weekend out on the trails! Shirley 676-5479.

EARTH DAY '92 Environmental Fair "Do What You Can Do" will be on 4-26 Sun. 12N-5 pm. Volunteers are needed for our informational booth. Judy Donath 697-1863. Any help appreciated!

FRIENDS OF THE ROCK ISLAND TRAIL - SATURDAY WORKDAYS - May 2 and June 6. Meet 9 am at Trail office Wyoming. Enter Wy. on Rt. 91, building is on left between IDOT & Magnussen Chevy in rear of green & white building. Paul 695-2228. \*\*\*MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH\*\*\* 5-10. Celebrate with a delicious brunch on the RIT starting @ 11 am at Depot in Wyoming. Enter Wy. on Rt. 91. At stop sign, turn right (Williams St.), go 2-blocks. Depot is just past water tower on right. After brunch, walk or bike off those pounds north to scenic Spoon River Bridge. \$5 adults/\$2.50 children under 12. Reservations a must! George 676-6113/266-5085, Mary 745-5479, Chris 691-2246. Paid Ad.

Notes from Excom 3-24-92: 1) Treasurer's report \$778.27. 2) 1992 Budget Guide approved. 3) Financial report on Lou Gold program. 4) Revisions to newsletter policy approved. 5) Tentative work day set. 6) Havana incinerator. 7) Hamm's Harbor update. 8) Championship golf course proposal. 9) Request from Heartland for HOI to join. 10) Chapter practices regarding restoration. L. Railsback

#### Additions to Newsletter Policy

1. All copy due on deadline to be in advance of paste up date. No additions after paste up except approved by excom in emergency situations. 2. Newsletter donations will be accepted for the newsletter general fund and not for specific publication. 3. Opinion section to be clearly labeled as such. L. Railsback

Recycling: Bring your aluminum cans to group meetings and help conserve resources as well as raise \$\$ for Sierra Club. Thanks to Al Harkrader for taking over this project. Shirley O'Connell

#### LOU GOLD'S "LESSONS OF THE ANCIENT FORESTS" TO BE ON PBS-TV CH. 47 MAY 6. SPREAD THE WORD!

For those who were unable to attend Lou Gold's riveting "Lessons of the Ancient Forests" event Mar. 9 at Lakeview Museum, you can view it from your favorite chair Wed., May 6, 10:30 pm on CH 47. An audience of 400 consisting of all ages & walks of life filled the museum auditorium Mar. 9, & the walls were decorated with 300 "save forests" posters made by school kids. Thanks for all who helped make the event a huge success. -- K. Berry



#### CALENDAR

April 11	Garage Sale-705 E. Republic
April 15	Group Meeting-7:30 P.M.
April 25	Trail Work Day-9 A.M., Forest Park Nature Center
April 26	Earth Day
April 28	Ex-Com-7 P.M.-All members welcome. 1609 N. Knollwood Ct. Call 676-5479 for directions.
May 6	Newsletter deadline. Send copy to K. Berry, 705 E. Republic, Peoria 61603.
May 8	Newsletter Paste-up. United Van Lines-Kenny Johnson Moving & Storage 7:00 P.M.
May 12	Newsletter Mailing Party-6:30 P.M. at Peoria Heights Pizza Works. Bring your appetite & your stapler!

#### RESPONSE TO CONSERVATION PRIORITY RANKINGS NOTICE

Four members sent in priority rankings for conservation attention in response to last month's newsletter notice. They were:

Charlene Lemoine: 1-Environmental education. "Without this we can't accomplish anything on any of the issues." 2-Solid waste (recycling, incineration, landfills). "They all are of equal importance." 3-Air & water quality. "They are the necessities of life." 4-Energy bill. 5-Illinois river. 6-Wetlands. 7-Pesticides. 8-Soil erosion. 9-Lock & Dam; 10-Open space. 11-Transportation.

"I feel the A & B issues (restoration) as outlined ... could well be a focus for Sierra members to research & develop specific details on," C.L. wrote.

Kathy Berry: 1-Restoration 'A' (planting, not cutting) "Save our own woodlands from chain saws." 2-Feed oaks in Glen Oak parking lot. 3-More road cleanup. 4-Wetlands. 5-River clean. 6-Help fight locally planned incinerator. 7-"Conservation issues letter writing get-togethers."

John & Shirley O'Connell? Consider them all even. Except do Restoration 'A'. -- T.E.

#### ExCom Memberrrs - 1992

Shirley O'Connell - Chair	676-5479
Chuck Buchna - V-Chair	243-7142
Judy Donath - Treas	697-1863
Luan Railsback - Sec	682-8830
Tom Edwards - Conservation Ch.	676-5428
Larry Johnson-Chapter At Large	697-3211

#### CONSERVATION NOTES:

HOI excom has sent a letter to the Peoria Park Bd. stating that the number of trees marked for removal along Forest Park Dr. is grossly excessive. We have asked to walk & remark the trees with them.

Also, a good work project would be to stabilize the badly eroded embankment to prevent trees from being undermined. -- Tom Edwards

#### Kenny Johnson

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