

TALLGRASS SIERRA

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club Group
September 1993, Vol. 21, No. 9



GENERAL MEETING by John Wosik

September's guest speaker will be Kelly O'Leary, who will talk about some of his recent trips. His talk will include Big Bend and Everglades National Parks, plus Algonquin Provincial Park.

The date is September 15, 7:30 pm, at Forest Park Nature Center. Everyone is welcome!



WOODFORD COUNTY'S LAKES? by Tom Edwards

The Woodford County Soil and Water Conservation District's plan for curtailing the silt flow of the Richland Creek area into upper Peoria Lake has focused mainly on establishing lakes behind what are described as three relatively huge dams estimated by the Soil and Water Conservation Service (SCS) to cost \$10 million.

At the August 3 public meeting it was stated by SCS representatives that the dams would trap about half the silt flow of the creek, would attract home development, would require about 50% local funding, and that provisions for any public use would be up to the county. SCS's Tom Book said the structures are "all high hazard dams" in that they have a potential of collapse.

A major discussion point was that the goal of erosion control is to "keep soil and water at their source" rather than simply impounding it at a different location. Retired SCS agent H. Blunier has stated that 5,000 farm ponds could be built with the \$10 million.

The dams are: Richland Creek Dam, a million cubic yards of dirt, 100 feet high, 1,400 feet long, creating a 91-acre lake and affecting 260 acres with periodic flooding. It would be larger than Farmdale Dam; Snag Creek Dam, 860,000 cubic yards of dirt, 101 feet high, 1,000 feet long, creating a 406-acre lake and affecting 460 acres; Dry Run Creek Dam, 406,000 cubic yards of dirt, 70 feet high, 900 feet long, a 70-acre lake affecting 100 acres.

This plan would assist the DOC-Corps "island" project, the SCS report said. HOI Sierra Club has formally opposed the island project and proposed an alternative.

EMIGUON CONTINUED by Cheryl Pauli

It appears development of the proposed Emiguon National Wildlife Refuge will be a long and slow process. Due to the economic condition of the U.S. the President proposed spending \$1.43 million on this project. The House of Representatives has approved this funding and at this time the Senate has not taken action.

This funding would allow the purchasing of approximately 1,000 of the 11,000 acres needed for the restoration of this wetland area and development of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's Emiguon National Wildlife Refuge. The ideal situation would have been complete funding for the development of this refuge. Now requests for funding will be needed each year.

Continued support and contact with Fulton County Board members, Congressmen Evans and Michel, and Senators Braun and Simon is needed.

CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL by Charlene Lemoine

The Task Force recommendations to the City/County Landfill Committee include allowing a private contractor the ability to "market" solid waste disposal contracts from across the state and beyond the boundaries if contracts prove difficult to obtain. A ten year contract is also being recommended. The rationale is that the Waste Industry must have volume to keep our local tipping fees down. An increase in Special waste is also being considered. Since fifteen waste disposal firms are interested one can only imagine the profits expected.

Availability of space for disposal and demand for that space determines tipping fees after the fixed cost associated with construction and maintenance of the landfill. Volume does not determine tipping fees. Supply and demand determines it. Although many landfills are closing, the Waste Industry has been acquiring greater capacity by expanding existing landfills and building mega-fills. Since the volume of waste is down due to an increase in recycling and poor economic conditions, a great deal of unused capacity remains and the "price wars" have begun. Volume also brings contracts for hauling the waste. Since our present tipping fee is only \$13.93 a ton the Waste Industry can charge greater fees for hauling and still be competitive because of our cheap disposal fees.

Through recycling and waste reduction we can conserve space

at the landfills and save money on constructing new disposal cells.

ACTION NEEDED: Contact your City Council or County Board representative and ask them to consider conservation and sensible waste management practices.

HERBICIDING CONTROVERSY by Tom Edwards

Sometimes what seems to be a setback can become the impetus for just the opposite. That seems to be the case in regard to the Peoria County Highway Department's decision to resume herbiciding vegetation around guardrails four years after the county board had halted spraying of roadsides.

First, County Highway Engineer Dale Page said he has no intention of resuming any roadside spraying beyond the guardrails.

Second, we have suggested reseeding the guardrail area with short species of grasses and clover (8-10 inches high), which wouldn't have to be cut or killed. Peoria County and Illinois Highway Department's Peoria District are interested.

Third, we received initial approval of the county for planting and seeding wildflowers along various road locations subject to its approval and have applied to the Illinois Sierra Chapter for some funding for this.

Not only is Mr. Page supportive of the HOI Sierra Group doing this, he has applied for federal funds for the county highway department to do some wildflower plantings. The Peoria County Board and Highway Department is the state leader in eliminating roadside herbiciding. Now we are on the verge of becoming moroso. The decision to allow just spraying of the guardrails passed by only one vote. Roundup, a contact herbicide that kills all vegetation, was used.



OUTINGS:

SEPTEMBER 18, 10 am. The HOI Sierra Club will be helping to build bat houses at Wildlife Prairie Park. It's an excellent opportunity to visit the park and help! Bring a sack lunch and enjoy the day. You must contact Phil Minear (694-3014).

SEPTEMBER 25 An autumn bike ride along the I & M Canal is planned. Contact Larry Robbins (692-3930) for details.

OCTOBER 2, 10 am. Once again the HOI Sierra Club will be helping to build bat houses at Wildlife Prairie Park. If you aren't able to make it in September plan on this date. The autumn colors should be great! You must contact Phil Minear (694-3014).

OCTOBER 9, 8:30 am. Enjoy a pleasant hike at Banner Marsh. Those interested may meet at the Bartonville Hardees (Rt. 24) for breakfast or at 9:00 am for the hike only. Bring a sack lunch, water to drink and wear comfortable hiking shoes. Contact Les Bodell (745-5479) for details and if you plan to hike.

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ANNUAL ELECTION



The Heart of Illinois Sierra Club is seeking nominations for the annual election of its Group Executive Committee. If you are interested in being considered or would like to nominate a person for consideration contact a member of the Nominating Committee. The positions on the Group Executive Committee will be for a two year period (1994-95).

Contact: Cheryl Pauli (446-9792), Al Harkrader (682-8462), Larry Leiken (691-3933)

GROUP CALENDAR:

- SEPT. 15** General Meeting, 7:30 pm, Forest Park Nature Center
- 18** Outing/Workday, 10 am, Wildlife Prairie Park
- 23** Ex. Comm. Meeting, 7 pm, Army Corps Building, foot of Grant St.; Everyone welcome!
- 25** Outing, Bike trip, I&M Canal (see OUTINGS)
- 27** Newsletter Deadline, send copy to C. Pauli, RR1 Box 168 A, Brimfield, IL 61517 (Late submissions will not be accepted)
- OCT. 2** Outing/Workday, 10 am, Wildlife Prairie Park
- 5** Newsletter Mailing, 7 pm, Pizza Works; Everyone Welcome!
- 9** Outing, 8:30 am, Banner Marsh
- 20** General Meeting

OTHER EVENTS:

SEPT 11 & OCT 2 Rock Island Trail Workdays, 9 am. Meet at the temporary trail office on Fox Rd., Alta. Go west of Alta on Rt. 91 to Radnor Rd., about one mile. Turn right on Radnor and continue around curves. House and metal barn (office) will be on your right just before the railroad tracks. Call Chris (691-2246 or 682-0549).

SEPT 19 BREAKFAST ON THE ROCK ISLAND TRAIL, 9-11 am. Bike or walk in from the Alta parking lot for a delicious breakfast to raise funds to build a picnic shelter at the Kickapoo picnic area. Rain date, Sept. 26, \$5.00 adults - \$2.50 child, children under 5 free. Handicapped & elderly rides available. Must call for reservations, Chris (691-2246 or 682-0549), Cheryl (446-9792)

(Note: The HOI Grp. provides this information as a public service. Other Events are not sponsored by Sierra Club)

HEART OF ILLINOIS

Sierra Club

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