



Tallgrass Sierran

Sierra Club - Heart of Illinois Group - Central Illinois Region

P. O. Box 3593 - Peoria, IL 61614

SPECIAL EDITION: Please note this issue of the Tallgrass Sierran is for two months.

GENERAL MEETING December and January

**** December 14** Join us for our annual holiday potluck and slideshow. Bring a dish to share and your own table service. If you have a few favorite slides of outings or special vacations you would like to share with the group, please bring those along, too! The date is **December 14, 6:30 pm**, at Forest Park Nature Center. Everyone is welcome!

****January 18** Our guest speaker for January will be Stewart Peguignot of the Illinois Department of Conservation. Mr. Peguignot will be discussing The Forest Legacy Program.

Please join us for this interesting program on **January 18, 7 pm** at Forest Park Nature Center. A question and answer session will follow along with refreshments. Everyone is welcome!



LOCAL ISSUES



DUPLICATE LOCKS FOR ILLINOIS RIVER ARE COMING! by Hal Gardner

On November 9 at the Peoria Pere Marquette Hotel, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented the results of their feasibility study on whether to increase the capacity of the locks on both the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. *Deja vu!* Nineteen years have passed since the public shot down the last attempt by the Army Corps of Engineers to build two 1200-foot locks at each of the dams on the Illinois River, and twenty years since the Lock and Dam 26 on the Mississippi was almost defeated (current amount spent, \$1.2 billion). The two expanded locks at each dam would far more than quadruple the capacity to move barges on the river. The expanded 1200-foot lock does not require the breakdown of a string of barges on the river, which must now do so to navigate through the present 600-foot lock at each dam. In 1975 the estimated bill for construction of duplicate locks on the Illinois River was \$630 million, and would certainly require much more today, mostly at taxpayers expense. The issues are the same today as they were in 1975; that is, environmental damage, danger of a toxic chemical spill, waste of federal funds, damage to little-subsidized forms of transportation (railroads), and insufficient need for the extra capacity. This correspondent even overheard Corps of Engineers employees scoffing about the so-called need for the project. Besides the lack

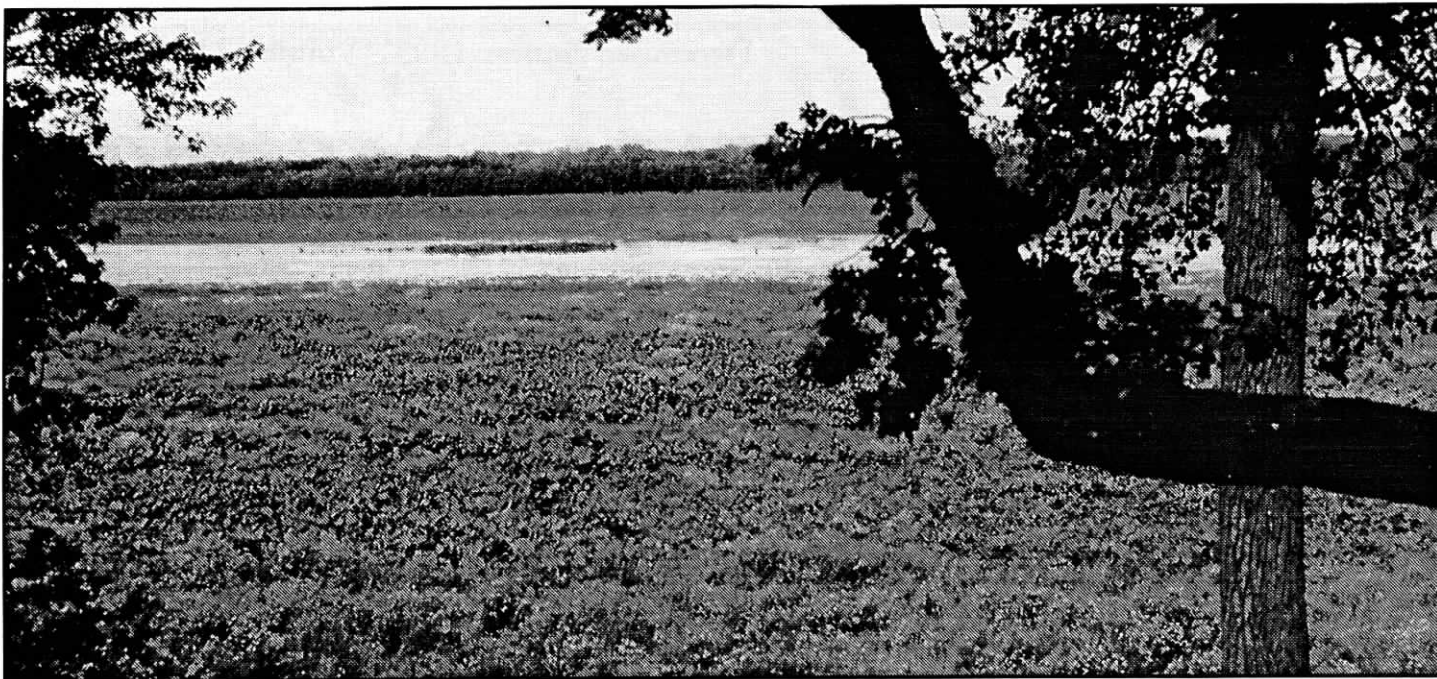


New Executive Board, left to right, Mary Bodell, Grayce Haworth, Kelly O'Leary, and Ralph Ginn.

of enthusiasm by some of their own employees, testimony was scathingly against expanding the system. However, we saw "the lay of the land" was against us when one speaker from a local industry spoke in favor of the project. The Corps of Engineers "economic specialist" enthusiastically came to life to tell the industry rep that he was "absolutely right". **Action Needed:** Please write your opposition to expanded lock capacity on the Illinois River, even if only a few words, to: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ATTN: Planning Division, Clock Tower Building, P.O. Box 2004, Rock Island, IL 61204-2004. Written comments will be taken until December 18, 1994. **WRITE TODAY!**

SIERRA CLUB OPPOSES THE NORTH ALTERNATIVE OF CHICAGO THRUWAY by Hal Gardner

The Sierra Club and several other environmental groups (total of 22 people attending) met with personnel and contractual engineers of the Illinois Dept. of Transportation on the evening of Nov. 29. The topic of discussion was the proposed Peoria to Chicago throughway which is in the "feasibility" stage of study. Concern and opposition centered on one of the four routes now being considered, namely the north or "N1" corridor. This corridor would be the most environmentally damaging alternative requiring five tranverses of the ecologically significant Illinois



*Chautauqua Wildlife Refuge (a smaller version of the proposed Emiquon Refuge).
A September Sierra Outing toured both refuges.*

River bluff. One only needs to look at the environmental damage caused by the previous routing of Route 6 through Big Hollow near Peoria (one bluff transverse). Route 6 is also instructive in another way - it ends at the bottom of the bluff at the south end of the "N1" alternative, so does I-80 at the north end of the proposed "N1" route. Although "N1" is one of the two longest routes in terms of both total mileage to Chicago and construction miles, it is considered one of the two cheapest routes to build (no bridge over the Illinois River is required and forest/bluff land is cheaper). Also, "N1" will probably receive less opposition from politically powerful farm groups. The feasibility study is due this summer, so now is the time for your input! Please write or phone your opposition to the "N1" alternative to Ms. Annette Mills, Illinois Dept. of Transportation, 401 Main St., Peoria IL 61602

(Editor's Note: It is very important that these letters be in this file when requests for federal funding is made.)

ILLINOIS CHAPTER BACKS CLEAN WATER CELEBRATION by John Wosik

The Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club will provide up to \$350 to the HOI Group to offset the expected costs of our exhibit at the Clean Water Celebration on March 20, 1995 at Peoria Civic Center.

This will be the second year we are participating in this event. Last March over 2,000 high school students from Illinois and other midwestern states attended this event. Our exhibit was

warmly received. We showed a video tape on the problems of the Great Lakes, and provided information on the Emiquon National Wildlife Refuge and the Mississippi River basin. Attendance at the next Clean Water Celebration is expected to double, providing an excellent opportunity to increase environmental awareness among our area's young students. Rudy Habben is coordinating our exhibit. If you are interested in helping on this project or just have some suggestions, please call Rudy at 309-685-5605.

NATIONAL ISSUES



ALASKA WOLF UPDATE by Joyce Blumenshine

Your letters asking for a ban of same-day-airborne hunting have worked! On September 1, 1994, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service banned same-day-airborne hunting of wolves in national wildlife refuges. The ban was a direct response to public outcry this type of wolf hunting in Alaska. The next step is to see that the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) enact a similar ban. Please write to Bruce Babbitt, Secretary, U.S. Dept. of Interior, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240 and ask that the National Park Service and BLM ban all "land-and-shoot" hunting.

While there is good news in Alaska about the ending of land-and-shoot hunting of wolves, there is cause for concern about the wolf slaughter that continues. The highest wolf kill in 17 years (1,472) occurred during the 1993-94 hunting season. This is a 40% increase over the previous season. On top of this, and added

150 to 500 more wolves could easily have been killed through illegal or unreported killing. In Alaska, hunters and trappers can kill unlimited numbers of wolves over most of the state by trapping, snaring or shooting, from October 1st through April 30th. With a big game license, hunters can shoot up to five wolves starting August 1st, which means pups or their parents. There is no other type of big game that the state allows hunted at a time when adults are killed while they have dependent young or the young themselves can be hunted.

Please write Governor Walter Hickel and a separate letter to Governor Elect Tony Nowles, PO Box 110001, Juneau, AK 99811, and also write to your congressman: Representative____, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515, and tell them of your outrage at the slaughter of wolves in Alaska. State your concern of wildlife balance. Ask your representative to support HR 1391 sponsored by Rep. Peter DeFasio (D-OR) which eliminates a loophole in the Airborne Hunting Act, which currently allows the State of Alaska to use aircraft to kill wolves in order to "protect wildlife". In actuality the state is killing wolves to boost caribou herds for sport hunters.



OUTINGS

ANNUAL STARVED ROCK WINTER HIKE

Weather permitting, there will be frozen waterfalls and other wintertime splendors to photograph on the Sierra Club's annual Starved Rock State Park winter hike scheduled for Sunday, January 15.

Even if the weather doesn't cooperate, this is always a great all-day adventure. Bring a sack lunch and meet at the Forest Park Nature Center at 9 am for car pooling or meet in the Starved Rock Lodge lounge at 10:30 am. Following the hike there is a planned stop at Mona's Italian Restaurant in Toluca to warm yourself with spaghetti sauce and red wine.

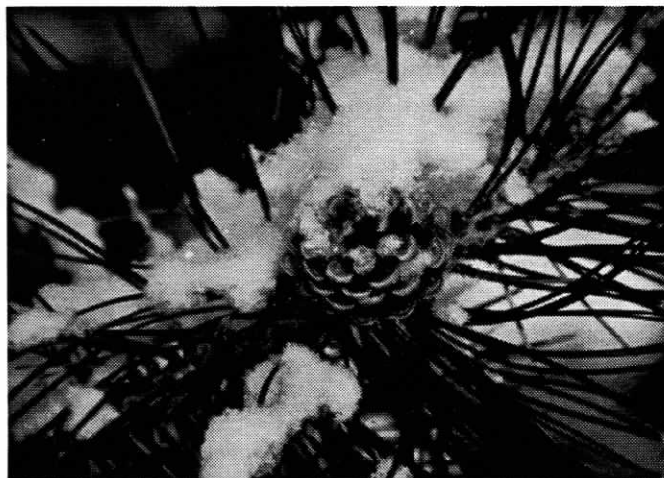
Hike leaders are Al and Mary Harkrader, for more information call 682-8462.

HARVEST DINNER SUCCESS by John Wosik.

Sierra Club members and the general public attending this year's Harvest Dinner were treated to a tasty array of fine homemade soups and other foods, topped only by Barb's fascinating slide show of her Mt. Everest expedition. Our new location, at Grace and Peace Lutheran Church just off of Knowville Ave. in Peoria, provided plenty of parking, was accessible and offered spacious accommodations along with a first-class sound system which made listening to our guest speaker effortless.

Barb Gurtler's presentation of her attempt to climb the world's tallest mountain was the highlight of the evening. Her presentation covered everyday life in the isolated region of Tibet, the difficulties of establishing a base camp at 17,000 feet, the beautiful environment of the Himalayan Mountains, and the determination and courage it takes to be a serious mountain climber. Barb climbed as high as 25,600 feet. the death of one

HOLIDAY GIFT MEMBERSHIPS



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Sierra Club

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80322-2968

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ONE EARTH, ONE CHANCE

Heart of Illinois Group Calendar



DECEMBER

14 Wednesday
Holiday Potluck, 6:30 pm
The Executive Board will be meeting an hour before the potluck dinner.

JANUARY

11 Wednesday
Executive Meeting, 7 pm
The 1995 Executive Committee will meet at Joyce Blumenshine's home. Call 688-0950 for directions. Everyone welcome!

15 Sunday
Annual Starved Rock Outing (See *OUTINGS* for more details.)

18 Wednesday
General Meeting, 7 pm
Forest Legacy Program

23 Monday
Newsletter Deadline
Send articles for February and March to C.Pauli, RR 1 Box 168 A, Brimfield, IL 61517.

31 Tuesday
Newsletter Mailing, 7 pm
Peoria Pizza Works. Good food, good conversation and great people. Everyone welcome!

FEBRUARY

8 Wednesday
Executive Meeting, 7 pm
This is a tentative date. More details will follow in the next newsletter.



member of the expedition, plus other logistical problems, prevented her from reaching the summit (29,028 ft.). May we all climb so high in life.

HARVEST DINNER THANK YOU by Joyce Blumenshine

Many people made the November 5th Heart of Illinois Group's Annual Harvest Dinner possible and a hearty thank you goes to all of you. Special thanks go to Chris Meydam, who took reservations in addition to much helping; to Mary and Les Bodell for their work on all fronts; to Grayce Haworth for her kitchen assistance; to Phil Minear for managing the ticket table and to all set-up and clean-up helpers. For all you fine soup makers, bakers, and salad makers... Thank you! It was a pleasant evening made possible by all your generous help and good work. John Wosik found our new dinner location, and his behind the scenes efforts deserve our appreciation. (*Editor's Note: And a special thanks to Joyce for organizing this event.*)

1995 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Joyce Blumenshine, Mary Bodell, George Burrier, Dale Goodner, Ralph Ginn, Grayce Haworth and Kelly O'Leary.

THANK YOU

Many thanks to outgoing board members Rudy Habben, Phil Minear, Larry Robbins and John Wosik. Your time and efforts are greatly appreciated.

OTHER EVENTS

Rock Island Trail Workdays

Saturday 9 am

January 2 and February 4

Meet at the Alta end maintenance building. Leave Alta on Rt. 91, go about 1 mile, turn right on Radnor Rd. Follow road around curves, maintenance building is on your right just before the railroad tracks. Call Chris at 682-0549 or 691-2246.

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



HEART OF ILLINOIS

Sierra Club

P.O. Box 3593
Peoria, Illinois 61614

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
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To explore, enjoy and preserve the nation's forests, waters, wildlife and wilderness...