

Tallgrass Sierran

May/June 1998 Volume 26 No. 3

THE HEART OF ILLINOIS GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB ♦ P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614 ☎ (309) 745-1920

HOI Group Meetings

WED
MAY 20

**Navigation Expansion:
It's All About Money and Water**
Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Mark Beorkrem, the Navigation Policy Director for the Mississippi River Basin Alliance, will address the consequences of expanding commercial barge traffic on the Illinois and Upper Mississippi River. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is spending \$50 million to study the feasibility of expanding the navigation system and it is the Sierra Club and MS River Basin Alliance position that expanding navigation only puts further pressure on a severely degraded ecosystem and that enough compromises have been made in the name of economic progress. Additionally Congress should explore eliminating the \$140 Million per year operating subsidy taxpayers pay for operating the navigation system to the benefit of multi-billion dollar asset companies like ADM, Cargill, Monsanto and Amoco. *All are welcome! Refreshment served after the meeting.*

WED
JUNE 17

**Annual Potluck Picnic &
White Elephant Auction**
Detweiller Park - Pine Shelter, 6:30 p.m.



Join us for our annual summer potluck picnic, presentation of the **Conservationist of the Year Award**, and fundraising auction of unusual, useful, and tasty items donated by our members. Bring a main dish or other food to share, plus your own table service. Iced tea and lemonade will be provided.

This year's picnic will be held at the **Pine Shelter in Detweiller Park, Peoria**. Enter the park from Rt. 29 and follow Detweiller Drive directly west toward the bluff. Just before the road ascends the bluff, turn left and follow the road to the parking lot next to Pine Shelter. Or, from Knoxville Ave. take Detweiller Drive east and turn right immediately after descending the bluff. If you'd like, don't forget an item to donate to the auction. *And bring a friend! Everyone is welcome!*



The restored Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Depot - Wyoming, IL

R.I. Trail Depot Restoration

Restoration of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Depot along the Rock Island Trail in Wyoming, IL. is complete. The exterior and interior surfaces have all been restored and painted with historically accurate colors. Electrical service, heating, and air conditioning have been installed. Those familiar with the depot will be amazed to see the refurbished baggage room. Melinda Kitchens, Site Superintendent of the Rock Island Trail State Park, has moved her office into the depot, and is working to furnish the depot with railroad artifacts and other items of historical and environmental interest relating to the trail. Interactive exhibits for children include a working telegraph and drawers with "touch and feel" items similar to those popular in children's museums. The depot exterior boasts new sidewalks, benches, bicycle racks, and a handicap accessible entrance.

For those Rock Island Trail bikers who normally do not get to see the north end of the Trail, consider a drive to Wyoming to check out the restored depot, and then a leisurely four mile round trip bike ride to the scenic Spoon River Bridge north of town.

Conservationist of the Year

The HOI Executive Committee is seeking nominations for the **Heart of Illinois Conservationist of the Year**. The nominee does not have to be a Sierra Club member. This individual's conservation efforts should have been pursued on a volunteer basis, not for pay. Your nomination should include a brief explanation of why you feel this person should be considered. The deadline for nominations is May 29. The winner will be announced at our annual potluck picnic on June 17. Send nominations to **Joyce Blumenshine, c/o HOI Sierra Club, P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614; or call 688-0950.**



I-TAN Now Available by E-mail

Do you want a quick, easy way to make yourself heard on environmental issues? Join the Illinois Telephone Activist Network (I-TAN). Approximately every two weeks you will receive late-breaking action alerts and the officials to contact to make your opinion count. To join call **Mary Bodell, 745-5479, the HOI HOTLINE, 745-1920, or send an e-mail to jwsik@mtco.com.** We need your name, phone number, and if you prefer e-mail notification, your e-mail address. (Current I-TAN members: contact us if you prefer to switch to e-mail notification.) **You DO NOT have to be a Sierra Club member to join.**



Homes For Rare Trees?

BY RALPH GINN

To the 500 Heart of Illinois Sierrans who did not attend the March meeting: You missed an opportunity to see and hear a CONSERVATIONIST who we can all admire and hold up to the public, and ourselves, as a model of dedication for a better environment. Jim Anderson (Peoria) brought to us his crusade to restore to Illinois some of the rare and endangered trees that once were common, but have since been decimated by disease, development, logging and agriculture. American Chestnut, Butternut (White Walnut), Paw Paw, Persimmon, Pecan, Wild Hazelnut, Wild Plum; names from the past, now rare and desperately in need of human help. Mr. Anderson has answered an inner call to restore these once magnificent trees to the woodlands, pastures, vacant lots and lawns of Illinois. He travels the State in search of seeds, plants the seeds in his tree garden, and a year later gives the seedlings to anyone willing to give them a good home. He does presentations (like the one for HOI) to as many groups, large and small, as will listen. He passes out free literature (recycled paper) to all: how to plant and care for seedlings, tree descriptions, starting from seeds, planting a windbreak, history of the trees. Ironically, the one thing Jim needs most, HOI could have given, 20 acres to plant and grow his trees. Remember the Ilo Dillin land that was willed to us....and lost by the bureaucrats in San Francisco. Still a bitter memory to many of us. But, what's meaningful here is that we give Jim Anderson an enormous THANK YOU, not just for speaking to our group, but more importantly for the remarkable work he is doing. If you are interested in planting and caring for some of these rare trees contact: Jim Anderson, 909 W. Oakview Dr., Peoria, IL 61615, phone (309) 691-4189.



Improvements Coming for Central Illinois Bike Trails

BY RUDY HABBen

The Illinois Department of Transportation has released its construction program for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1998. Included are \$6.5 million for trail development in central Illinois. Half the funds, \$3.2 million, will go for bikeway development and aqueduct repair on the Hennepin Canal Trail in Bureau County. Tazewell County will receive over \$2.5 million for three projects: \$886,000 for the River Trail extension into Morton, \$523,000 for engineering and bridge repair on the Pekin Park District Trail, and \$1.1 million for bike and pedestrian bridges on the East Peoria River Trail. The Bloomington Park District will receive \$850,000 for landscaping, pedestrian bridges, and bikeway improvements on the Constitution Trail.

The City of Peoria has released a public notice that the riverfront bike trail will be extended north from Hamilton Blvd. as part of the extension of Constitution Avenue to Irving Street. The bike trail will be on the east side of the railroad tracks and will be developed with the Rex Plex in the area north of the Murray Baker Bridge.

Poet and biologist Sandra Steingraber, the internationally acclaimed author of "Living Downstream, An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment" and her husband, Boston sculptor and installation artist Jeff de Castro, will speak at the Peoria Art Guild on Sunday May 24, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. She will read several of her poems and talk about her book. He will show slides and talk about his latest projects. The event is free, the public is cordially invited, dress is casual, and the presentations will be less than an hour. Sandra's books will be available for purchase. For more information, call the Guild at 685-7522. (*Not a Sierra Club sponsored event.*)

You can make a difference!

- ☐ **The White House:**
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue., NW,
Washington D.C. 20500
Comment Line: (202) 456-1111
E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov
- ☐ **U.S. Senators:**
Carol Mosely-Braun / Richard Durbin
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510
Capital Switchboard: (202) 224-3121
- ☐ **U.S. Representatives:**
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121
Local: Ray LaHood (309) 671-7027
Lane Evans (309) 793-5760
- ☐ **Governor Jim Edgar:**
State House, Springfield, IL 62706
Ph. (217) 782-6830
- ☐ **State Senator or Representative:**
State House, Springfield, IL 62706
Capitol Switchboard: (217) 782-2000

Proposal for the Grand Kankakee Marsh National Wildlife Refuge

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing a way to restore up to 30,000 acres of the Kankakee River watershed over the next 30 years by creating the Grand Kankakee Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. This Refuge would restore important fragments of wetlands, oak savanna and prairie lost to farmland and urban sprawl. The Kankakee River was once one of the most productive wildlife habitats in the country, and had major breeding grounds for migratory waterfowl. Much of its marshlands were drained, and wildlife habitat has declined dramatically. The primary goal for the Refuge would be to restore habitat for more than 75 state-listed and five federally

threatened and endangered resident species, including the Sandhill Crane, copperbelly watersnake, Mead's milkweed and the Mitchell's Satyr butterfly. Your letter is crucial to keep this project alive. As a citizen of Illinois and a person concerned about the environment, your comments can really help in making this Refuge really happen. Please write a letter of support for the Grand Kankakee Marsh National Wildlife Refuge to: Thomas J. Larson, Chief, Ascertainment and Planning Division, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056. Your letter must be received by the June 21st comment deadline.

Timber Sales Threaten Cove/Mallard Forest Area in the Greater Salmon/Selway Ecosystem, Idaho

**Letters Needed to Help Save Our Forests:
PLEASE SPEAK UP ON BEHALF OF THE TREES**

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

The Clinton Administration and U.S. Forest Service are proposing changes in the management of Roadless Areas. Your letters are needed to stress the following important points:

The Greater Salmon/Selway Ecosystem is the only place left in the lower 48 states with all the native plants and animals it contained before the United States was formed. The U.S. Forest Service is destroying this valuable habitat with timber sales like the Cove/Mallard sale. Timber sales cost the U.S. taxpayers, and the U.S. Forest Service is losing about \$1 billion per year. The Forest Service must end logging and roadbuilding on public lands. The Forest Service should cancel the Cove/Mallard timber sales and all other Roadless Area sales greater than 1000 acres. The Forest Service must do a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Cove/Mallard sales and request public commentary. The United States should save its National Forests for species habitat, watersheds for the provision of clean water, and our National Forests should not be used for private profit through logging. *Less than 4% of timber supplies in the U.S. come from National Forests and this small percentage can be stopped without damage to the U.S. timber industry. Full support should be given to U.S. House of Representatives Bill 2789, the Zero Cut legislation to save what is left of our great national forests for our children, for our future.* Write to: Dinah Bear, Council for Environmental Quality, 722 Jackson Pl. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005; Chris Wood, U.S. Forest Service, 14th & Independence S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250; President Bill Clinton and to your U.S. Representative.



BIG PIG Action Alert

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Keep Hog Waste Out of Illinois' Waters! Support House Bill 3165!

Please call your State Legislator today and ask him or her to support House Bill 3165 to keep hog waste out of Illinois' waters. Be sure to also ask that your Legislator oppose industry efforts to weaken existing hog factory farm regulations. Your help is needed now! House Bill 3165 has several important safeguards that are greatly needed. It will ban megahog farms in floodplains and high groundwater areas. It will also limit the amount of manure that can be dumped on farm fields, so that the ground will not be over-used and a hazard for rain runoff of the manure. H.B. 3165 also has stronger standards for building waste storage pits or lagoons that will help prevent leaking. Your calls and e-mail, fax or other quick action is urgently needed to support House Bill 3165. Act now!



Illinois Senate Bill 1707 Really Stinks!

As the megahog factory farm fight heats up, some pretty stinky legislation has been proposed to appease the public. Do not be fooled! Even though area Senators Hawkinson and Shadid are part of S.B. 1707, it is a bad bill. Contact your state Senator and tell your strong opposition to Senate Bill 1707. This bill is basically written by the hog industry and will weaken the already inadequate and too few rules that exist regarding megahog factory farms. S.B. 1707 allows an increased amount of manure dumping on farm fields. This will be a real threat to surface water contamination and a longer term threat to overloading the soil with phosphorus and other substances. Act now! Call your Illinois Senator and oppose S.B. 1707.

ONE EARTH, ONE CHANCE®

☐ **Yes**, I want to help safeguard our children's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

Name

Address

City

State Zip

Phone (Optional) ()

Annual dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter. Dues are not tax-deductible.

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Enclose check and mail to:

Sierra Club
P.O. Box 52968
Boulder, CO
80322-2968



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Thanks

to State Representative Ricca Slone

As a new State Representative, Ricca Slone deserves our thanks for her exceptional efforts on behalf of environmental issues. She is an activist in the megahog farm battle and she has helped sponsor several bills that we can all appreciate. The Slone/Andrea Moore Illinois Smart Growth Task Force Bill 0365 would create a task force to examine the causes and consequences of converting agricultural land to other uses and make recommendations for the continued use of land for ag purposes. Her H.B. 2995 would have amended the Illinois Pesticide Act to require applicators to annually report to the Illinois Department of Agriculture the types and amounts of pesticides and herbicides applied. The Department of Agriculture would then have to compile a report that would be publicly accessible to see the volume of pesticides and by county and watershed. Thanks for all your hard work, Ricca!

HOI Group Calendar

May

- 14 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**
THU Joyce Blumenshine's home, 120 W. Arcadia, Peoria. Call Joyce at 688-0950 for directions.
- 16 Illinois Chapter Executive Committee Meeting, 9 a.m.**
SAT The HOI Group hosts the Illinois State Sierra Chapter Executive Committee Meeting at the Alpha Park Public Library, 3527 S. Airport Rd., Bartonville. You are welcome to attend and hear your state Excom in action.
- 20 Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**
WED Forest Park Nature Center. *Mark Beorkrem, Navigation Expansion: It's All About Money and Water.* Everyone is welcome!
- 23 Mackinaw River Canoe Outing, 8 a.m.**
SAT Canoe "the prettiest section" of the Mackinaw River with 1997 Conservationist of the Year Mary Jo Adams. Birdwatching, seining for fish, viewing a hillside prairie and the Nature Conservancy Bateman property are possibilities. Meet at Forest Park Nature Center. Bring a sack lunch, something to drink, and a complete set of dry clothes in a heavy plastic bag. **Canoes and life preservers provided. Reservations are required by May 15.** Call the Hotline, mailbox 3, or Mary Bodell at 745-5479. (*This outing was rescheduled from April due to high waters on the Mackinaw.*)



June

- 6 National Trails Day**
SAT **Rock Island Trail Bike Outing, 11:00 a.m.**
Celebrate National Trails Day with a bicycle ride on the Rock Island Trail. Meet at 11:00 a.m. in the main Trail parking lot at the west edge of Alta. Bring water, a hat, and dress for the weather. We will ride to Princeville and have lunch in Dunlap on the way back. For information phone 688-0950.
- 11 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**
THU Mary Bodell's home, 2267 Hollands Grove Road, Washington. Call Mary at 745-5479 for directions.
- 17 Annual Potluck Picnic & White Elephant Auction, 6:30 p.m.**
WED Detweiller Park, Pine picnic shelter. See front page for more details.
- 20 Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup, 9 a.m.**
SAT Route 26 volunteers meet at the Total Gas Station at the Rt. 26 & 116 intersection. Route 40 volunteers meet at the Fry Farm at the intersection of Rt. 40 and Singing Woods Road. Gloves and hard-soled shoes are recommended. Sorry, no helpers under 10 years due to safety concerns. For more information, or if you have not viewed the safety video (required), call Grayce Hayworth at 246-8397.
- Other 1998 Adopt-A-Highway dates:
Sept. 19 • Nov. 14
- 22 Newsletter Deadline**
MON Send articles for July and August to: John Wosik, 3403 W. Richwoods Blvd., Peoria, IL 61604, or jwosik@mtco.com

27-28 Apple River Canyon Camping Trip

Leave early on Saturday for some easy hiking and camping at the Apple River Canyon State Park at the far northwestern border of Illinois. The Apple River has been named by American Rivers as one of the most endangered rivers in the U.S. On Sunday we will explore more of the area by car, and look for the megahog farms that threaten the river's ecosystem. Potluck camp dinner will be planned. For information phone Joyce at 688-0950.



July

- 1 Newsletter Mailing, 7 p.m.**
WED Peoria Pizza Works; Everyone welcome!

Other Events: (Not sponsored by the Sierra Club but provided as a public service.)

Prairie Dawgs Work Crew

Work includes prairie burns, brush cutting, eradicating alien plants, native plant seeding, and planting root stock. Crews meet the 1st & 3rd Saturdays at 9 a.m. at Hal Gardner's old house about 2.4 miles west of Jubilee- Princeville Rd. on Jubilee-Brimfield Rd. Call Hal Gardner at 446-9792 for directions.

Pimiteoui Trail Association

WALK FOR WILDLIFE PRAIRIE PARK

Saturday, May 16th - check-in at 8:30 a.m. for a 2 or 4 mile walk. Entry fee is \$20. with all proceeds to benefit the park. For info/registration form call 688-1165.

THE Interplanetary Bicycle Ride
....coming to our galaxy July 25th & 26th!
Watch for more details in the July-August Tallgrass Sierran!

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

HOTLINE: Local Meetings & Outings • Action Alerts • 745-1920
Public Contacts • Leave Messages

Executive Committee

Chair	Joyce Blumenshine	688-0950
Vice-Chair / Newsletter Editor	John Wosik	682-8950
Secretary / Chapter Delegate	Cindy Ewing	693-1881
Membership Chair	Cindy Matthias	686-4134
Alternate Chapter Delegate	Rudy Habben	685-5605
	Michael Ingram	686-2824
	Laurel Williams	244-7238
Treasurer	Grayce Haworth	246-8397
Conservation Chair	Ralph Ginn	274-3289
I-TAN / Acting Outings Chair	Mary Bodell	745-5479
Calendar Sales	Chris Meydam	682-0549

HEART OF ILLINOIS

Sierra Club

P.O. Box 3593
Peoria, IL 61614

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... To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth ...

