



# Tallgrass Sierran

September/October 2001 Volume 29 No. 5

THE HEART OF ILLINOIS GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB ♦ P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614 ☎ (309) 637-1393

## HOI GROUP MEETINGS

WED  
SEPT 19

**HOI Conservationist of the Year**  
**Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.**

Karen Hudson, factory farming activist, will be accepting the 2001 HOI Conservationist of the Year Award. Karen is a founder and president of F.A.R.M. (Families Against Rural Messes). She currently works for the New York based Grace Factory Farm Project and resides in rural Elmwood. Karen has agreed to update us on the efforts of F.A.R.M. and Grace to combat mega-livestock operations in rural Illinois.

A short slideshow on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge will also be presented. *All are welcome! Refreshments served after the meeting.*

WED  
OCT 17

**Angkor Wat, Thailand, and the Bridge on the River Kwai**  
**Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.**

Al Harkrader will give us a slide presentation of a recent trip to southeast Asia. Coffee, lemonade, cake, cookies, and pie will be available after the meeting. This is a special event to celebrate Al Harkrader's great slide show. All are welcome! Treat yourself to a Fun Night Out and bring a friend!

## ICC Hillside Bluff

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Thanks to everyone who has written in efforts to encourage the Illinois Central College Board and President to oppose college road access for a private subdivision on the bluff above Routes 116 and 24. There are concerns that the issue may be brought up again at the September 20th, ICC Board meeting, which will be held at the downtown Peoria campus, at 3:00 p.m. The meeting is open to the public. Write to Dr. John S. Erwin, President, Illinois Central College, and to Mary Heller, President, ICC Board, at One College Drive, East Peoria, IL 61611.

## THE MAINSTREAM HAS SHIFTED

BY RALPH GINN

In the 1980's Mr. and Mrs. America repeatedly told pollsters they were conservationists, but when specific issues were on the table they didn't walk the talk. Ronald Reagan and his Secretary of Interior, James Watt, thumbed their collective noses at the environment with impunity. Environmentalists were, "out of the mainstream." Well, that stream's channel has shifted since the 1980's. The new millennium has seen conservation and environmentalism arise as a force of culture and politics.

In the November 2000 election three incumbent Senators, Gorton (WA), Abraham (MI), and Grams (MN) were defeated by much greener challengers. An AP poll shows that Americans oppose drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) by a margin of 55% to 33%. The Bush energy plan was met with a chilly greeting from the public and the Congress. The House voted in June to ban mineral extraction from monuments and the

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Senate voted in July to bar coal mining and oil and gas drilling on pristine federal lands in the West. Although, the House recently voted an Energy Bill that would permit drilling in the ANWR, the Senate is expected to send that provision to the guillotine. In Illinois we have witnessed an evolution of government funds for conservation projects. Millions from Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Open Lands Trust Initiative, Illinois Rivers 2020, and wonder-of-wonders, the U.S. Congress has finally agreed to spend some of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) billions on.....CONSERVATION! The original intended use, but never before realized since LWCF's inception in 1964.

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's) invaded the Midwest in the 1990's. Insufferable odors, ground and stream water contamination soon followed. The lives of CAFO neighbors were degraded and to paraphrase a line from the movie Network, "They're mad as hell and they aren't going to take it anymore." People like Karen Hudson, HOI's Conservationist of the Year, are building a wall of resistance that is braking the impending CAFO train wreck.

In 1961, when I arrived in Central Illinois, the Peoria Journal Star was a newspaper that was mired in far-right environmental politics. And it stayed that way for nearly three decades. But the Illinois River began to silt upward before our very eyes and that alone catalyzed a new era in the way the media

■ see page 2 ■

■ Mainstream, from page 1 ■ viewed conservation. Today, the Journal Star cranks out 3 or 4 editorials a month that advocate for environmental issues.

Final proof that our time has come is soaring membership in conservation and environmental groups. The Chicago Sierra Group gained 800 members in the first three months of this year. HOI is up over 100 since January. The BIG MO is with us.



## Plum Island Update

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Audubon activist Don Goerne says that there are still many concerns regarding protection of Plum Island, located in the river below Starved Rock at Starved Rock State Park. The developers who want to build a resort on the island are also looking at property on the north side of the river across from the state park. Any development on the scale that is being proposed would be detrimental to the many eagles using the area. There is added concern that the Army Corps of Engineers wants to have twelve acres condemned for dredge spoil dumping, also on the north side of the river within view from Starved Rock. Write your concerns for protection of Plum Island and oppose the location of any dredge dumping by the Army Corps of Engineers that will blight the Starved Rock State Park view. Ask that the resort developers be encouraged to find a different location and that Plum Island be protected for the eagles and the future of Starved Rock. Letters can be sent to:

Brent Manning, Director, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources,  
524 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62701-1787, and to

Commander William J. Bayles,  
Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,  
P.O. Box 2004, Rock Island, IL 61204-2004.



## Recreation Fee Demo Program

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Sierra Club and a variety of outdoor groups are opposing the U.S. Forest Service program called the Recreation Fee Demo Program. This program will force Americans to pay a fee to walk on public lands. Sierra Club literature describes the Recreation Fee Demo program as being implemented by Congress at the wishes of the American Recreation Coalition (ARC), which is an industry group representing high-impact recreation interests. ARC encourages privatization, commercialization, and motorization of public lands. Members of ARC include the American Hotel and Motel Assoc., Yamaha and Suzuki Motor Corps., the Recreation Vehicle Industry Assoc., and others. The Recreation Fee Demonstration Program was authorized by a rider to the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 1996 (PL 104-134) as a 3 year test program "to demonstrate the feasibility of user-generated cost recovery for the operation and maintenance of recreation areas or sites on public lands". More information about this is at the Wild Wilderness website: [www.wildwilderness.org](http://www.wildwilderness.org) which is a coalition opposing the fee demo program. Wild Wilderness has prepared a video about the Recreation Fee Demo Program. A local copy can be borrowed by calling Joyce at 688-0950. Letters are needed to your U. S. Senators Durbin and Fitzgerald and to your U.S. Representative asking for an end to the Fee Demo program and that Congress approve adequate funding for recreation facilities on public lands.



## We Need You!

### HOI Group Seeking Excom Nominations

The HOI 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 Nominating Committee Chair Norman Ewing (686-4122) by October 17. The EXCOM positions will be for a 2-year period (2002-2003).

Any member not considered by the Nominating Committee, but who would like to be on the ballot can submit a petition with the signatures of 15 HOI Group members to Joyce Blumenshine (688-0950) by Oct. 17. Ballots will be mailed with the November-December newsletter and counted at the November HOI Group meeting.

# Roadless Rule Redux

What Part of 1 Million Comments Didn't They Understand?

*(Reprinted from the September 2001 issue of the Planet, an activist newsletter of the Sierra Club)*

By Kim Todd

When Sierra Club President Jennifer Ferenstein put a stack of "One-Minute Activist" letters on Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth's desk, she promised it was merely a down payment.

The letters, clipped, signed and sent by readers of the July/August Planet, demanded that the Forest Service immediately implement the Roadless Area Conservation Rule.

Enacted by former President Clinton before he left office in January, the rule bans logging and roadbuilding on 58.5 million acres of national forest land. Activists are gearing up for another skirmish in the battle for wild forests, in response to the Forest Service's call for still more input on the rule.

Apparently, more than 1 million comments and 600 hearings weren't enough for the Bush administration, which wants the Forest Service to revisit and revise the rule. The 60-day comment period ending Sept. 10 is the first step in this process. Meanwhile, the rule remains tied up in district court in lawsuits brought by the state of Idaho, Boise-Cascade and others.

The Forest Service is seeking responses to 10 questions, many addressing complaints about the rule made by timber companies. One asks, "What is the best way to implement the laws that ensure states, tribes, organizations and private citizens have reasonable access to property they own within inventoried roadless areas?" Another deals with the danger of wildfires.

"There's nothing in the questions they ask that wasn't already considered in the previous, comprehensive process," said Club Wildlands Committee member Laura Hoehn. "Clearly this is just an attempt to revisit issues that have already been decided in order to produce a result that is more favorable to logging and other forms of development."

Rallying people to pick up their pens again is not as hard as one might think, according to Tanya Tolchin, associate representative in Washington, D.C.

"The difference is that now the target is President Bush and his administration's multiple attacks on the environment. People are outraged by what they're seeing, and they want to get involved again," she said.

Hundreds of One-Minute Activist letters from Planet readers have been pouring in to the Club's Washington, D.C., office, some with notes added to the prepared coupon.

The more personal the comments, the better.

Forest Service personnel who counted the previous round of comments categorized them in two ways - as "responses" and "responses and comment," according to Tolchin. A letter or even a preprinted postcard with just a few words penciled in - "preserve grizzly bear habitat" or "I've hiked in the Great Burn, and it's worth saving" - went into a different pile. A letter expressing specific concerns almost always has more weight, she said.

The two main concerns in any revision of the rule are that roadbuilding and logging decisions could revert to individual districts, where timber companies traditionally hold more sway, and that the Tongass National Forest in Alaska would be denied protection.

If the Department of Agriculture decides to draw up a new rule, it will launch a second comment period. This will be

followed by a draft environmental impact statement, another round of comments with hearings and a final decision.

But for now, the focus is on this first push for comments and on actions in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

On behalf of the Sierra Club and other environmental groups, Earthjustice has appealed a district court injunction that blocked the roadbuilding ban from taking effect. Scheduled to be heard before a three-judge panel in October, the appeal challenges arguments by the state of Idaho and Boise-Cascade that the roadless rule process was hasty and inadequate.

"Our contention is that the process was not only sufficient under the law, but that it surpassed all legal requirements," said Timothy Preso, a staff attorney for Earthjustice.

If the injunction is overturned, the rule will take effect immediately. The ongoing lawsuit in district court, which will determine whether the rule stands permanently, probably won't be decided before the new year.

Among all the court dates and administrative procedures, it's important to remember what's at stake, according to Preso.

"It's not the Clinton legacy versus the Bush legacy," he said. "You start talking about 'roadless areas' and it has a bureaucratic quality, but what we're really talking about is the last vestiges of pristine forest land."

## Take Action:

Write to Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth and ask him to let the Roadless Area Conservation Rule stand as written in the January 2001 Record of Decision. Add that the rule should protect the Tongass, and that you oppose forest-by-forest decisions on logging, roadbuilding and other development. According to the Forest Service Web site, you do not need to address the 10 questions, but be sure to add that you are making an official comment on the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on

Roadless Area Conservation. To see the entire list of questions, go to [www.roadless.fs.fed.us/xcomments.shtml](http://www.roadless.fs.fed.us/xcomments.shtml).

Write to USDA-Forest Service - CAT, Attention: Roadless ANPR Comments, P.O. Box 221090, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84122; e-mail [roadless\\_anpr@fs.fed.us](mailto:roadless_anpr@fs.fed.us); fax (801) 296-4090, Attention: Roadless ANPR Comments.



## Membership

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

Name

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☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa Exp Date /

Cardholder Name

Card Number

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
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REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32


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# HOI Group Calendar

## September

- 8 SAT Illinois Chapter Sierra Club Executive Board Meeting**  
Hosted by the Woods & Wetlands Group near Chicago. Phone Rudy (685-5605) or Joyce (688-0950) if you are interested in attending.
- 12 WED Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
Joseph Laszlo's home, 330 S. Barnewolt Dr., Peoria. Call 637-4692 for directions.
- 15 SAT Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup, 9 a.m.**   
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 Haworth at 246-8397.
- 19 WED Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
Forest Park Nature Center. *Karen Hudson, HOI Conservationist of the Year presentation, and an update on mega-livestock operations in rural Illinois. Also: Arctic National Wildlife Refuge slideshow.* Everyone is welcome!
- 23 SUN Hike at Jubilee College, 2 p.m.**  
Meet at the Historical Building parking lot for an hour or so easy hike. Call Joyce at 688-0950 for information.



## October

- 6 SAT Hennepin Backwater Restoration Tour, 9 a.m.**  
 Meet at Forest Park Nature Center. The Wetlands Initiative has restricted public access to the Hennepin restoration site as water levels continue to rise and mammals recolonize the area. HOI Sierra has permission to view the changing landscape from the surrounding five mile long levee. Parking is very limited at the access point. Please call (309) 685-5605 and leave a message if you plan to attend.
- 10 WED Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
Joyce Blumenshine's home, 120 W. Arcadia Ave., Peoria. Call 688-0950 for directions.
- 17 WED Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
Forest Park Nature Center. *Al Harkrader: Angkor Wat, Thailand, and the Bridge on the River Kwai.* Everyone is welcome!
- 19 FRI Newsletter Deadline**  
Send articles for November and December to: John Wosik, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap, IL 61525, or johnwosik@home.com.
- 20-21 SAT-SUN Sand Ridge State Forest Campout**  
Join us at the Sand Ridge State Forest for a late fall campout. Bring your own camping equipment and food to share to the main campground on Saturday afternoon. We will have an evening social and Sunday we will hike the trails, viewing some areas that have had selective logging. Call Rudy at 685-5605 if you plan to participate or for more information.
- 24 WED Newsletter Mailing**  
Peoria Pizza Works; *Everyone welcome.*

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

### Illinois River Sweep 2001

**Sept. 15 (Sat.), 8 a.m. to noon**  
**Cookout to Follow**

Meet at Cutright Park on Front Street in Chillicothe to help sweep the islands and the Senachwine Creek sand bar. This is the 2nd annual one-day cleanup of the Illinois River. Call Ron Dumbar at 309 274-9121 for more information or e-mail: [northamptonhillprairies@bwsys.net](mailto:northamptonhillprairies@bwsys.net)



### Forest Park Nature Center Book Club

Sept. 27, 7 pm – *The Great Work*,  
by Thomas Berry  
Oct. 25, 7 pm – *Affluenza*  
by John DeGraff, David Wann, and Thomas H. Naylor

Copies of all chosen books may be purchased at the Trailhead Nature Store at a 25% discount. For more information, call Kristin Jacobson at 686-3360.



### Prairie Day at Forest Park Nature Center

**Oct. 7 (Sun.), 1:30-4:30 p.m.**

A day for the whole family! There will be hikes to see the prairie, workshops for the prairie enthusiast, as well as crafts and storytelling for the whole family.

### Prairie Dawgs Work Crew

We need volunteers! 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 more information.

## Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

**Hotline:** Local Meetings & Outings • Action Alerts  
• Public Contacts • Leave Messages (309) 637-1393

### Executive Committee

**Chair** ..... Joseph Laszlo ..... 637-4692  
**Vice-Chair** ..... Rudy Habben ..... 685-5605  
**Secretary** ..... Joyce Blumenshine ..... 688-0950  
**Treasurer** ..... Grayce Haworth ..... 246-8397  
**Conservation Chair** ..... Ralph Ginn ..... 274-3289  
**Outings Chair** ..... Richard Klatt ..... 274-3792  
**Newsletter Editor / Chapter Del** John Wosik ..... 243-2230  
\*\*\*\*\*  
**Membership Chair** ..... Norman Ewing ..... 686-4122  
**Calendar Sales** ..... Emiko Yang ..... 691-5213

HEART OF ILLINOIS

*Sierra Club* 

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