



Tallgrass Sierran

March/April 2009 Volume 37 No. 2

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

HOI Group Meetings

WED
MAR 18

Recycling 2009

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

The Village of Peoria Heights has a contract with Eagle Recycling Company of Galva, Illinois to collect and recycle paper, plastic, metal and glass. The owners and operators of the firm, Paul and Jaque Jaguet, will give an overview of the recycling industry in 2009. *All are welcome!*

WED
APR 15

Cooking in Greece

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

The sparkling Aegean Sea, the sunny Dodecanese Isle of Kos, the aroma of moussaka in the oven, what could be better? Al and Mary Harkrader give you a tour and a taste of Greece. *All are welcome!*

Appeal Filed Regarding Illinois Pollution Control Board Decision for Peoria Disposal Company Waste

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

At the January 21st, Heart of Illinois Sierra group meeting, the group voted to proceed with an appeal of the Illinois Pollution Control Board (IPCB) decision approving the Peoria Disposal Company (PDC) request to delist Electric Arc Furnace Dust waste (EAFD). As Sierra members, we are "one club" and court cases are filed under "Sierra Club" and not a specific local group. HOI obtained national Sierra club approval to proceed with the appeal. The appeal is being

(See *PDC*, page 2)

A Moment Too Late

BY RALPH GINN, *Opinion Columnist*

The election and inauguration are finished, but before we move on, some reflection is good for the public memory. In the four months prior to the day Barack Obama became our President, George Bush rushed through regulations and policies that, if left in place, will have alarming consequences for the environment. On election day, November 4, the Bush administration announced a plan to open up 160,000 acres of Utah's Red-rock Wilderness to oil and gas drilling. Some of this public land is adjacent to Arches and Canyonlands National Parks. In October Bush announced yet another plan to strip wolves of their endangered species protection and turn their management over to the states. A year ago Bush did essentially the same thing but was blocked by a court injunction, after 110 wolves were killed by state agents and hunters. In December Bush implemented a rule that frees federal agencies from having to consult independent biologists before approving any construction or extraction that could lead to the extinction of birds, fish, mammals, or other endangered species. This would put the fate of many species, that are on the brink, into the hands of industry biased departments like the Corps of Engineers, and The Forestry Service. Also, the Bush Interior Department eased rules on mountaintop mining companies which will allow them to dump waste into rivers and streams, and the Environmental Protection Agency relaxed restrictions on water and air pollution from factory farms (CAFOs).

Some of these transgressions can be stopped or changed by the Obama administration but some will be difficult to counter. New rules will have to be put in place, some of which will require Congressional approval, a process that is always slow and often an invitation for pork barrel additions. It is likely that a few of the new Bush rules will disappear only if environmental groups challenge them in court.

The upside is that President Obama is committed to a strong environmental agenda. The first time I had heard of him was in the spring of 2004, when the Illinois Chapter of Sierra Club endorsed him in the democratic primary for the U.S. Senate. He has a daunting array of important issues confronting him and environmental concerns will be in line behind a sinking economy. Nevertheless, Mr. Obama has pledged to support new energy policies, including energy sources other than fossil fuels, and to reducing global warming gases. A recent report by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration states that irreversible damage from climate change has already occurred. The report defines "irreversible" as change that would remain 1,000 years if humans stopped adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere immediately. Spokesperson Susan Solomon says, "Climate change is slow but it is unstoppable." The report concludes that if carbon dioxide levels peak at 450-600 parts per million the result would be decreases in dry-season rainfall that are comparable to the North American Dust

(See *Too Late*, page 2)



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

GLOBAL WARMING SOLUTIONS GROUP OF CENTRAL ILLINOIS



BY KIERSTEN SHEETS

Our first Cool Cities presentation was given to the Peoria Area League of Women Voters on Saturday, January 17, 2009. They have voted to join our Cool Cities coalition. We would like to begin presenting to many more groups to build a coalition of interested community members backing the agenda of Cool Cities. If anyone reading this article would like to have us come to a meeting you are a member of (other than HOI Sierra), please let me know. We are very excited about our first success story and want to have many more.

The library display will be in Eureka for the month of February. A newly designed display will be in Brimfield for the month of March and Creve Coeur will host in April. Please let us know if you would like to see the display in a library near you!

Please remember you can take your spent CFLs to Home Depot for recycling. You can also visit the GWSG's site at Cash & Carry Lumber in East Peoria.

Our website is trotting right along thanks to Todd Abercrombie. Please visit for future events and interesting information: www.gwsolutionsgroup.com. Or join our Yahoo! Group: ciglobalwarmingsolutions. For more information contact Kiersten Sheets at wtigerme@yahoo.com or 309-251-4950.

(PDC, from page 1)

done in conjunction with Peoria Families Against Toxic Waste (PFATW). Attorney David Wentworth, of the Peoria law firm Hasselberg, Grebe, Snodgrass and Birdsall, is handling the appeal for Sierra and PFATW. EAFD waste is a federally listed hazardous waste which must be treated and landfilled in a licensed hazardous waste landfill.

The IPCB decision allows PDC to use a new treatment process on the EAFD and send it to municipal waste landfills. This will enable PDC to keep from reaching capacity at their hazardous waste landfill at Peoria, while they continue taking in EAFD waste, which is their largest waste entity. An estimated 95,000 cubic yards a year will be diverted from the hazardous waste landfill and shipped to a municipal waste landfill. Donations are needed to help with expenses for this effort. Please make your check out to Heart of IL Group Sierra Club, and indicate " PDC " on the check. Mail to: HOI Sierra, P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614.

(Too Late, from page 1)

Bowl of the 1930s (present carbon dioxide levels are 380-400 and rising). Regions affected will include northern Africa, southern Europe, southwestern North America, southern Africa and western Australia. The first three weeks of the Obama presidency are encouraging. Bob Herbert, op-ed writer for the New York Times says, "What we have been watching is leadership. Mr. Obama has been feeding the almost desperate hunger in this country for mature leadership, for someone who is not reckless and clownish, shortsighted and self-absorbed." But, Mr. Obama, don't be the

man who can't chew gum and tie his shoes at the same time, you've got an environmental catastrophe staring your country in the face, be true to your energy and global warming promises.

Let's close the memory of George Bush with two of his infamous quotes. "It isn't pollution that's harming the environment, it's the impunities in our air and water that are doing it." He later followed with, "I stand by all the mis-statements that I've made." Goodbye George, may you and your boundless nullity be erased from the public mind, forever.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



It's time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power. Let your voice be heard.

**Add your voice to protect the planet.
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Card Number _____
Exp. Date ____/____/____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
Standard	<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/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to 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 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club,
P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968
or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Industry Coal Strip Mine Destroying the Last Remnants of Historic Chandler Woods

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Concerned citizens in Macomb requested a hearing regarding the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Office of Mines and Minerals (OMM) fifth renewal of the Industry coal strip mine permit Number 16. Industry is a small town about nine miles south of Macomb, however the actual strip mine is located closer to Colchester to the west. Mine permits are renewed for five years at a time. Permit 16 covered 2,750.8 acres in 1991. Much of the strip mined area was forest. A mine document appeared to indicate that 766 acres of forest would be restored in Permit 16, but it is difficult to see where this has been done. The Industry Mine is actually a conglomeration of multiple mine permits, approved since the 1980s. There have been numerous boundary revisions and changes to the permits. Industry mine permit Number 357 includes a massive coal haul road crossing at Grindstone Creek. This permit is being contested in court. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommended denial of the permit, however, OMM approved it in 2003. Indiana Bats were documented in the permit area. There was also a large heron rookery in a section of Grindstone Creek. A court decision to revoke Permit 357 would mean all the forest and creek destruction for the haul road is for naught. Sadly, what is left of the great Chandler Woods of McDonough County is continuing to be destroyed for strip mining. Illinois Sierra has funds for volunteers to be trained to do water monitoring. Volunteers are needed for monitoring from public roads in the mine area. For more information phone 309-688-0950.



A view of Grindstone Creek, south of Macomb, McDonough County, which has a historic heron roost. Indiana Bats, a federally endangered species, were documented to be using the creek area and a bat roost tree was found with 46 bats flying out when disturbed. The steep bank and thick woods are part of what was once the thousands of acres of Chandler Woods, the largest contiguous woodland left in the county, before Freeman Coal Company, now Springfield Coal LLC, began strip mining the area in the 1980s. A new section of the strip mine will continue destroying hundreds of acres of forest. A mammoth haul road is being constructed over Grindstone Creek. Greg Arnett, engineer for Capital Resources Development Company who filed for the proposed Banner Mine, and is now North Canton LLC, with the proposed North Canton mine, is the engineer for all of these coal strip mines. The Industry Mines have a stack of violations about 1/4 inch thick. Photo: Joyce Blumenshine



Many thanks to the following who recently stepped up and donated much needed funds to the HOI Sierra Group. Your support is greatly appreciated!

For the General Fund:

Amy Blumenshine & Michael Troutman
Emiko Yang

For the PDC Fight Fund:

Dennis Ford

For Newsletter Support:

Glenn Zipp

IDNR Planning to Schedule Hearings For North Canton Strip Mine Permit

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Congratulations to members of Canton Area Citizens for the Environment, who have been getting many letters to the editor in area newspapers to inform people of problems regarding the proposed North Canton coal strip mine. Citizens from around Canton and members of HOI are waiting for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to set a date for an Administrative Review hearing of the North Canton strip mine permit. The hearing is to review issues regarding the mine impacts and other matters in which citizens

contend the IDNR has failed legal requirements in approving the permit. A hearing officer chosen by IDNR will be in charge of the review and will decide on the issues after evidence is presented by all concerned parties.

Members of HOI and Banner area citizens participated in the same process during an Administrative Review of the Banner strip mine permit, which took 15 days spread out over 6 months. The Banner review is not yet finished, as attorneys for each side have additional filings for the case.

HOI Group Calendar

March

5 THU Global Warming Solutions Group Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Peoria Public Library, 2nd floor conference room, downtown Peoria. Check <http://gwsolutionsgroup.wordpress.com> for more information.

11 Executive Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
WED Wendy Marquis' home, 13707 N. Lucerne Dr., Dunlap. Call 645-6263 for directions.


18 **Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**
WED Forest Park Nature Center. *Paul and Jaque Jaquet from Eagle Recycling Company, Recycling 2009.* Everyone is welcome!



April

2 THU Global Warming Solutions Group Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Peoria Public Library, 2nd floor conference room, downtown Peoria. Check <http://gwsolutionsgroup.wordpress.com> for more information.

8 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.
WED Judy Stalling's home, 1311 W. Moss,
Peoria. Call 673-4673 for directions.


11 SAT **Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup,**
9 a.m.  Meet at the Fry Farm at 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, call Rudy Habben at 685-5605.

15 **Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**
WED Forest Park Nature Center. *Al and Mary Harkrader, Cooking in Greece.* Everyone is welcome!

20
MON

Newsletter Deadline
Send articles for May/June to: John
Wosik, 12409 N Blackhawk Ct, Dunlap,
IL 61525, or johnwosik@comcast.net

21
TUE

 **John Muir's Birthday**

'Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul alike.'

- *The Yosemite* (1912), page 256

"Keep close to Nature's heart... and break clear away, once in awhile, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean."

22
WED



27 MON Newsletter Mailing, 6:30 p.m.
Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 N. Prospect
Rd., Peoria Heights

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

March 21 (Sat)

Peoria City Council Candidate Forum, 9:30 am
The Peoria Area League of Women Voters will host a Peoria City Council Candidate Forum at the Radisson in West Peoria. A breakfast buffet is available at 9 a.m. This forum will focus on the City Council's environmental agenda.

April 17-18 (Fri-Sat)

Illinois Sustainable Living & Wellness Expo
Join over 100 exhibitors and 20 presenters at the Illinois Wesleyan University Shirk Center to learn about the many aspects of sustainability and wellness. Other activities include a fuel-efficient vehicles exhibit, children's carnival, labyrinth walks, free massages, and organic food. The event is free and open to the public. Check www.islwe.org for more information.

April 25 (Sat)

Earth Day at Forest Park Nature Center,
11 am - 4 pm
Locate local resources, identify environmentally-friendly products, and learn what you can do to make a difference. Enjoy music, storytelling, and other live entertainment, try out some tasty local food, and locate educational materials. Check www.peoriaparks.org/forest-park-nature-center for more information.

April 26-27 (Sun-Mon)

Clean Water Celebration at the Gateway Building, GAR Hall, and the Peoria Civic Center, downtown Peoria. Check http://sunfoundation.org/?page_id=19 for more information.

Prairie Dawgs Work Crew

The Prairie Dawgs meet the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month at Jubilee State Park. Work includes prairie burns, brush cutting, eradicating alien plants, native plant seeding, and planting root stock. Call 243-2230 for more information.

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614 Hotline: (309) 637-1393

Executive Committee

Chair	Robert Jorgensen ..	698-0325	jestpr@aol.com
Vice Chair	Rudy Habben	685-5605	
Secretary	Kiersten Sheets ...	249-2095	
Conservation Co-Chair			wtigerme@yahoo.com
/ Chapter Delegate	Tom Edwards	637-1979	
Outings Chair /			
Alt. Chapter Delegate	Wendy Marquis ..	645-6263	wendyjmarquis @yahoo.com
	Judy Stalling	673-4673	
	Jim Thomas	673-0083	

Conservation Co-Chair	Joyce Blumenshine	688-0950	joblumen@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Chris Golden . . .	579-2967	
Membership Chair . . .	Norman Ewing . . .	686-4122	
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HEART OF ILLINOIS

Sierra Club

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