

# SIERRASCAPE

Eastern Missouri Group - Missouri Chapter      Volume 39, Number 1 - Spring 2022



*Day hikers at Mountain Hughes. Photo by George Behrens*

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**SIERRA  
CLUB**

**Enjoy, Explore & Protect the Planet**

# Call for Submissions for EMG Newsletters

The mission of the Eastern Missouri Group Newsletter Committee is to provide EMG members and supporters with information on local Sierra Club activities, conservation issues, upcoming events and outings, recent accomplishments and volunteer opportunities. The Newsletter Committee is responsible for creating the bi-annual publication of the *SierraScape* newsletter and the monthly e-newsletter.

Please visit the **EMG website** to read our full submission guidelines and deadlines for submission. Over 20 years in publication, *SierraScape* is a wholly volunteer effort. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions, please reach out to us via email. The Newsletter Committee members are Tim Elwell, Caroline Pufalt, Charles Whitt, and Caitlin Zera.

**Fall SierraScape Deadline:**  
August 22, 2022

**E-Newsletter Deadline:**  
Third Monday of each month

Submission Guidelines:  
[sierraclub.org/missouri/  
eastern-missouri/sierrascape](http://sierraclub.org/missouri/eastern-missouri/sierrascape)

Email:  
[emg.missouri.sierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:emg.missouri.sierraclub@gmail.com)

# Photo Feature: Shaw Nature Reserve



Photo by: Matthew Self during an EMG outing to Shaw Nature Reserve

## Volunteer Opportunities



- EMG Treasurer
- Conservation Committee

Contact: [emg.missouri.sierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:emg.missouri.sierraclub@gmail.com)

## Find Latest Outings



View upcoming outings on the online calendar!

[sierraclub.org/missouri/eastern-missouri](http://sierraclub.org/missouri/eastern-missouri)

**SIERRASCAPE** A biannual publication of the Eastern Missouri Group

### EMG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chapter Chair: Ken Schechtman  
Vice Chair: Caitlin Zera  
Secretary: Stephanie Todd  
Treasurer: Robert Roberson  
Tim Elwell  
John Feldmann  
Glenn May  
Diana Oleskevich

### MISSOURI STAFF

Michael Berg  
Leah Clyburn  
Billy Davies  
Jenn DeRose  
Sara Edgar  
Marisa Frazier  
Britt Harris  
Andy Heaslet

Natalie Johnson  
Andy Knott  
Ashton Kuehnel  
Rajiv Ravulapati  
Kane Sheek  
Brian Smith  
Ed Smith  
Gretchen Waddell Barwick



For a full directory of committee leaders, please visit [www.sierraclub.org/missouri](http://www.sierraclub.org/missouri)

# In-Person Outings Leader Training Resumes

BY GEORGE BEHRENS

Outings Co-Chair

On March 5th the Outings Committee hosted an in-person Outings Leaders Workshop (OLW) at the Sierra Club office. This effort to restart the Outings Program after the year and a half pandemic shutdown was met with enthusiasm and energy. All attendees were masked and vaccinated.

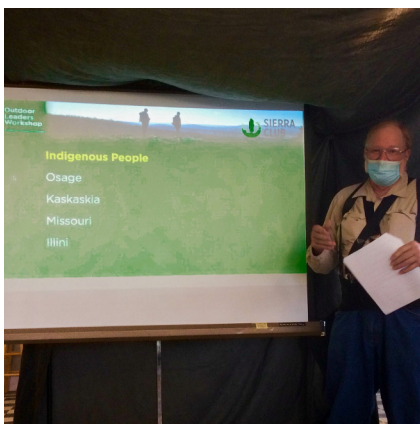
The Outings Committee welcomed eight new leader candidates and two returning leaders to the training. Outings Committee members were also in attendance.

The topics covered included updated Sierra Club policies, recent legislative action, first aid kits, the basics of leading an outing, the Inspiring Connections Outdoors program and filling out Club safety forms. Other topics covered were leadership of day hikes, backpacks, canoe trips and trail-building outings. The locally-produced video 'How to Lead a Hike' was shown. You can find local outings on at [sierraclub.org/missouri](https://sierraclub.org/missouri).

***Interested in becoming an Outings Leader?***

Reach out to:

[georgebehrens53@sbcglobal.net](mailto:georgebehrens53@sbcglobal.net)



Workshop attendees participate in a session on Missouri Land Acknowledgments.

Photo by: Toni Armstrong



Photo by: Natalie Johnson

## Sierra Club Lobby Day Returns in 2022

BY CAROLINE PUFALT

Conservation Committee Chair

After a 2 year COVID-19 hiatus, intrepid Sierra Club volunteers traveled to Jefferson City early on April 6 to lobby for our environment. It was a busy day at the Capitol due to a legislative backlog. Yet volunteers connected with legislators about hazardous waste standards, rights to solar energy, protecting public lands and reducing carbon emissions. Thanks to Legislative staff, Michael Berg, for his effective organizing skills, as this event requires coordination. Our voices are so important!

It was a first experience at Sierra Club Lobby Day for local volunteers, including newly elected Executive Committee member Stephanie Todd.

*"I didn't have any lobbying experience and was hesitant to attend. But with the Sierra Club's mini-training session and guidance, the issues I discussed with the legislators were easy to frame in non-partisan terms to garner support. I felt the legislators actually listened, and I made a difference."*

**-Stephanie Todd**

# Volunteer Spotlight: Toni Armstrong & Richard Spener

BY CAROLINE PUFALT

## Conservation Chair

The history of the Sierra Club, Eastern Missouri Group, would be much poorer without the long-time participation of Toni Armstrong and Richard Spener. Toni recalls joining the Sierra Club in 1978 when members were working (successfully) to defeat the proposed Meramec Dam. The campaign meant many nights of phone banking (with dial up phones!) where Toni met other Sierrans and built lifelong friendships.

Toni and Richard specialized in outings leadership, including sharing their skills through local outings workshops. One event featured how to put up many types of tents – as demonstrated in Toni’s yard! Canoeing is also a passion. With the addition of their daughter, they added more family outings to EMG’s schedule. Toni is still leading EMG outings.

But their outings horizons went far beyond Missouri. Both served on the Board of the Alaskan Wilderness League and travel to the Alaskan Arctic frequently. Both provided EMG with many programs on the Alaskan Arctic based on their own travels. Toni led EMG’s Alaskan Lands committee when the Club was campaigning for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Protecting the Alaska from drilling is still a Club priority.

Toni and Richard helped combine outings with a conservation perspective. EMG’s outings photo share nights included frequent calls to action. Richard is an avid amateur photographer, he led many EMG photography programs, sharing his skills and inspiring all.

Many members will remember the outstanding Missouri Wilderness photo exhibit Toni and Richard produced for the 50th anniversary of the federal Wilderness Act in 2014. Their exhibit was displayed at the St Louis History Museum and later toured the state through 2015. You can still see their magnificent Wilderness banner in the local Sierra Club office.

Toni served 6 years on the EMG Executive Committee and that group still uses her



Toni & Richard at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Photo by: Yuechun Wan



Photo by: Richard Spener

calendar guide to help keep track of yearly responsibilities!

Toni is an avid defender of Creve Coeur Lake Park when, in 2017, it was threatened by a commercial hockey rink. As area residents they continue to be on the front line for EMG regarding threats to the park. Toni is a reliable witness for limited development and floodplain protection at Maryland Heights City meetings. This is an ongoing effort today.

It's hard to imagine EMG history and the present without the contributions of Toni and Richard. As the Missouri Chapter celebrates its 50th anniversary Toni and Richard stand out as volunteers who helped guide EMG over the years to truly enjoy, protect and explore!

***Know a volunteer we should feature?***

Send your nomination to:

**[emg.missouri.sierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:emg.missouri.sierraclub@gmail.com)**

# Sierra Club - Missouri Welcomes Natalie Johnson as Director of Development & Communications

Members and supporters of the Missouri Chapter of the Sierra Club are excited to welcome our new Director of Development & Communications, Natalie Johnson. Natalie is a leader in non-profit management and environmental advocacy with a passion for community engagement. With over fifteen years of experience, Natalie has built a well-rounded career in the environmental non-profit sector, working in leadership positions as well as in the areas of programmatic implementation, community outreach, volunteer management, development, and organization sustainability.

Previously, Natalie served as the Executive Director of Indiana's environmental nonprofit Save the Dunes where she oversaw all aspects of the organization's work to protect and advocate for the Indiana dunes and Lake Michigan. Prior to relocating to Northwest Indiana, she worked on water quality, quantity, and access issues on waterways throughout Missouri.

"Returning to Missouri is truly a homecoming for me," says Natalie. "I have always loved our state's rivers and streams, and fishing is one of my favorite hobbies. It is a blessing to be back in the area doing work that I love alongside such dedicated and passionate people."

Natalie's work now will focus on expanding

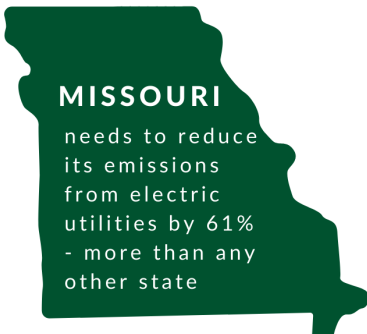


Photo by: Natalie Johnson

Sierra Club's membership base, promoting giving opportunities and stewarding new donors, and strengthening the Chapter's communications.

"The long-term sustainability of our environmental non-profits is something very important to me. It's exciting to help spread the good word about what Sierra Club staff, members, and volunteers are doing to protect our state's natural assets. This not only inspires donors to give and support our work, but it also inspires the next generation of Sierra Club members to take up the cause and carry on the legacy of environmental action."

## DID YOU SEE THE NEWS FROM THE EPA?



## CAN YOU HELP?

The Missouri Chapter of the Sierra Club is fighting to protect our local environment for you and your family. If you're passionate about our state's wildlands, stabilizing our climate, and ensuring clean air and water for future generations, please consider making a gift today.

Visit our Chapter website at [Sierraclub.org/missouri/donate](https://Sierraclub.org/missouri/donate)

# Welcome to new STL-based Beyond Coal staff!

BY CAITLIN ZERA, EMG Vice Chair

The Missouri Sierra Club is excited to welcome 3 new staff members - Jenn DeRose, Brian Smith, and Rajiv Ravulapati - who have joined the national Beyond Coal campaign and will be based in St. Louis. The main objective of the Beyond Coal campaign is to replace dirty coal with clean energy. Jenn, Brian and Rajiv shared their favorite places to get outdoors, why they're excited to work on renewable energy issues and what inspires them.



Jenn DeRose

## What excites you about working on the Beyond Coal Campaign?

"I've worked in the environmental movement for years, but this is the first time my role has been rooted firmly in advocacy, and I think advocacy is where I've always belonged. I'm excited to help shepherd in a just transition from coal with some of the best people on the planet: Missouri's Sierra Club team."



Rajiv Ravulapati

## What's your favorite place to get outdoors?

"I am a born and bred Chicagoan, so my favorite place would be getting on the beach and swimming in Lake Michigan. I also love the lakefront trail and its access to so many neighborhoods in Chicago. Here in Missouri, my go-to hiking trail is Castlewood State Park. It was the 1st place I ever hiked when I moved to St. Louis in 2014."



Brian Smith

## What inspires you each day to advocate for a cleaner, healthier, more equitable planet?

"I'm inspired to do this work by being determined to do my part to protect our clean air and water and our abundance of beautiful nature spaces and the diverse ecosystems that thrive there."



**Read more online!**

Read the full article at [www.sierraclub.org/missouri](http://www.sierraclub.org/missouri)

# Management Plan Updates to Protected Riverways

BY MARISA FRAIZER, Conservation Program Coordinator

2022 has already brought a cascade of updates to the management plans at our federally protected riverways.



## Ozark Nat'l Scenic Riverways

The Missouri Sierra Club has advocated for years for stronger motorboat limits on the Current and Jacks Fork Rivers, which make up Ozark National Scenic Riverways (ONSR). After many administrative delays, on January 5, 2022, the National Park Service released their proposed amendments regarding motorized vessels on the Riverways for public comment. This was the final step to implement the horsepower limits decisions made in the 2015 General Management Plan after an extensive public input process.

These limits were decided after more than 1,400 people attended public meetings throughout the state and more than 3,000 people submitted written public comments. 83% of the commenters were Missourians.

Noise pollution, wake, and fumes from motorboats not only affect floaters, but also disturb the wildlife that evolved to live in the natural environment along these rivers. The NPS draft plan explains that limiting motorboats “could help reduce the threat of water quality degradation from petroleum-based pollutants resulting from motorboats in these areas during the peak season.” Additionally, powerful motorboats generate wakes that erode the river banks and disrupt fish nests on the river bottom.

Comments were due March 7. The Missouri Sierra Club’s persistence and member comments played a crucial role in protecting the serene quality of the Scenic Riverways.

We are very grateful to all of the Sierra Club members who submitted their comments, and for the members of the Conservation Committee who assisted in writing our Chapter reports! Want to get more involved in our Conservation team?

Email [marisa.frazier@sierraclub.org](mailto:marisa.frazier@sierraclub.org)



## Eleven Point Nat'l Scenic Riverway

In 1968, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act designated the Eleven Point River as one of its first protected rivers thanks to its free flowing nature and pristine waters. The Eleven Point was designated to protect its Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs), which are: Ecology, Geology, Recreation, Scenery, Fisheries/Aquatics, and Pre-European Contact American History.

The U.S. Forest Service is now revising its Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) to direct the management of the river for the next 50 years. The CRMP addresses changes over the years and brings the original 1972 plan up-to-date.

While the draft plan recommends great points, it fails to adequately address several primary issues, including the potential impacts of hard rock mining on the river, and high fecal coliform and fecal streptococci levels caused by rain events that may make swimming unsafe.

Some of the favorable updates proposed in the current draft of the plan include addressing the impacts of climate change, acknowledging Indigenous history and input, and addressing capacity issues of the river’s management.

You can learn more about our stance on our website.

Many of our members and our Missouri Sierra Club Conservation Committee submitted comments advocating for stronger protections and a ban on mining and mineral exploration. This plan was open for public comment through March 25.

# **SIERRASCAPE**

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