

# THE MUIR VIEW



NEWS OF THE SIERRA CLUB IN WISCONSIN

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## TO RETROFIT OR RETIRE RATEPAYERS PAY THE PRICE FOR EXTENDING THE LIFESPAN OF AGING COAL PLANTS

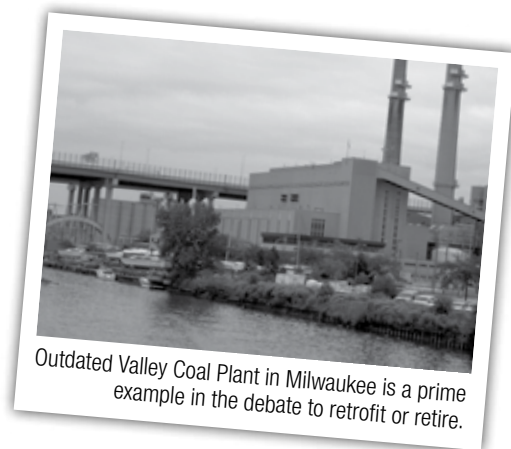
by Shahla Werner, Director, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter

Conservative politicians and large energy users often oppose clean energy investments on the basis that it will lead to increases in electricity rates. For instance, they may oppose policies for Wisconsin utilities to generate a larger percentage of our energy from renewable sources, despite the fact that this policy would create local jobs and reduce our state's contribution to climate change. And investing in energy efficiency would have similar effects on our economy while also having the added benefit of saving ratepayers money, because although rates might increase, utility bills would go down as customers with better insulation, windows, doors, and lighting used less energy.

But what about rate increases that are the result of retrofitting an aging coal plant? Where are the cries of outrage from Representative Vos and the Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group

over sinking hundreds of millions of dollars to outfit a decades-old coal plant with expensive new scrubbers? It's important to note that although retrofits are able to reduce pollutants like soot and smog from the air, such as sulfur oxides and nitrogen oxide, they do nothing to prevent emissions of carbon dioxide that causes climate change.

What's more, everything that is removed at the stack still must be disposed of later in the form of toxic coal ash. The We Energies bluff collapse into Lake Michigan last Halloween and the undrinkable ash contaminated water in Caledonia, Wisconsin remind us of the challenges posed by coal ash. The ugly truth is that ratepayers might also have to cover the cost of properly disposing of coal ash in the future even after funding expensive retrofit projects.



Outdated Valley Coal Plant in Milwaukee is a prime example in the debate to retrofit or retire.

The good news is that there are things that you can do as a consumer to make sure that your utility dollars are being spent wisely. When your utility files a request to raise your energy rates with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC), the public is invited to submit public comments on that proposal. As of mid-May, MG&E, Wisconsin Public Service, We Energies (gas only so far), and Xcel (aka North Central Power Company) had filed rate cases with the PSC.

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## ATTEND THE AUTUMN ASSEMBLY WITH KEYNOTE SPEAKER PATTY LOEW

Melissa Warner, Chair, Southeast Gateway Group

A beautiful fall weekend on a scenic lake, interesting speakers, music, good food and great conversations with environmentally-minded friends— what could be better? You can find all this and more at the Autumn Assembly, the annual gathering of Sierra Club members and friends from across Wisconsin. This year's event, featuring keynote speaker Patty Loew, will take place October 12-14 at Holiday Home Camp in Williams Bay on Geneva Lake. Volunteers with the Sierra Club's Southeast Gateway Group, which covers Racine, Kenosha and Walworth counties, are organizing the 2012 Autumn Assembly. We hope you can join us for this public, family-friendly event featuring indoor and outdoor environmental activities for kids of all ages. Register for the Autumn Assembly today using the form on page 15! **Don't delay - early bird registration ends August 20!**

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# FROM THE CHAIR

by Liz Wessel, Chair  
John Muir Chapter

When I pulled together a group of members to start planning a 50-year celebration for the John Muir Chapter, the immediate inclination was to review where we have been. Who were our leaders and what did we accomplish? But it did not take long for the conversation to switch to how do we turn this great legacy into a launch pad for the next 50 years.

So in 2013, we will highlight conservation heroes and heroines of old and our conservation achievements, but we will also urge the club and its members to not rest on their laurels. Our strength lies in our membership, which stands around 15,000 in Wisconsin. Our members are not members in name only, but their individual passions and interests spur them to take action and further the club's goals.

You don't need to go far for examples of Sierra Club volunteer leaders with their boots on the ground. Dogged activists like Jane Schley and others in the western part of the state have sounded the alarm on sand mining, its health and environmental impacts, and the need to be engaged. Will Stahl has provided testimony and remained vigilant in tracking the Brown County proposal for a pyrolysis facility. In an effort to clean up Milwaukee's air, Dianne Dagen, along with community partners, has

been working to convince Valley Power Plant to find alternatives to burning dirty coal.

Nancy Carlson, taking matters into her own hands, not only monitors waters in her backyard for pollution but trains others to do the same. This is critical work as state regulators back away from enforcement of environmental laws. Don Ferber, ensuring that the ball is not dropped on recycling and waste reduction, organizes volunteers for "Recycling Away from Home" (RAH). A joint project involving the Sierra Club and other activists, RAH provides a recycling service for local events and festivals.

Individual members in Wisconsin and Illinois are working hard to establish a new wildlife refuge on the Illinois-Wisconsin border. The US Fish and Wildlife Service, agreeing with these activists, recently recommended creating the Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge, saving this gem of conservation lands for future generations. (Learn more about the Hackmatack at Autumn Assembly!)

One thing is certain: We can all take individual action, but collectively, our actions speak louder and carry a broader impact. They ripple across the state and the country. And that can be seen in some of our work from the past. The Sierra Club helped make Wisconsin a leader in recycling. We helped create the Ice Age Trail established in 1980, and one of 11 national scenic trails in the country. Sierra Club members were on the front lines fighting the Exxon mine that preceded the Crandon mine and the most recent Gogebic Taconite mine proposal. And we helped fight off the Perrier proposal that would have taken precious ground water

and sold it off as bottled water benefitting only the company. These efforts evolved from concerned individuals and leadership who then engaged a broad cross section of Sierra Club members in the state.

Groups and the chapter tap this leadership and passion through their Executive Committees. As members of the Executive Committee, we work to coordinate, find synergy, seek resources and apply tools available to the groups and the chapter for priority conservation issues. I would urge you to consider running for the Executive Committee (see the information in this newsletter) if you have the passion and a skill that can help move the club forward, creating our next 50 years of legacy and leadership. The Executive Committee, like any other nonprofit board, has need of people with a variety of skills – fundraising, legal, operations-including elections (Yes! We are at the core a democratic organization!), building membership and of course passion for the issues across the state.

The staff of the John Muir Chapter provides support and direction, but the Sierra Club is truly run by volunteers that take the time to help us all see and harness the collective power we hold as a club. Unlike any other organization I have belonged to, the Sierra Club offers a tremendous amount of training and support. The national club has embarked on trying to ramp up our connections, our ability to learn from one another (There are over 60 chapters in the country!), and to train and support leaders on the ground. It's an exciting time within the club, so join the John Muir Chapter Executive Committee and help lay the track for our future conservation legacy. ♻️

## THE MUIR VIEW

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Please submit articles typed, on disk, or email to:  
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Please include the author's first and last names, and day and evening phone numbers at the top. Acceptance of submission contingent upon availability of space and must meet Sierra Club guidelines.

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**DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012 ISSUE IS AUGUST 15**

# TO RETROFIT OR RETIRE

Continued from Page 1

- MG&E is asking for an increase to their baseline fee, amounting to a \$22.5 million (5.8 percent) increase in electrical and a \$4.3 million (2.6 percent) increase in gas rates (PSC rate case code: 3270-UR-118). Without pairing this with an increased investment in energy efficiency, it doesn't give customers incentives to reduce their energy use.
- Wisconsin Public Service is requesting an electric rate increase of approximately \$85.1 million (9.2 percent) and a gas rate increase of approximately \$12.8 million (3.2 percent), in order to cover the cost of installing pollution controls on the Weston coal plant (6690-UR-121). At the same time, they are also reducing incentives for solar energy by rolling back the net energy billing ceiling from 100 kW to 20 kW and capping the full retail credit at 200 percent of annual load.
- We Energies, or WEPCO, is seeking a rate increase of \$172.6 million in 2013 and \$37.4 million in 2014 (amounting to a nearly 10 percent increase for ratepayers) (5-UR-106).
- Other utilities are also expected to file soon. You can see if your utility has filed a rate case that is currently open for public comment at: <http://psc.wi.gov/apps40/dockets/comment.aspx>.

## HAVE YOU INVITED ANYONE YET?

In the last Muir View, we asked every member to help us make the Sierra Club stronger than ever by inviting a friend to become a member. **Have you invited a friend yet?** It's easy, fun, and a great way to help the planet!

*"I got three just asking friends over drinks! It was much easier than I thought it would be!" Liza Peckham*

*"It's great! I just take the invite letter off the website and add a personal note at the bottom!" Liz Wessel*

To find the invitation, more information, or share your story, go to: [wisconsin.sierraclub.org/membership.asp](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/membership.asp)

## HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR COMMENT TO THE PSC:

1. **A person's written comment may consist of the person's personal knowledge or personal opinions only.** Begin your comments by identifying yourself as a customer of the utility, and describe how your business or household will be affected by the proposed rate increase. You are not expected to be a scientist or technical expert, but you may reference these sources if helpful to making your point. You should also mention if you have consulted your neighbors or area experts on their opinions about the proposal.
2. **Outline your specific concerns in your comments.** For instance, describe what habitats or plant and animal species are impacted by extending the life of an aging coal plant near you, and how might it impact your quality of life or your personal finances.
3. **Only one comment may be submitted per person per comment period.**
4. **Comments submitted via email or fax will not be accepted.** The Commission accepts comments received through its Electronic Regulatory Filing (ERF) System (which you can visit online at: <http://psc.wi.gov/apps40/dockets/comment.aspx> or through the U.S. mail (PSC of WI, PO Box 7954, Madison, WI 53707). The ERF website also contains all the information about the justification made by the utility requesting the rate increase, so it's a good idea to visit the site even if you decide to print out and mail your comments.
5. **Comments received before an official comment period opens or after the official comment deadline has passed will not be accepted.** This can be tricky, since they don't always announce comment deadlines on the PSC website, so comment as soon as you see that public comments are being accepted for your local utility.
6. **Propose an alternative.** Here's where you can make your case for retiring a coal plant and encouraging your utility to invest in cleaner energy sources instead.

## A SAMPLE COMMENT THAT YOU CAN BORROW FROM IN MAKING YOUR COMMENTS.

"My name is X and I live at X. As a customer of X utility, I'm writing to voice my opposition to a rate increase that will be used to pay for expensive pollution controls for the aging coal plants in my community. Pouring huge sums into these facilities could extend their lifespans for decades. This project will do nothing to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide that causes climate change which threatens Wisconsin's farms, forests and cold water fishes, and many other species. Because Wisconsin has no fossil fuels, we send at least \$16 billion out of state each year to fuel our energy needs. Wisconsin's current RPS only requires utilities to get 10 percent of their energy from renewable sources. A recent poll shows that a majority of Americans would be willing to pay more for utilities if they knew that their energy was coming from cleaner sources. I for one would support a rate increase if I knew utilities were using the additional funds for local renewable energy and energy efficiency investments. Even if it causes my rates to increase, my utility bill will go down, and we will reduce air pollution and climate change."

If you have questions regarding how to file a written comment in a Commission docket, please contact the PSC at (800) 225-7729. Commenting on these rate cases might seem arcane, but failing to voice your opinion will lead utilities to make bad investments with your ratepayer dollars. Please add your comment today! ☺



# UNPRECEDENTED ATTACKS ON CONSERVATION AT THE CAPITOL

by Caryl Terrell, Volunteer Legislative Committee Chair & Shahla Werner, Director, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter

To say it was a tough legislative session for the environment would be like calling Hurricane Katrina a minor shower. Gov. Walker and GOP majorities in the state Legislature took our state on a roller coaster ride of unprecedented environmental attacks from January 2011 until March 15, 2012, when the session finally ended. This article focuses on what was actually enacted into law.

Significant conservation wins include stopping a bill to gut mining safeguards and blocking efforts to repeal wind siting rules. First, AB 426/SB 488, the “Strip Mine Giveaway Bill”, would have allowed for habitat destruction and tailings disposal in pristine waterways, eliminated contested case hearings and citizen suits, reduced revenues for local communities and rushed the permit review process. In a rare but crucial victory for conservationists, the bill passed the Assembly 59-36, but stalled in Senate committees before dying. This bill would have paved the way for an out-of-state mining owner to dig the largest taconite iron ore mine our state has ever seen near the shores of Lake Superior. Unfortunately, we know this issue will likely resurface next legislative session.

The Legislature previously passed 2009 Act 40, authorizing the Public Service Commission (PSC) to develop statewide standards for wind energy systems 1-100 MW in size. The wind industry critically needed this regulatory certainty before developing small, distributed renewable energy projects. After the bill passed, the PSC held numerous public hearings with diverse stakeholders before sending the final rule, PSC 128, to the Joint Finance Committee, where it was approved in 2010. Gov. Walker wasted little time in waging a war on wind energy jobs in February 2011 when he proposed Special Session AB/SB 9, which would have increased turbine setback distances from 1,250 to 1,800 feet from property lines. Then on March 1, 2011, the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules (JCRAR) voted to suspend PSC 128. In May 2011, SB 50 was introduced to complete the repeal of PSC 128. During the year long fight, five major wind developments totaling \$1.6 billion in economic

investment and over 398 MW of renewable energy were canceled. In March 2012, SB 50 was debated on the Senate floor, but died with the end of the session after being referred to committee, leaving PSC 128 permanently intact. Wisconsin is once again open for clean energy business.

We defeated two other bad energy bills, one that would have undermined renewable energy goals by allowing utilities to buy clean energy credits that were over four years old (AB 146) and another that rewarded wasted energy by decreasing rates for large customers that increase energy use (AB 145). We also defeated the proposal to take transit out of the Transportation fund and restored collective bargaining rights for transit workers (preventing the loss of \$47 million in federal funding) in the budget. Thankfully, AB 303/SB 225 to repeal Wisconsin’s comprehensive planning law also failed.

Unfortunately, we lost on AB 114/SB 81, which allows large hydroelectric resources (likely from Manitoba) to be counted towards our Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS). SB 81 passed the Senate 21-11, the Assembly concurred 60-37, and the bill was signed into law as 2011 WI Act 34. This undercuts local clean energy jobs.

Aside from the exceptions noted above, we saw a series of unrelenting, unprecedented attacks on environmental programs protecting land, air, water, wetlands and recycling. Here are the sorry results of major laws adopted.

Gov. Walker requested a January 2011 Special Session on AB 11/SB 11, the now infamous, poorly-named “Budget Repair Bill” that removed collective bargaining from all public employees. This bill led to early retirements and brain drain among the people responsible for protecting precious natural resources.

This was followed by the worst Biennial Budget (AB 40/SB 27) for the environment in Wisconsin history, signed into law by Gov. Walker as 2011 Act 32. The budget wiped out over \$100 million in increases to Focus on Energy, eliminated regional transit authorities, increased highway funding while reducing funding for transit, eliminated the Office of Energy Independence and the Green to Gold

program, cut recycling funding by 40 percent and cut the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program by 30 percent.

## CLEAN WATER

Drinking water and wetlands protections are set back in three new laws.

Assembly Bill 23 prevents the Wisconsin DNR from requiring municipalities to disinfect their drinking water. This bill passed the Assembly 58-35 and the Senate 21-11 before being signed into law by Gov. Walker as 2011 WI Act 19. Water disinfection ensures that our drinking water is safe. Viruses and bacteria in drinking water threaten public health, such as the cryptosporidium outbreak in Milwaukee that made hundreds of thousands sick in 1993.

The “Flood Our Families Act” or AB 463/SB 368 passed the Assembly 61-34, the Senate 17-15, and was signed into law as 2011 WI Act 118. This act guts wetlands protections by dangerously deleting ASNRI wetlands (with significant ecological, educational, or recreational value), rolling back the “Avoid and Minimize” rule, requiring mitigation too early in the permit process, and setting arbitrary, aggressive permit review time limits and information request restrictions for the DNR.

Special Session AB 10/SB 10 removes isolated wetland protections in Brown County. SB 10 passed the Senate 20-11, the Assembly 56-35, and was signed into law as 2011 WI Act 6. This harmful legislation, a special favor to campaign donor John Bergstrom, puts critical urban wetlands needed for flood prevention and wildlife habitat at risk. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel recently announced that a Cabela’s store will be built on this site.

There were a couple wins for water protection. First, a bill to roll back phosphorus lawn fertilization restrictions (AB 165) failed. Second, a bill known as the “Polluters Over People” bill, Special Session AB/SB 24, was substantially scaled back before passing as AB 421/SB 326. After hundreds testified at public hearings, provisions to eliminate newspaper hearing notices and presumptive approval for high-capacity wells and oil and gas exploration permits were removed, and a provision allowing lake bed dredging was eliminated. But the final

# ATTACKS ON CONSERVATION CONTINUED...

bill, which was signed into law as 2011 WI Act 167, still reduces public hearing requirements and fast tracks some shoreland developments.

## CLEAN AIR

The Joint Committee on Review of Administrative Rules (JCRAR) suspended two Clean Air rules and the Legislature passed two bills to complete their repeal.

AB159/SB111 prohibits the DNR from setting carbon monoxide standards for projects related to congestion and bad air quality, such as parking lots with over 1,000 vehicles. SB 111 passed the Senate 30-3, the Assembly on voice vote, and was signed into law as 2011 WI Act 121.


AB 195/SB 138 prohibits Wisconsin from setting standards for hazardous air emissions from concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). SB 138 passed the Senate 24-9, the Assembly concurred, and the bill was signed into law as 2011 WI Act 122. WI Act 122 leaves people living next to CAFOs vulnerable to health problems and reduced property values.

## SPRAWL

Senate Bill 26 allows for \$300 million in bonding authority for a huge interstate bridge across the federally protected Wild and Scenic St. Croix River between Hudson, WI and Stillwater, MN. SB 26 passed the Senate 23-10, the Assembly 71-26, and was signed into law as 2011 Wisconsin Act 30. The Sierra Clubs in MN

and WI have fought for a slower, more modest bridge that wouldn't destroy riparian habitat for years, so Act 30 was a big disappointment

And the attacks don't stop at the Capitol. As we go to press, DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp is under scrutiny for having the lowest level of pollution violation referrals to the Department of Justice in 12 years, and for a case in which a top DNR administrator allegedly avoided fining a polluter and campaign donor for spreading dangerous levels of human sewage on farm fields.

Wisconsin's conservation traditions have taken a severe beating. Join us in fighting to restore the Wisconsin we love. Contact the chapter office at 608-256-0565 about joining the Legislative Committee and visit our Legislative Tracker to get involved, [wisconsin.sierraclub.org/](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/) 

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# AUTUMN ASSEMBLY

*Continued from Page 1*

On Saturday, we are honored to welcome keynote speaker Patty Loew, who will examine the cultural significance of wild rice to the Bad River Ojibwe and strategies to protect it from large-scale iron mining in her address, "Sacred Sites vs. Corporate Rights: Mining, Manoomin, and the Bad River Ojibwe Struggle to Protect the Food that Grows on Water." An enrolled member of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe, Dr. Loew is a professor and documentary film producer whose films include *No Word for Goodbye*, *Spring of Discontent*, *Nation Within a Nation*, and the new PBS documentary, *Way of the Warrior*. Patty Loew was formerly the co-host of *In Wisconsin on Wisconsin Public Television*. She is the author of *Indian Nations of Wisconsin: Histories of Endurance and Renewal* and *Native People of Wisconsin*, as well as numerous freelance pieces that have appeared in *Wisconsin State Journal*, *The Capital Times*, *Madison Magazine*, and *News from the Sloughs*.

In addition to our distinguished keynote speaker, we'll hear from a range of other experts on topical conservation issues. On Saturday morning, attendees will hear from Southeast Gateway Group volunteers who will give an overview of all the wonderful things happening in our area. Later on, Lynn Ketterhagen of the Geneva Lake Conservancy and Ted Peters of the Geneva Lake Environmental Agency will share information about restoration and conservation projects on the lake and its watershed. Susan Greenfield of Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network and Bill Sasse from the Village of Mount Pleasant will share stories on Root and Pike watershed conservation efforts. We'll also have an update on the proposed Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge from Cindy Skrukruud, and see a compelling documentary on point-of-use water filters created by students in Racine Unified Schools.


On Saturday evening attendees will get a chance to bid on eco-friendly items generously donated by local businesses to benefit the Chapter's conservation work at the silent auction while enjoying happy hour refreshments. Later we'll honor inspiring volunteer activists at the Awards Banquet and enjoy a special presentation by "Professor Aldo

Leopold" himself! After dinner attendees will join Great Lakes-based singer, songwriter, sailor, and teller of tales Tom Kastle for a journey in story and song through the waters of our Great Lakes region, from rivers, streams, and lakes, both great and small.

There will also be ample time for field trips at the Autumn Assembly. We have to get out and enjoy nature so that we remember why we do what we do! Outdoor fun options include boating on the lake, tagging monarch butterflies, and hiking at the Kishwaukee Nature Conservancy and the Geneva Lake Shore Path. Participants will also have the chance to tour the Yerkes Observatory, the birthplace of modern astrophysics. There will also be morning bird walks and evening star-gazing.

Sunday morning is the time to learn more about the Sierra Club's work in Wisconsin. Groups will discuss their latest projects, and chapter staff will update us on statewide issues, from our work in the Capitol to stepping up efforts for clean energy, clean water, and the need to retire Wisconsin's aging coal plants.

On Sunday afternoon Gary Hougin will guide participants on a four or eight-mile segment of Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail, the 1200-mile long, scenic trail that spans our state. You'll see hilly topography of kettles and moraines left by the last glacier, and oak openings and savannas described by Aldo Leopold while viewing native wildlife along the way.

Accommodations include tenting (your own) and bunk rooms, with a few smaller rooms with twin beds. Williams Bay has several motels as well. Early registration (by August 20) will save you money and earn thanks from those of us planning the weekend. A children's program is being offered, so bring the entire family! We hope to see you there! 

Register for the Autumn Assembly today by filling out the form and check for updates at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/aa.asp>



# WOLF STEWARDS

by *Laura Menefee, Conservation Committee member,  
Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter*

The 2012 Midwest Wolf Stewards Conference was held in Duluth, MN, April 26-27. The annual conference presents the most recent field research in wolf biology with special relevance to the Great Lakes region.

Discussion topics included the impact of impending hunting and trapping legislation in Wisconsin and Minnesota and the disparity between the two state plans, both of which were introduced within hours of wolves being removed from federal endangered species protections. Wisconsin legislature passed Act 169 under emergency rules establishing a state wolf hunt from October through February.

Randal Jurewicz, recently retired head of WDNR Depredations program, pronounced Wisconsin's newly enacted wolf hunting and trapping legislation, "preposterous...we could very well turn non-problem wolves into depredators."

Laura Ragan of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) outlined provisions under which wolves could be re-listed as endangered species. Among the criteria: if either Wisconsin or Minnesota wolf populations drop below 100, or if wolf populations in Wisconsin and Michigan together drop below 200, wolves could be re-listed. When asked when these criteria were derived, Ragan declined to respond. The USFWS has not revised its wolf recovery plan in over thirty years. The 1992 Wolf Recovery Plan did not revise goals outlined in the 1978 plan and remained unchanged in the 2006 revision, which is, in effect the current plan, now based on outdated science

Jennifer Stenglein, a Ph.D. candidate working with UW-Madison's Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology's Dr. Tim Van Deelen, presented an interactive computer model that maps various hunting scenarios, including those delineated by Act 169. Her research incorporates probabilities reflecting risks and reproductive behaviors that contribute to population growth documented by Van Deelen. Stenglein demonstrates the probability of destabilizing effects on Wisconsin wolf population caused by current legislation. Her research argues the need for refuge areas closed

to hunting to protect core populations in heavily forested areas of the state where predatory attacks of domestic animals and livestock do not occur. Allowing hunting in these core population areas could destabilize the entire Great Lakes wolf population, magnified by the effects of hunting and trapping in Minnesota and Michigan.

Pack dynamics predict that hunting is associated with increased population growth in some scenarios, as pack structure is disrupted, creating dispersers and potentially creating more packs. Nevertheless, Stenglein's model shows that a 20 percent harvest rate, which is additive to other mortality rates including an existing 75 percent pup mortality and 25 percent adult mortality, is unsustainable and courts local extinction. Additionally, her analysis predicts stabilization of Wisconsin's wolves in suitable habitat at about 1500 without hunting.

All three of the Great Lakes states and Ontario presented predatory attack or depredations statistics. While sustainability of depredations payments (compensation for livestock, hunting dogs and pets killed by gray wolves) was questioned by each presenter, incidence of depredations remains low. Brian Roell, a wolf specialist from the Michigan DNR, noted only seven percent of about 900 working farms on the Upper Peninsula experience depredation, and the majority of those occur on two farms uninhabited by humans. Of the recent wolf removal in Ironwood, he noted that people were feeding deer and wolves moved in to eat the deer.

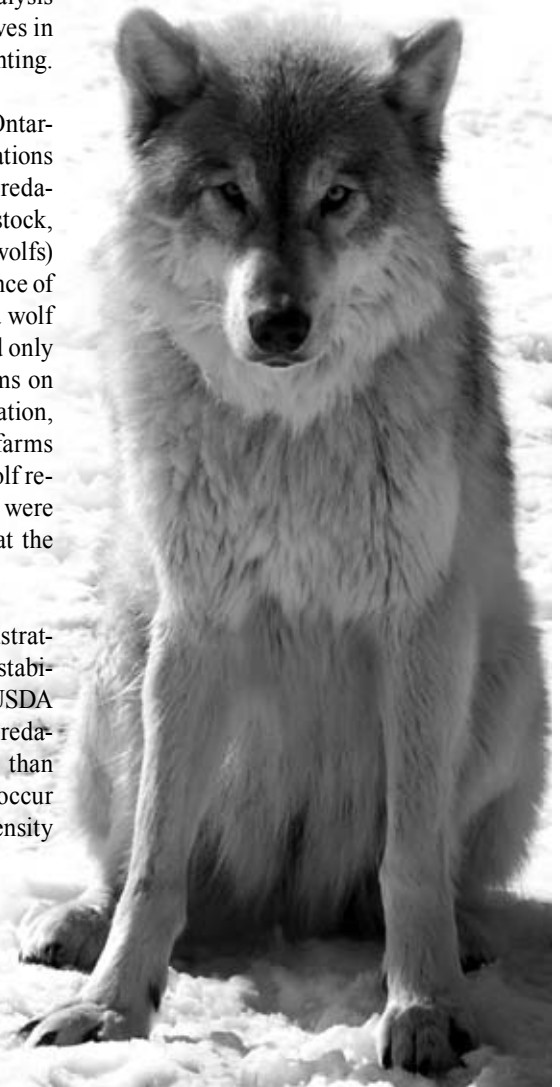
Dan Stark from the Minnesota DNR illustrated the Minnesota wolf population has stabilized in the past decade and Minnesota USDA representative John Hart noted that depredations in Minnesota were lower in 2011 than in 2010. Great Lakes wolf depredations occur mostly in marginal habitat, where deer density is greatest.

Several presenters noted that hunting will have little effect on attacks, as dispersing wolves or packs looking to change or expand territory move into areas vacated by hunted and trapped

wolves. Hart and other biologists emphasized "Hunting does not equal depredation management." Depredation management targets problem wolves in areas of high attack rates. Black bears and domestic dogs continue to be responsible for higher depredation incidence than wolves.

Hart noted in 20 years of wolf recovery, "only two to three guard dogs have been hurt or killed in Minnesota." To date, there have been no incidents of guard dogs hurt or killed by wolves in Wisconsin. Additionally, Hart noted, guard dogs are extremely effective when bonded to cattle, which contradicts information previously published by the WDNR both online and in brochures shared with farmers and livestock ranchers. However, bear hunting dogs continue to represent a special concern in Wisconsin and Michigan (dogs are not used to hunt bear in Minnesota).

Joseph Bump, assistant professor of wildlife biology at Michigan Technological University, presented statistical correlation between wolf/bear dog incidents and the length of bear bait-



## WOLF STEWARDS CONTINUED...

ing season in Wisconsin. While the fact that Michigan offers no compensation for hunting dogs is accounted for in the model, increasing wolf populations would have no effect on the incidence of dog depredations in either state. Conversely, wolf depredation on bear hunting dogs increases proportionately to the length of baiting season. As a result, dog attacks are three times higher in Wisconsin, which begins baiting in April, than in Michigan, which begins mid-August. Additionally, "wolf re-colonization is more likely in areas where bears are baited," explains Bump."

While public perceptions continue to dominate wildlife management, Roger Nemeth from the department of sociology at Hope College in Michigan conducted a survey on attitudes toward wolves among 1053 Upper Peninsula residents, 39 percent of whom were hunters. The study showed that a majority of hunters do not perceive wolves as a threat or

competition for deer. At present, Michigan has no legislation for a wolf hunt.

Peter David, wildlife biologist for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, says people continue to underestimate the effects of human impact on the complex interaction between the elements in a healthy ecosystem. He said any harvest approved by the tribes would have to be both biologically defensible and maintain human health and safety standards. As a sovereign government within the ceded territory, they have the authority to hold the state to certain standards, and have no plan to approve a hunt at this time. David emphasized the state of Wisconsin's obligation to conduct government-to-government consultations with the tribes when considering any management of natural resources within the ceded territory. David described the tribal processes undertaken in resource management, which attempt to take into account the potential effects of any action on seven generations yet to come. According to David, This community-up approach to establishing wolf policy is essentially the "antithesis of the process which created Wisconsin's Act 169." ☞

Coal, Great Lakes, High-Speed Rail,  
Wind Power, Frac-Sand Mining,  
Grey Wolves, Factory Farms, Energy  
Efficiency, Recycling, Transit,  
Solar Power, Forest Protection,  
Sustainability, Geothermal Energy,  
Endangered Species, Nuclear  
Energy, Bicycling, Natural Gas/  
Fracking, Tar Sands...

## WHAT DO YOU WANT US TO WORK ON?

Please take the survey and tell us which conservation issues should be a priority! We need your input in order to best protect what you want us to protect!

Go to [wisconsin.sierraclub.org/issues.asp](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/issues.asp) to take the survey and voice your opinion!

# SUMMER 2012 POLITICAL UPDATE

## RECALLS AND POLITICAL TRAINING *by Dave Blouin, Political Committee Chair*

The recall election yielded mixed results with the election of environmentalist John Lehman to the state senate but the retention of an anti-environmental governor. No matter the results, your dedicated chapter staff and political volunteers deserve praise for the extraordinary effort to rally our members to help with the recalls. National Sierra Club also pitched in, as they did last fall, with money and staff help. National staffer Lev Guter spent a month in Madison supplementing our effort; we give our sincere thanks to Guter for his willingness to relocate to Madison. We also met an important goal of motivating our "grassroots base" to vote. Real people (no robots) contacted every member for whom we had a phone number at least once or more to urge them to vote.

As you might imagine, the chapter's ambitious political program requires a lot of time, effort and commitment on the part of our volunteers. But the payoff is potentially huge. This quotation from our political manual sums it up best: "The Sierra Club's reason for devoting time, money and people to electoral politics is

simple: Sierra Club works to elect good people to office who will further the goals of the club's conservation programs. When we help a strong environmental candidate win, we have made an investment in sound environmental policy that will bear fruit for years to come. We will have an ally to work with, rather than an adversary to lobby."

To help us realize these goals, all members are invited to help grow and strengthen our political program. You're invited to a political training program by National political staff on Sunday, August 19 from 12:30-6 in Madison (location to be determined). This will be a great opportunity to learn from our national experts and volunteers about how to build on our successes. We also expect a state political leader to address us at the training. The free training will benefit both new and veteran activists and will further our conservation goals. The timing is very good for fall campaign organizing as the primary election is on August 14; our endorsements should be wrapped up in time for the training. Contact the chapter

office to RSVP and get on the notification list for the training.

Chapter staff and political committee members will be working hard this summer to prepare for the fall elections. First, we'll release the legislative scorecard for the 2011-12 session that you can use to assess how well your legislator represents your interests. I expect this session's scorecard will very clearly demonstrate the extreme difference between good and bad environmental voters. Then we'll assess every state race in the 2012 elections to make endorsements of the best environmental candidates. We'll announce those results in the next Muir View newsletter this fall.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or to learn more about our political program at 608-233-8455, [burroak15@gmail.com](mailto:burroak15@gmail.com) or contact the chapter office at 608-256-0565 or [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org) to be added to the volunteer list to help out this fall. ☞

# THE SAND RUSH

## WISCONSIN'S CONNECTION TO FRACKING

*By Elizabeth Ward, Conservation Programs Coordinator, Sierra Club- John Muir Chapter*

Hydrofracturing, or “fracking,” is a process many of us have become more aware of in recent years. Fracking is the controversial process used to extract natural gas and oil from hard-to-reach shale deposits. In the process, high volumes of water, high-quality sand, and chemicals are forced into shale rock formations to hold open fissures to allow fossil fuels to be extracted. The process has been known to pollute our air and water and even cause earthquakes. Fortunately, Wisconsin doesn't have any known natural gas deposits, but our state does have a connection to this awful gas fracking industry.

Wisconsin and other states in our area are “blessed” with beautiful hills along the Mississippi River and into the central part of the state. These bluffs are filled with the high-quality silica sand needed for fracking, called frac-sand. Frac-sand needs to be grains of ideal size, shape, strength, and purity—and there needs to be a lot of it. Each natural gas or oil well (there are thousands of them) uses as much as 3 million pounds of sand in its lifetime. Three-fourths of this sand comes from the Midwest. In 2009, 6.5 million metric tons of sand was sold to drilling companies, and experts estimate that number may have doubled in 2010. As a result of this “sand rush”, mining companies are using open-pit, hilltop removal mining in Wisconsin that is destroying landscapes, quality of life, and poisoning our air and water.

Wisconsin has a rich history of sand and other nonmetallic mining. We have relatively small quarries and pits across the state that mine for gravel and sand used for construction, monuments, landscaping, and more. Frac-sand mines are completely different. Some operate around the clock and throughout the entire year. Neighbors find their beautiful hills leveled and replaced with 100-foot pits and the rural peace & quiet replaced with a noisy stream of trains and semi-trucks. Sand mining containment ponds have breached, dumping process water and sediment onto farms and into streams and rivers. This mining transforms our quaint rural towns into giant industrial zones.

With the enormous frac-sand mining boom, residents near frac-sand mines are worried about their quality of life and, more importantly, the health effects of the mining. Fine silica dust is known as a common hazard in the workplace. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) explains that exposure to crystalline silica is associated with the development of silicosis, lung cancer, tuberculosis, and other respiratory diseases. Autoimmune disorders, chronic renal disease and other health effects have also been related to silicosis. There are serious concerns for those working at the mines and companies are required to take work-place precautions. However, there is not enough information to know the potential risks frac-sand mining poses to the surrounding community.

We do know that silica sand can lead to increased levels of particulate matter in the air. Although actual silica sand is too large to inhale, smaller dust particles blow off the uncovered piles of sand and travel to the surrounding community. These dust particles are small enough to

be inhaled. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), particulate matter can affect the lungs and heart. Once inhaled, the particles can lead to difficulty breathing, chronic coughing, decreased lung function, asthma, bronchitis, and other lung disease. These small particles can then travel from the lungs through the blood stream and into the heart, causing irregular heartbeats, non-fatal heart attacks, and possibly even premature death.

One way of reducing the amount of silica dust in the air is to water down the pile of sand to prevent the dust from blowing off. Unfortunately, this uses a large amount of water. Water overuse is one of the most concerning impacts of frac-sand mining. Water is used for transporting, cleaning, sorting and dust control. According to a recent study conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), most mines in Wisconsin use a closed-loop system that recycles and reuses the water. However, the study also showed that with evaporation and water that is incorporated into the sand, a system can use anywhere from 420,500 to 2 million gallons of water per day, or 292 to 1380 gallons per minute. Watering down the sand to prevent dust can use up to 3,000 gallons per minute of water. Open-loop systems, or those that do not recycle the water, can use up to 3,000 gallons per minute.

## 50 More Years of Legacy and Leadership

In preparation for our celebration in 2013, you can help us by contributing the following nominations:

### **NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITE OUTING!**

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the John Muir Chapter in Wisconsin and the contribution of outings to the club's accomplishments, please nominate your favorite outing for recognition. This could be a hike, bike, paddle, urban adventure or multisport trip that highlights or features a destination or region in Wisconsin. **Please submit your nomination by October 1st, 2012.**

For a nomination form or for more information, please contact Eric Uram at 608.233.9022 or [eric.uram@sierraclub.org](mailto:eric.uram@sierraclub.org). You can also find a nomination form on the chapter website <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/outings.asp>.

### **NOMINATE A LOCAL CONSERVATION HERO!**

We are looking for local members who are conservation heroes. This person has taken leadership action to organize an event, save a special place, stood up to a polluter or a development or enhanced members and others appreciation of the environment in Wisconsin. You get the picture! In addition to filling in our short nomination form, we would like a picture of the person with permission to use it on the web and in other communication material related to the 50th anniversary.

For a nomination form or for more information, please contact Liz Wessel at 608.238.9934 or [lizard59sc@yahoo.com](mailto:lizard59sc@yahoo.com).



# SAND RUSH CONTINUED...

One issue that needs additional study is how much pollution gets into the groundwater. The sand is washed with several chemicals, including polyacrylamides. Polyacrylamides are harmless; however, there can be small traces of acrylamide in these chemicals. Although the WDNR does not regulate acrylamide, the EPA has a Maximum Contaminant Level Goal of zero for any acrylamides in drinking water. Drinking water contaminated with acrylamides can result in problems with the nervous system or blood and can even increase the risk of getting cancer.

Local activists are turning people out to public hearings, questioning the mining companies and educating people in the area about the dangers that exist. Once one mine is stopped, after hours and hours of fighting, the companies just pop up with a new mine in the next town over. The one action that has had some success in blocking new frac-sand mines are moratoriums. Towns, cities, and counties have established short moratoriums in order to better study the impacts of mining proposals. Sand mine companies have actively fought against these moratoriums. For example, High Country Sand sued Eau Claire County after the county established a moratorium on the company's proposed mine.



Worse, in the last days of the legislative session, the legislature passed 2011 Wisconsin Act 144. The law makes it far more difficult for cities, towns, and villages to establish development moratorium ordinances, effectively blocking local communities from creating moratoriums.

Another example of the legislature giving a hand-out to companies whose disregard for the environment can damage our landscapes, natural resources, and quality of life.

The Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter is calling for a moratorium on the permitting of any frac-sand mining permits until the state conducts a comprehensive study of the impacts and the adequacy of local control. The mining companies claim they are bringing jobs into the area. Wisconsin is desperate for jobs, especially in small towns like those in the frac-sand area, but there are better ways to create jobs.

Western Wisconsin is well suited for clean energy jobs, organic farming, tourism and more. These mines are detrimental to industries like tourism that help the area prosper while showing off the beautiful landscapes. Area businesses will also suffer and local development opportunities will be lost as our charming towns are industrialized, more people leave, and fewer people are attracted to the area. We can and should have jobs and clean air and water. Jobs created from visitors enjoying the beautiful bluffs, the Laura Ingalls Wilder museum and historic landmarks, the Tiffany Bottoms State Wildlife Area and other attractions in western Wisconsin.

We need to save our hills and our beautiful landscapes before they are gone forever. The Sierra Club is working to educate people about this destruction and encourage elected officials to get involved. If you would like to get involved, please contact Elizabeth Ward at [elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org](mailto:elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org).

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

by Jenny Peek, *Muir View Editor*

The Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter is calling on dedicated members to serve on our Executive Committee. The committee is made up of 16 members that strive to carry on the powerful, grassroots work the Sierra Club is known for.

Throughout this election period, we are looking for three individuals who are dedicated to protecting Wisconsin's natural resources and willing to meet on a regular basis while understanding the need to financially support the chapter.

### REGULAR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DUTIES INCLUDE:

- ▶ Chapter general and operational health
- ▶ Membership recruitment and retention
- ▶ Strategic planning and decision making
- ▶ Fiscal and financial health, and fundraising

Executive Committee members will guide the John Muir Chapter and help influence crucial environmental decisions from energy to water protection to the continued battle to protect mining regulations. In addition to the future that lies ahead, you will be a part of the organization as it rings in its 50th anniversary in 2013.

The Sierra Club is a premier grassroots, democratic, environmental group in Wisconsin thanks to people like you who put in the time and energy to make it flourish. If you are interested in serving, you can get a full position description for Executive Committee members, as well as a short application form, by contacting the chapter office at (608) 256-0565 or by emailing [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org). Once you contact us, a member of the Nominating Committee will provide you with further information.

All application materials must be completed by August 15th, 2012. The Nominating Committee will consider all applications received by the deadline and place eligible names on the ballot, which will appear in the fourth quarter Muir View newsletter, delivered to all chapter members the first week of October.

# HELEN CALDICOTT

## SHIFT IMMEDIATELY FROM NUCLEAR AND COAL TO SOLAR AND WIND

by Susan Michetti, Sierra Club member & Shahla Werner, Director, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter

Last April Wisconsin was fortunate to receive a visit from legendary anti-nuclear activist and author Helen Caldicott, MD. Hailing from Australia, Caldicott previously worked at the Children's Medical Hospital of Boston and taught pediatrics at Harvard before leaving her post in 1980, following the Three Mile Island accident to work on nuclear issues. She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985 for her efforts to end the threat of nuclear weapons and reduce the world's reliance on nuclear power. Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), founded by Caldicott, sponsored her visit to Madison.

During her stay, Caldicott was a guest on WPR and WORT-FM radio. She also gave an inspiring lecture on the campus of University of Wisconsin- Madison, and she was the keynote speaker at a private benefit for PSR-Wisconsin held at Sundance Cinema. Her talks not only highlighted nuclear dangers, but they also touched on a range of topics, from the need to reduce the threat of global warming by vastly increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy to reducing our consumption and waste habits in the US. During her talk at the Humanities building, she held up a plastic cup that was wrapped in plastic from her hotel, and encouraged everyone to stop using disposable, single-use fossil fuel-based products in favor of alternatives, such as cloth handkerchiefs and napkins and reusable mugs and water bottles.

### Wisconsin has had a whirlwind election year.

Were you involved? Did you think about getting involved? Would you like to get involved? Want to know more about our endorsement process?

### COME TO OUR FREE POLITICAL TRAINING

AUGUST 19, 2012 | 12:00-6:30 PM

Experts from the National Sierra Club will be flying to Madison to teach Sierra Club members how to run an effective political campaign, write a campaign plan, follow those pesky campaign law rules, and have fun!

For more information or to RSVP, go to [wisconsin.sierraclub.org/political.asp](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/political.asp)

As expected, the author of *Nuclear Madness*, *Nuclear Power is not the Answer*, *If You Love this Planet*, and other great tomes gave a chilling account of dangers posed by nuclear weapons that remain on hair trigger alert since the Cold War, the ongoing health and safety impacts of the Fukushima nuclear disaster, and aging nuclear plants that are increasingly vulnerable to accidents. For instance, she discussed how tumors related to radiation exposure are already being observed in Japan, even though this wasn't expected until

at least five years post-accident. She warned that aquatic life, including seafood from Japan, is contaminated with cesium-137 and other radioactive elements that can increase cancer risk. And if another strong earthquake should hit Japan and cause Fukushima's Unit 4 to collapse, the 30 million residents of Tokyo would need to be evacuated. She went on to describe how nuclear plants are most stable in mid-life. Chernobyl and Three Mile Island occurred in the first few months of operations, when reactors are quite vulnerable. Increased failure rates also occur when reactors are old, rusty, and contain weakened parts. At this point in her talk, she mocked her own age by describing what would happen if someone extended her lifespan for another 20 years. But her joke fell flat, since she proved to be more vibrant and energetic than most people half her age. In Wisconsin, three nuclear reactors at Kewaunee and Point Beach create 20 percent of the state's electricity. Unfortunately, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission renewed the licenses for these 40-year-old plants in 2011, allowing them to operate until at least 2030. This renewal occurred despite the fact that we have never identified a safe, permanent offsite repository for the dangerous radioactive waste they produce, leaving it "temporarily" stored in Wisconsin on the shores of Lake Michigan and in 38 other states.

Dr. Caldicott shined when she discussed the urgent need to tackle climate change. She highlighted the prediction that global temperatures will increase by 6 degrees Celsius by 2100 due to fossil fuel emissions. She warned of sea level rise and methane emissions that will result from the melting of the permafrost. But rather than stopping at doom and gloom, she offered solutions. According to Caldicott, the US wastes 28 percent of our electricity through inefficient buildings and appliances, while nuclear supplies 20 percent of our electricity. Therefore, by increasing energy efficiency and conservation, we can quickly shut down all of our aging nuclear power plants. David Freeman, President Carter's science advisor, put solar panels on the White House and did an analysis showing that we can generate all the energy we need without coal and nuclear. Arjun Makhijani, President of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, came to a similar conclusion, outlined in his book *Carbon-Free, Nuclear-Free*. In 2009 the Department of the Interior released a report showing that offshore wind alone could meet the electricity needs of the entire US.

During the Sundance gathering, Caldicott concluded her talk by requesting to hold the Sierra Club's newest addition, Chapter Director Shahla Werner's infant daughter Miranda (see photo). There wasn't a dry eye left in the room when, holding the baby, she told the audience that this is why she dedicated her life to ending nuclear threats over the past several decades. She added that the lack of progress on these issues sometimes makes her feel like she should have stayed in medicine. We have a responsibility, as citizens, as mothers and fathers, and as teachers of our next generation to make sure her message has not been in vain. We need to work every day to reduce wasteful consumption, move to cleaner energy solutions, and safeguard Wisconsin and the entire country from the dangers of nuclear weapons, nuclear energy, and nuclear waste. ♻️



Caldicott with Miranda



## WISCONSIN NATIVE SPECIES

# THE AMERICAN KESTREL

by Bill Mueller and Dr. Noel Cutright

The American Kestrel (scientific name *Falco sparverius*), formerly known as the Sparrow Hawk, is North America's smallest and most abundant falcon species, although its populations are declining in some regions of the continent. It preys primarily on small mammals such as voles and field mice, larger insects including grasshoppers and occasionally small songbirds.

American Kestrels prefer open areas with low vegetation and widely-spaced trees. It's most likely that you will encounter them in old fields and meadows, open parks, grasslands and prairies, desert environments and agricultural fields. It's also not unusual to find them in cities and suburbs. Kestrels need at least a few trees with old woodpecker cavities or natural cavities that provide appropriate nesting sites.

Pair bond establishment between kestrels is often permanent. A pair can be started once a male finds and sets up territory. A female will then associate with the male and begin hunting in that territory. Aspects of behavior that develop and maintain the bond between the two kestrels include aerial displays, courtship feeding of the female (done by the male), and the eventual search for a suitable nest location. Kestrels nest in spring and early summer.

American Kestrels nest in cavity locations, but they do not excavate their own. They depend on the existence of old woodpecker holes, natural tree hollows, rock crevices and available openings in buildings and other built structures. The male does the searching for potential nest cavity sites. American Kestrels frequently use nest boxes built especially to the size that will suit their needs.

American Kestrel populations are experiencing long-term declines in North America, and existing data are insufficient for understanding the causes. In the Western Great Lakes states, Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) data for 1999-2009 show an annual decline of 6.3 percent in Wisconsin, a larger annual decline than in Illinois (4.1 percent), Michigan (2.6 percent), Minnesota (1.8 percent), or Indiana (0.3 percent). In addition to the BBS data, Christmas Bird Count data, various nest-box monitoring programs, and migration counts collectively

indicate long-term regional declines of American Kestrel populations in North America. The causes are unknown, largely because of insufficient data, highlighting the need to generate data, models, and conservation strategies at a continent-wide scale.

The American Kestrel Partnership is an international research network designed to generate data, models, and conservation plans for kestrel habitat and populations at large spatial scales. The partnership unites the data-generating capacity of citizen scientists with the data-analysis expertise of professional scientists by promoting research collaboration among citizen scientists, universities, government agencies, conservation organizations, schools, and businesses. The partnership also fosters long-term conservation values and appreciation of science by engaging the public with hands-on research experiences.

The partnership supports the development of a coordinated, continent-wide network of independently managed nest-box monitoring programs and associated database; provides an interactive research networking website; and supports professional scientists to develop targeted research on fledgling and adult demography, genetics and toxicology.



The Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory, headquartered at the Forest Beach Migratory Preserve in northeastern Ozaukee County, has established as its first partnership goal the creation of a 100-nest box monitoring program for kestrels in Wisconsin. Already existing kestrel boxes are being incorporated into this program, and additional boxes are being constructed and will be erected and monitored. ☞

If you would like to participate with the observatory in this kestrel program, either by hosting a nest box on your property or helping to erect and monitor nest boxes, please contact Observatory Project Coordinator Bill Mueller at [wpmueller1947@gmail.com](mailto:wpmueller1947@gmail.com).

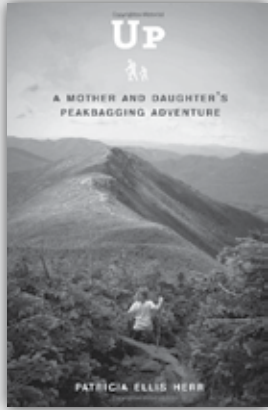
*Bill Mueller and Dr. Noel Cutright from the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory provided this information. Find additional information at these internet sources:*

*[http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/american\\_Kestrel/lifehistory](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/american_Kestrel/lifehistory)  
<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/species/kestrel/>*

# THE GREEN REVIEW



By Amy Lou Jenkins



## UP: A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER'S PEAKBAGGING ADVENTURE

*Broadway Paperbacks, 1012, 233 p.*

Midwesterners, even the outdoorsy types, may be unfamiliar with the term “peakbagging.” While not flatlands, Wisconsin terrain consists of rolling hills that don’t rise to even half the altitude of the peakbagging criteria. In New Hampshire, home of the

Ellis Herr family, mountain ranges offer 48 peaks with summits above 4000 feet. Hikers stalk these peaks in much the same way Wisconsinites might check off segments of the Ice Age Trail. Thousands of NH climbers “bag” peaks in the White Mountain National Forest and aspire to become part of the Four Thousand Footer Club, a group of hikers who have climbed all 48 peaks. In *Up*, Patricia Ellis Herr tells the story of her daughter Alex, the youngest person to win membership in the club, and concurrently tells the stories of the mother and father who love to climb.

The authors’ girls are little. Alex was five years old during most of these climbs. Her younger sister, Sage, joins them on some of the hikes as does their father. Alex is perhaps too young to have heard the demeaning “like a girl” sayings (you run, play, hike or hit like a girl). When she and her mother decided to climb the peaks, Alex knew that she loved to hike up mountains with her family. The goal emerged from a natural extension of her proclivities.

Herr dedicated this book to her daughters, but it’s written for every little girl who might be told or made to feel that they are *just* a girl. Climbing these mountains requires fitness, proper equipment, current data, judgment, fortitude and a supportive social network. Safe outdoor adventure demands a pool of skills. The drama and scope of the family adventure unfolds over pages and steps where Alex faces those who doubt her “place” on the mountain. She also finds supportive characters, including a helpful “grouch” who hikes in a kilt and comes to admire a little girl who has no capacity for whining.

The drama is magnified when Herr reveals the details of an accident her husband experienced on Mount Washington. In 1987, decades before he began a family with Patricia, Hugh Herr was one of the best climbers in the world when he and a friend decided to make a winter climb on Mount Washington, the highest of the 48 peaks. The details of the climb and aftermath explain the prosthetic legs that Alex never thought to question. She saw her father as whole and normal with the prostheses and hadn’t considered them to be remnants of tragic events.

*Up* is a quick read. It’s the story of people. Readers won’t find accounts of natural history or details of flora and fauna, but the pace and depth of the experiences and conversations are peculiar to natural settings. Readers are reminded of the deep bonds found in sharing hours and days in natural settings. Men, women and little boys and girls can come to understand themselves and their relationship to the world and each other as they face natural challenges together. No one has to engage in unreasonable risk to learn the lessons. *Up* reminds us that many hikers and nature lovers find the idea of pitting of one man against nature as an irrelevant paradigm. Natural settings are not there to be conquered. We do not battle them. We challenge ourselves and build our own skills, knowing that we cannot win a war against natural elements. The term “we” is inclusive. We can climb mountains or kames, hike ravines or peaks, and paddle streams or lakes. Along the way, we foster talents and relationships. Henceforth the term “little girl,” can never be used to demean another. Alex, Sage and their hiking parents have exploded that myth.. ☺

*Broadway Paperbacks provided a review copy of Up*

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*Amy Lou Jenkins BSN MFA is the author of the award-winning Every Natural Fact: Five Seasons of Open-Air Parenting. She writes from Wauwatosa, WI.*

**Amy Lou Jenkins**

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# SUMMER OUTINGS

John Muir felt very strongly that the best way to empower people to want to protect the wild places of the earth was to get them out to enjoy them. To that end, there are many local events available to hike, bike, camp, ski etc. To see the latest information, visit <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/outings.asp>

Outings are open to all members of the John Muir chapter and to the general public. Note that all outings are subject to change. PLEASE contact trip leaders ahead of time so they know you are coming and can contact you in case of cancellation or other changes.



## **JULY 18, 5:45 PM: EVENING PADDLE ON YAHARA FROM RUTABAGA**

Learn about water wildlife and explore scenic waterways. Meet at Rutabaga at 5:45 PM at 220 W. Broadway in Monona. Canoes or kayaks are available to rent, and they have very stable ones for novices, but call Rutabaga to reserve one at (608) 223-9300. PFDs (life jackets) are required. Bring along plenty of liquids. Plan on about 1 1/2 hours of leisurely paddling on the Upper Mud Lake segment going into the Nine Springs E-Way. RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon at [kmulb@charter.net](mailto:kmulb@charter.net)

## **SUNDAY, AUGUST 5: SUMMER PICNIC SOIRÉE, LAKE FARM COUNTY PARK**

Our annual Four Lakes Group summer soirée outings event and social will be held this year to, from, and at lovely Lake Farm County Park on the shores of Lake Waubesa. Contact Don Ferber if you'd like to help with the event or have questions at [d\\_ferber@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d_ferber@sbcglobal.net) or 608-222-9376. Visit [wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/outings.asp](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/outings.asp) to see the great options and see you there!!

## **AUGUST 20-21: CLASS II, CANOE CAMP THE FLAMBEAU BEAU RIVER.**

Refresh your soul on the Flambeau by participating on a trip that has become one of our finest traditions. We'll learn about the importance of protecting rivers within our State Forests. Rich Krieg, 920-660-3557, [eddyout@gmail.com](mailto:eddyout@gmail.com)

## **OCTOBER 12-13: 2012 AUTUMN ASSEMBLY**

Hosted by the Southeast Gateway Group at Holiday Home Camp in Williams Bay on Geneva Lake. (For details see related article on page 1 & registration form pg 15)

## **LIABILITY WAIVER & CARPOOLING**

In order to participate in a Sierra Club outing, you will need to sign a liability waiver. In the interests of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.



## **2012 BOUNDARY WATERS / QUETICO CANOE TRIPS**

Quetico Provincial Park in Ontario, Canada offers truly the most unique and premier canoeing experience anywhere in the world. You've heard, read and dreamed about these Boundary Waters and now you can experience them for a fraction of the price under expert guidance. Paddle, portage and camp in this pristine wilderness with new friends who share your spirit of adventure and love of nature's wonders. Expect to see some of the same wildlife that the voyageurs, trappers and ancient Ojibway saw as you travel the same waterways that they traveled in centuries past. Learn the history of this storied land as you revel in its clear, drinkable waters, star-lit skies and deafening silence. A minimum of two layover days are planned for swimming, photography, fishing, hiking, exploring or just plain relaxing. These are trips you will talk about for many years to come.

All Quetico trip leaders are experienced veterans of the area with Wilderness First Aid training. Experience is not a requirement, but a good attitude and physical fitness are essential. All trips are 8 days, put-in through take-out. Crews are limited to nine participants. Travel to and from the base/starting point is not considered part of the trip although carpooling is encouraged and coordinated by participants. Fees include canoes, group equipment, meals, necessary lodging and park permits and taxes. Not included are pre/post trip travel, passports, personal permits and fishing licenses. Contact trip leaders for additional information, including registration, which will include a \$100 deposit.

### **AUGUST 10 - 18, 2012**

**Leaders:** Mike McQuilken, 253-219-9208, [sumcqu@comcast.net](mailto:sumcqu@comcast.net); Scott McQuilken, 253-988-4394, [lo86blazer@aol.com](mailto:lo86blazer@aol.com)

**Departure Point:** Camp Quetico, Atikokan, ON

**Optional Meeting Point:** International Falls, Minnesota

**Trip Cost:** \$600

**Trip Differences:** Mike and Scott's trip emphasizes Quetico's world-class fishing for bass, walleye, and northern pike, through 20 of the area's lakes and 3 layover days.

### **AUGUST 13TH - 21ST**

**Leader:** Nancy McDermott, 608-238-1421, [njmcderm@gmail.com](mailto:njmcderm@gmail.com)

**Departure Point:** Canoe Canada, Atikokan, ON

**Trip Cost:** \$525

**Trip Differences:** Nancy's trip covers a shorter distance and features ancient Ojibway pictographs, a waterfall, fishing, two base camps and delicious home-cooked, light weight meals with camped baked breads.

### **AUGUST 22ND - 31ST**

**Leaders:** Jane McMillan, 815-543-2756, [janellmcmillan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:janellmcmillan@sbcglobal.net); Bill Moore, 262-785-9022, [environ1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:environ1@sbcglobal.net)

**Departure point:** Sommers Canoe Base, Moose Lake, Ely, Minnesota

**Trip cost:** \$495

**Trip differences:** Jane and Bill's adventure features pictographs, waterfalls, two layover camps, voyageur history, laser-lit stargazing, fishing opportunities and Bill's famous fire-baked bannock bread.

# RIVER TOUR CALENDAR



Interested in paddling some great water with fun and skilled paddlers? If so, the River Touring Section (RTS) is the group for you. Every year, our members lead paddling adventures on both quiet water and whitewater. We also lead instructional clinics to teach you paddling and safety skills.

RTS is affiliated with the Sierra Club, but our trips are open to everyone. We want to get you on rivers. We hope that you grow to enjoy paddling and to love rivers and support groups that work to protect them such as the Sierra Club and the River Alliance of WI. For more information, please visit our website at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/rts/>

## **JULY 8 - 10 SYLVANIA WILDERNESS AREA. MI**

Quietwater; Canoe Camping with portages. Explore some of the 34 clean, clear lakes in a wilderness setting. Learn about what others have done before us to make this a special place for plant, animal, and human interaction. Moonlit/dawn paddles. Family-oriented trip. 5 paddlers maximum. \$10 non-refundable deposit due by June 6th. This includes 3 night camping fee. Kasy Culbertson, 608-222-0746, [kasy99@gmail.com](mailto:kasy99@gmail.com).

## **JULY 14 - 15 WOLF AND RED RIVERS**

Class II; Car Camp. Practice whitewater skills from the WW clinics. Paddle the Red River, a favorite of many paddlers. For details, contact: Pat or Bobbie Wilson, 608-788-8831, [pbwilson@centurytel.net](mailto:pbwilson@centurytel.net).

## **JULY 21 - 22 LOWER WISCONSIN RIVER**

Class I; Canoe Camp (on sandbars). This two day, one night canoe camping trip on a remote, peaceful section of the lower Wisconsin River features inviting sandbars, sandy beaches, towering bluffs, and craggy rock outcroppings. We'll put in near Prairie du Sac and take out near Spring Green. We'll learn about the importance of these habitats. For details, contact: Carl Wisler at 262-542-9593, [carl.wisler@att.net](mailto:carl.wisler@att.net).

## **JULY 28 - 29 QUIETWATER RIVERS OF CENTRAL WISCONSIN/EXPLORATORY**

Quietwater - Class I; Car Camp. Dogs allowed. Rivers to be determined by water levels and group interest. Possibilities include Bark, Mecan, Lemonweir, Sugar, etc. We'll explore the geography of central and southern Wisconsin and discuss how human impacts affect water quality and ecological diversity. For details, contact Doug Robinson, 608-334-8026, [dougknu@gmail.com](mailto:dougknu@gmail.com).

## **LATE JULY - EARLY AUGUST PADDLE AND DAY HIKE IN MONTANA**

Class II-III; Car Camp. Join experienced paddlers on some classic western rivers. Car camp, paddle, and day hike in northwest Montana. The trip will be flexible in order to meet the needs of participants. Paddlers must feel comfortable on rivers like the Wolf Section III. Join us for all or part of this trip. For details, contact: Phillip Johnsrud, 715-445-4777, [johnsrudp@tds.net](mailto:johnsrudp@tds.net).

## **AUGUST 4 - 5 BLACK RIVER**

Class I; Canoe Camp (on sandbar). Life's a beach on this section of the Black River! We'll canoe camp on a sandbar in this beautiful quietwater section of the river downstream from Black River Falls. Children are welcome on this family-oriented trip. Learn how to canoe camp with children. For details, contact: Pat and Bobbie Wilson, 608-788-8831, [pbwilson@centurytel.net](mailto:pbwilson@centurytel.net).

## **AUGUST 11 - 12 CHIPPEWA RIVER**

Class I; Canoe Camp (on sandbars). The Chippewa River features sandbars, sandy beaches, wooded shorelines, and a wild appearance. Expect to see eagles, osprey and other wildlife while paddling on the stretch from Dunnville on the Red Cedar River to the Mississippi. We will cover 10 to 15 miles a day and paddle through both the Dunnville and Tiffany State Wildlife Areas. This is a great chance to learn about canoe camping. For details, contact: Carl Wisler at 262-542-9593, [carl.wisler@att.net](mailto:carl.wisler@att.net)

## **AUGUST 18 - 19 FLAMBEAU RIVER**

Class II; Canoe Camping. Refresh your soul on the Flambeau by participating on a trip that has become one of our finest traditions. We'll learn about the importance of protecting rivers within our State Forests. For details, contact: Rich Krieg, 920-660-3557, [eddyout@gmail.com](mailto:eddyout@gmail.com) or Dale Dean, 608-302-5744, [daleink55@gmail.com](mailto:daleink55@gmail.com).

## **SEPTEMBER 8 - 9 MISSISSIPPI BACKWATERS**

Moving Water; Car Camp. This trip is great for rec kayaks 12' and longer, sea kayaks and tandem canoes. We'll paddle the backwaters of the Mississippi near Fountain City and Trempealeau and have lunch on a sandbar. Paddlers should be comfortable with big water since we'll be crossing the main channel. We'll complete a loop, so all paddlers need to have enough stamina to paddle against the current. Learn about the efforts to restore a healthy habitat along a major migratory bird route. For details, contact: Sue O'Brien, 507-452-3164, [sueob1@gmail.com](mailto:sueob1@gmail.com).

## **SEPTEMBER 15 - 16 WISCONSIN WHITEWATER (RIVERS TO BE DETERMINED)**

Class II-III; Car Camp. Another beautiful fall weekend (if we're lucky). Depending on water levels, paddlers' interest, and weather, we could paddle the Pike, Red, or Wolf. This is a chance to improve paddling skills learned earlier this year in the clinics or on other rivers, and to see bald eagles and kingfishers along the way. Wet/drysuit and helmet required. For details, contact: Bruce Nelson, 608-244-6397, [b1nelson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:b1nelson@sbcglobal.net), or Kasy Culbertson, 608-222-0746, [kasy99@gmail.com](mailto:kasy99@gmail.com).

## **SEPTEMBER 22 - 23 ROOT RIVER (MINNESOTA)**

Class I; Car Camp. Enjoy a fall weekend paddling the Root River in unglaciated SE Minnesota near Lanesboro. Dolomite cliffs overlook the valley which has many spring fed tributaries and abundant wildlife. Learn about the region's early history and its effect on the river valley. For details, contact: Sue O'Brien, 507-452-3164, [sueob1@gmail.com](mailto:sueob1@gmail.com).

## **SEPTEMBER 29 BARABOO RIVER**

Class I; Day trip. This stretch of river is shallow and rocky with a nice current. Good for plastic and Royalex canoes

or kayaks. Shallow gravel sections would be hard on nice kevlar or fiberglass boats. Helmets required for kayakers and solo canoes. This section used to be blocked by three dams, which have been recently removed, allowing boaters and wildlife to return. Come see how this now free-flowing river makes a fine centerpiece to historic downtown Baraboo. For details, contact: Carl Zimm, 608-246-0485, [beampowered-tetrode@yahoo.com](mailto:beampowered-tetrode@yahoo.com)

## **OCTOBER 4 - 7 NAMEKAGON RIVER (FOR WOMEN)**

Moving Water; Canoe Camping. Join five other women for a scenic 30 mile canoe paddle on the Namekagon River, part of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The Namekagon is a quiet and narrow river that meanders through varied landscape and abundant wildlife in Wisconsin's northwoods. Cost: \$100, including canoes, meals, and first night's lodging. \$25 registration deposit required. Nancy McDermott, 608-238-1421, [njmcderm@gmail.com](mailto:njmcderm@gmail.com).

## **OCTOBER 13 - 14 KICKAPOO RIVER**

Moving Water; Canoe Camping. Ontario to LaFarge. Paddle through and learn the history of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. For details, contact: Gregg Riemer, 608-257-5239, [duNord@sbcglobal.net](mailto:duNord@sbcglobal.net).

## **OCTOBER 27 - 28 WOLF RIVER (SECTIONS II & III)**

Class II-III; Car Camp. Annual Halloween Trip. We'll paddle Section III on Saturday and Section II on Sunday. Let's leave the river looking good for winter by picking up trash as we go. Wet/drysuit and helmet required. Potluck dinner on Saturday night. For details, contact: Phillip Johnsrud, 715-445-4777, [johnsrudp@tds.net](mailto:johnsrudp@tds.net).

## **SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 2013 RTS ANNUAL MEETING**

Summit Village Hall, outside of Oconomowoc at 11 am. For details, contact: Gregg Riemer, 608-257-5239, [duNord@sbcglobal.net](mailto:duNord@sbcglobal.net)

**LIABILITY WAIVER & REQUIREMENTS:** All participants are required to sign a liability waiver prior to the trip and abide by decisions made by the trip leaders. If you would like to read the liability waiver form before you sign up for a trip or clinic, please see: [www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/](http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/). CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of CA.

### **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?**

Visit [wisconsin.sierraclub.org/rts/](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/rts/) or contact: Gregg Riemer, [duNord@sbcglobal.net](mailto:duNord@sbcglobal.net), 608-242-8633.

# 2012 Autumn Assembly Registration

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions**

Indicate your registration, lodging, meal and recreation choices below. Add the totals for each section together. Make check payable to: **SEGG-Sierra Club** and mail to: Jeff Sytsma, 3508 Washington Ave., Racine, WI 53405 Questions: jeff12759@aol.com

Direct Assembly questions to: melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net 262-639-0918

## Assembly Registration

**Early** (if paid by August 20)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Adults (14 & up) x \$20 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Children (5-13) x \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

**Regular** (if paid August 21-Sept. 15)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Adults (14 & up) x \$35 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Children (5-13) x \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

**Late** (if paid after Sept. 15)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Adults (14 & up) x \$45 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # Children (5-13) x \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Total** \_\_\_\_\_

## Lodging

*Options include bunkhouses or tenting. (Motels are available in Williams Bay.) Bunkhouses have 6 bunk beds, bathroom and separate room with two twin beds. Tenters share bath facilities with bunkhouses.*

**Rooms for two** (indicate roommate below)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # rooms Friday night x \$50 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # rooms Saturday night x \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

**Bunk rooms** (indicate roommate(s) below)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # people for two nights x \$35/person \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # people Friday only x \$20/person \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # people Saturday only x \$20/person \_\_\_\_\_

**Tenting**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # tents x \$15 (for the weekend) \_\_\_\_\_

**Lodging Total** \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate who you would like to share your two-person room or bunk room with:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Meals

*Those arriving by 6:30 pm on Friday may choose to eat together at a restaurant in Williams Bay. Light refreshments will be available at the Friday night social.*

**Saturday Breakfast:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # adults & children (5 & up) x \$7 \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday Lunch:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # adults & children (5 & up) x \$8 \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday Awards Dinner:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # adults (14 & up) x \$15.50 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # children (5-13) x \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

**Sunday Breakfast:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # adults & children (5 & up) x \$7 \_\_\_\_\_

**Sunday Bag Lunch:**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # adults & children (5 & up) x \$6 \_\_\_\_\_

**Meals Total** \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate any food allergies or special dietary needs:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Recreation

**Tour of Yerkes Observatory (Sat.)**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # participating x \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

**Hiking Ice Age Trail (Sun.)**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # participating (no charge) \_\_\_\_\_

*Boating, tagging monarch butterflies and hiking at Kishwaukee Conservancy also available. No additional fee.*

## Children's Program

*Activities for children (5 & up) will be available on Saturday. No additional fee. Please indicate the name(s) and age(s) of children that will be participating.*

JOIN US FOR THE JOHN MUIR CHAPTER'S

# 2012 Autumn Assembly

October 12-14, 2012 @ Holiday Home Camp | **Early-bird registration ends August 20!**

## JOHN MUIR CHAPTER CALENDAR

### 2011 EXCOM MEETINGS

September 11 Conference Call

### 2011 EVENTS

- July 26, Celebration in honor of Jonathon Ela & chapter fundraiser. Olin Park, Madison. 5:30pm - 9:00 pm  
RSVP requested. Contact the chapter office (608) 256-0565 or [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org)
- August 14 WI Fall Primary: Vote for Congress and state legislators
- August 19 National Sierra Club Political Training, Madison  
<http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/political.asp>
- September 15 Fighting Bob Fest, Alliant Energy Center, Madison  
<http://www.fightingbobfest.org/>
- October 12-14 Autumn Assembly with keynote Patty Loew  
Holiday Home Camp, Williams Bay, WI
- November 6 Fall General Election: Vote for President, Congress and state legislators

## CONTACT INFORMATION FOR JOHN MUIR CHAPTER GROUPS

**Chippewa Valley** <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/chippewa/>

**Coulee Region** <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/coulee/>

**Four Lakes** <http://www.4lakes.org>

**Fox Valley** <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/foxvalley/>

**Great Waters** <http://www.sc-gwg.org/>

**SE Gateway** <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/segg/>

### St. Croix Valley Interstate

<http://www.northstar.sierraclub.org/about/groups/st-croix/>

Even if there is not a Sierra Club group located near your home, you can still take meaningful action.

### Contact the John Muir Chapter office to find out how.

222 S. Hamilton St., Suite 1  
Madison, WI 53703-3201

**Website:** <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org>

**Phone:** (608) 256-0565

**E-mail:** [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org)



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