

THE MUIR VIEW



NEWS OF THE SIERRA CLUB IN WISCONSIN - wisconsin.sierraclub.org



Tell The Legislature:

Get Out of the Way and Grant RTAs!

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

LAST YEAR the Wisconsin Transportation Finance and Policy Commission released a report called *Keep Wisconsin Moving* about the transportation trends and needs in Wisconsin. The report listed a number of striking statistics. First, the number of miles Americans are traveling (measured in Vehicle Miles Traveled or VMTs) has decreased 8.4% since 2007. Wisconsin is seeing similar trends since our VMT peak in 2004. Additionally, it explained that more than 11% of Wisconsin workers do not drive personal vehicles to work—instead they take the bus, bicycle, or walk. Other trends imply these numbers will likely increase over time.

The Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WisPIRG) released the report *Transportation and the New Generation* which showed that since 2001 Millennials (born between 1983 and 2000) are driving 23% less. More and more, this generation

is choosing not to own a car or drive. Reasons for this trend include increases in the cost of gas and car ownership, the shifting preference for living in walkable, downtown communities and the growing ease of using public transportation for commuting. If Wisconsin hopes to keep and attract this generation (already our country's largest) we need to make our cities attractive by having well-run, well-funded transit systems.

Keep Wisconsin Moving reported that by 2025, 27% of the population in 17 Wisconsin counties will be over 65. Many within this growing population of seniors will also need to rely on public transit. The ability to safely and affordably get to doctor's appointments, grocery stores, and social engagements will ensure their quality of life is not diminished. Transit systems can provide this connection, but they need to be properly funded.

While the demand for driving

alternatives is greater than it has ever been, transit systems are starving for funding. Governor Walker's 2011-13 Biennial Budget cut state funding for transit systems by 10%. Additionally, municipalities saw cuts to funding for local road maintenance and upkeep, as well as cuts to school funding and other community needs. To make matters worse, laws were enacted barring local governments from raising property taxes to fill in these gaps, leaving many transit systems suffering. For example, the cut in transit funding combined with state mandated municipal spending limits resulted in the Racine area's Bell Urban System (BUS) raising cash fares by 33% and cutting the number of hours of bus service by over 7% in 2012. After the census reported population growth in the Appleton area, Valley Transit could have lost a huge chunk of its federal funding when it exceeded the population threshold. The loss of

this funding in conjunction with the state cuts could have shut down the entire transit system. Thankfully, a bipartisan change to the federal law included an upper limit based on the number of buses, so the transit system is temporarily safe.

Regional Transit Authorities (or RTAs), is a policy we desperately need across Wisconsin in order to help fund transit systems.

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Conservation Congress Spring Hearings

The annual Wisconsin Conservation Congress spring hearings will be held on Monday, April 14 at 7:00 p.m. in every county across Wisconsin. At these meetings, the public can weigh in on several natural resource issues. The Conservation Congress is made up of delegates elected to represent each county to advise the state Natural Resources Board, which sets policy for the Department of Natural Resources. The spring hearings are a good chance for citizens to voice their opinions on environmental topics that matter to them.

Topics to be covered at this spring's meetings include ballot questions related to hunting, trapping, waterway access, fishing and licensing. Meeting attendees are also given a chance to vote on the issues through a series of advisory

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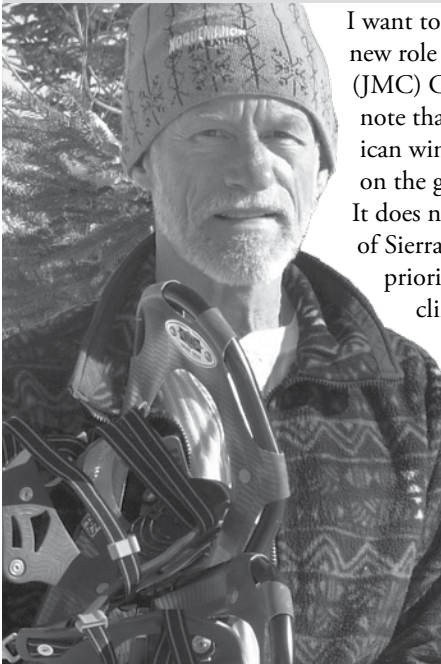
**April - June
2014**

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FROM THE CHAIR

What a winter -- The coldest in years!



I want to introduce myself in my new role as John Muir Chapter (JMC) Chair. Briefly, I want to note that our frigid North American winter is only a small blip on the global temperature map. It does not justify a recalibration of Sierra Club Climate Change priorities. Manmade global climate disruption is still the elephant in the room, and most news to the contrary comes directly from fossil fuel business interests.

I want to take time to thank my predecessor, Liz Wessel, for her energy and dedication while leading the JMC Executive Committee.

There is much to do in

this volunteer “job”, and Liz did it well! In particular I want to say thanks for her ongoing fundraising work with chapter staff and key volunteers such as Caryl Terrell. We are an important and respected voice for the environment and the funds raised enable our Wisconsin work to continue in spite of a limping economy. Thanks also to all of you who have contributed, whatever the amount. If you’ve never attended one of our fundraising events, such as the “Locally Grown, Nationally Known” dinners, the John Muir Chapter’s 50th anniversary celebration, or the upcoming Our Wild Wisconsin themed house party, (watch these pages for news and sign up) – you’ll meet good people, eat well and have fun!

After 50 years of successful campaigns I wonder if the John Muir chapter has ever had a greater sense of Wisconsin’s environment

being under siege than we see right now. It is a period of hyper-partisan winner-take-all “shock and awe” governance. The manufacture and deployment of High Speed Trains has been derailed, and we’ve had to fight to save state clean energy funding. Industrial “factory farms” are welcomed across the state with friendly regulation and lax enforcement, while the pleas of rural neighbors with receding lakes, poisoned wells and polluted air are largely ignored. Mining laws that protected our waters have been weakened statewide by legislation to promote Gogebic Taconite’s obliteration of the Penokee Hills, threatening the iconic Bad River watershed. Similarly landscape-altering frac sand mining is being promoted with legislation to nullify local control.

It’s a long, cold winter for environmental ethics when the government repeatedly bows to lobbyists instead of protecting the land, health and welfare of the people. Nonetheless, I walked outside one morning in the late January to the sound of a cardinal singing at the top of his lungs. I’m sure he was reacting to lengthening hours of daylight, but to hear him you’d think spring had burst forth all around. And it will...Soon!

Wisconsin’s environmental pendulum will swing back as soon as we the people wake up to the impacts and act collectively. We will show up at town, city and county board meetings, write letters to the editor and call politicians. And we won’t let others call us a “special interest” group, or “anti-business”. We Sierrans are a shared human interest group. We seek to protect our shared natural assets and living environment from those who would enhance profits by foisting their environmental costs on the public.

Let’s make it clear to our friends and acquaintances. Get involved, speak up! Spring is coming fellow cardinals, it’s time for us to sing!

Jim Kerler

Chair, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter

save the date...

Autumn Assembly 2014 **October 10-12**

Keynote Speaker:

Ron Seely, Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism

www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/aa.asp



The Wilderness Act Turns 50!

By Shahla Werner PhD, Director, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter

On September 3, 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Wilderness Act into law. This policy established the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) and initially protected 9.1 million acres of wilderness. Since then - thanks to the efforts of thousands of activists and strong support from the general public - Congress has designated an additional 100 million acres of wilderness, protecting special, unique areas from development or disturbance across the nation. Today there are 757 wilderness areas within the NWPS managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the National Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States Forest Service, and the National Park Service. Under the Wilderness Act, "wilderness" is defined as an area where the earth and its communities of life are left unchanged by people, where the primary forces of nature are in control, and where people themselves are visitors who do not remain.

The Sierra Club is one of many environmental organizations celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act throughout 2014. We wouldn't miss this milestone, because so many Sierra Club members played an integral role in getting Wilderness Areas designated over the past five decades. In addition, exploring Wilderness areas through Outings and permanently protecting and connecting large tracts of high-quality land and water habitats and the wildlife that depend on them are essential parts of Sierra Club's Our Wild America campaign (see <http://content.sierraclub.org/ourwildamerica> for more information).

Personally, I'm most familiar with Sylvania

Wilderness Area, a diminutive six square mile tract of old growth hemlock and hardwood forest located just north of Land O'Lakes Wisconsin in Watersmeet, Michigan. I was lucky enough to complete my master's research in this idyllic setting, comparing ground-dwelling beetle biodiversity between old growth hemlock and hardwood forests.

I still have fond memories of staying at Kemp Natural Resources Station in Woodruff with my entomology department lab mates and Gary, the groundskeeper, who generously assisted me in digging 8 pitfall traps (think plastic beer cups sunk into the ground containing a couple ounces of propylene glycol) at each of 23 sites. The traps were left out for two week periods to collect beetles, flies, bees, and other unlucky critters who wandered in, including salamanders, toads, shrews and voles (that I donated to other researchers so that they weren't sacrificed in vain). It was hard work at first, complete with getting totally lost in the middle of the forest while looking for a short stake that had been driven into the ground to mark previously established study sites; falling chest deep into bogs that mocked my idea of using the compass lines as off-trail "shortcuts"; and blistering our hands from digging out rocks and roots to sink the traps. But by mid-summer I had reached a sweet spot that allowed me to check traps in all the Sylvania sites with plenty of time to take a mid-afternoon swim in Clark Lake, after resting my giant backpack and bags of labeled, collected beetles on the beach.

I remember the smell of the pine trees on the path by the lake and the magically peaceful,

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THE MUIR VIEW

Muir View Committee

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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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CALL TO ACTION

VOTE IN THE SPRING ELECTION APRIL 1!

One of our best hopes for making long term conservation gains is electing strong environmental leaders in state and local elections. There is a lot at stake in this spring's election. There are important local ballot questions and races for mayor, city council, and county executive for you to consider that will influence local decisions on a wide variety of conservation issues, from expanding transit and clean energy to protecting your local watershed to regulating construction, mining, and other developments in your community. Please take some time to learn more about candidates who will make decisions that will impact Wisconsin's air, water and natural habitats. Find out who Sierra Club has endorsed at: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/political/Endorsements.asp>

Polls are open from 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM on April 1, and you may register at the polls on election day. Find your polling place online at: <https://myvote.wi.gov/>, or consider voting early until 5:00 PM the day before the election at your local municipal clerk's office: <http://gab.wi.gov/clerks/directory>

There will be plenty of opportunities to take action above and beyond casting your vote. If you'd like to get involved in supporting pro-conservation candidates contact Elizabeth Ward elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org



Grant RTAS *Continued from pg. 1*

RTAs allow regions, like a county, group of cities, or Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to increase sales tax by a fraction of a percentage and use that money to fund transit systems.

Without RTAs, the State is constraining any ability for transit systems to operate and grow, putting local governments in an impossible position to meet all of their identified needs.

This flies in the face of conservative talking points which champion local control and not picking 'winners and losers'. If such decision makers mean what they say, they will 'get out of the way' and let communities choose whether or not to implement an RTA. With the growing demand for transportation options, supporting transit should be a clear winner for all.

Not only do our communities need more transit options to meet the needs of their citizens, but transit is also good for local economies and our environment. A study done by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation found that for every \$1 spent on public transit, \$3.44 is returned to the state. Additionally, a 2.5% increase in transit funding would yield \$3.61 for every \$1 spent because it gives residents access to local businesses and shops.

Another benefit of an RTA is it encourages a regional approach to planning and providing transit. With the current structure, routes are based around who can afford to participate

and how much the municipality can afford. Currently, many small communities cannot afford to join a transit system. With an RTA, decisions affecting routes and infrastructure would be based on regional need, not ability to pay, making it possible for more communities to offer public transportation options.

In Governor Doyle's 2009 budget, four RTAs were granted in the Chippewa Valley, the Chequamegon Bay area, Dane County, and southeastern Wisconsin. Despite citizen efforts to get state-wide RTAs, the Joint Finance Committee eliminated the authority for these RTAs in the 2011 Budget.

Recently a bipartisan bill, SB 259, was cosponsored by Senator Mike Ellis and State Representative Penny Bernard-Schaber to create a Fox Valley RTA (which would cover Appleton, Menasha, Neenah, Kaukana, and a number of other municipalities). The legislation required a binding referendum so the citizens would have to choose to adopt the sales tax and it couldn't be thrust upon the communities. SB 259 overwhelmingly passed the Senate on a vote of 25-7! (Stay tuned for our Legislative Scorecard for the break-down of the vote.) Unfortunately, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos has not allowed this legislation to come up for a vote, and therefore the bill will likely die as this legislative session comes to a close.

The Sierra Club strongly advocates for and recommends the Wisconsin Legislature pass a statewide regional transit authority to allow Wisconsin communities to fund the transit systems in their region. We also support an

2014 Boundary Waters Canoe Trips

Ontario Canada's Quetico Provincial Park offers one of the world's unique and premier canoeing experiences. Several trips planned for the coming months.

For information and details see the Quetico website

http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/events/outings_queticotrips.asp

increase in state funding for transit systems and local road maintenance.

If you'd like to help us work toward these goals, please contact Elizabeth Ward at Elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org or (608) 256-0565.

Manure Digester Failures Haunt Madison Lakes

Citizens and government in the Madison area are making serious efforts to clean up Madison's cherished lakes and the Yahara River. Much of the cleanup effort focuses on farm runoff, a major source of water pollution. Meanwhile over one million gallons of manure spills were reported statewide in 2013, the highest in over five years. Manure is high in phosphorus that can degrade lakes and streams, causing them to play host to dangerous algae blooms. Manure digesters are touted as a solution to phosphorus pollution from agriculture. Unfortunately, as Madison-area residents have learned, reliable operation of these complex systems cannot be taken for granted.

Two digester-linked spills of 300,000 gallons each occurred in the Yahara River and Lake Mendota watershed in 2013. Last February a burst pipe caused a mile-long manure trail at UW-Madison's Arlington agricultural research station. A similar spill occurred at the Dane County Community Digester in Waunakee in November, tarnishing watershed stewardship efforts. The latter failure occurred at 11 PM and manure flowed freely for six hours, some making its way through a ditch into Six Mile Creek. In January 2014 a third spill of 20,000 gallons occurred at the Waunakee digester when the same pipe fitting failed a second time. This spill was better contained because personnel were on site at the time but it magnified safety and pollution concerns.

A manure digester is a large confinement vessel, typically in the form of a tank or covered lagoon. Inside, bacteria process the manure with warmth and agitation, in oxy-

gen-free conditions – hence the term anaerobic digestion. The bacteria give off biogas with a high methane content that can be captured and used to power an electrical generator or a boiler. Energy produced can be sold to the electrical grid, or it can provide heat or power for on-farm processes. The processed liquid and solids are lower in pathogens and phosphorus. They may be spread as fertilizer on farm fields with less pollution risk. Sometimes dried solids are used as a peat moss replacement or even as bedding for livestock. Clear Horizons Dane, LLC operates the Waunakee digester and has promised to upgrade failed digester components. This digester serves three farms, two of which are confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), housing hundreds of cows indoors under the same roof. Sierra Club policy opposes public funds subsidies for CAFO digesters as this helps them compete with smaller farms generating far less manure per acre. Similarly the Club favors alternatives over CAFO-produced energy in renewable portfolio standard (RPS) legislation. Digesters remove phosphorus and capture methane but have potential drawbacks:

- All phosphorus and other pollutants (e.g., antibiotics) are not removed by anaerobic digestion.
- If not designed and tuned properly, the anaerobic process can generate highly objectionable odors and release toxic gases such as hydrogen sulfide and ammonia.
- The system must be physically stable, durable and designed to withstand the



gas pressure being produced.

- A well-designed system should have automated leak detection and alarms to notify operators of a spill, as well as backup systems (e.g., berms,) to contain spills until they can be remediated. Digesters should also be formally inspected and tested on a regular schedule.

All who value the numerous Wisconsin waterways in farm country will want to watch closely to assure the risks associated with manure digesters are identified and addressed. Sierra Club John Muir Chapter will advocate for regulatory oversight by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) so these systems keep phosphorus out of our irreplaceable water resources as intended.

For more information on CAFO's visit: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Issues/CAFOHome.html> To get involved in the John Muir Chapter's water protection efforts contact Chapter Director, Shahla Werner at 608-256-0565.

NOTE

Sierra Club Elections for national club leadership

As a member of the John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club, you will be receiving your ballot for election of the National Sierra Club Board of Directors. It's important for you to vote in the national election because the Sierra Club Board of Directors is a working board that's directly involved in club activities. Board members take on important duties for the club, and help keep the club effective in pursuing our mission to "Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet." This includes involvement in conservation policy development, financial oversight, fundraising and serving on committees that directly address the needs of volunteers at all levels of the

club.

It is critical that we elect individuals who are knowledgeable about the workings of the Sierra Club. The board will be challenged to make critical decisions about the club's conservation priorities, the hiring of national staff and funding decisions that affect all programs. It is up to us to choose and elect those who are most qualified -- those we believe will provide the best leadership and guidance for the largest grassroots environmental organization in the country.

Before voting, there are a number of ways you can review the candidates' credentials.

Brief candidate bios will be provided in the ballot mailing. Candidate responses to election questionnaires may be found online at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/bod/2014election/candidateforum/>. We strongly urge you to take the time to look at the information provided and evaluate the candidate's credentials before casting your vote.

This decision and election is a critical responsibility for you as a member of the Sierra Club. Please take the time to mark a ballot and vote for members to represent us on the Board of Directors.

Thank you for taking the time to vote!

ISSUES AT A GLANCE

SIERRA CLUB BUSINESS

SOLAR HOMES PROGRAM RETURNS

We're excited to announce that Sierra Club - John Muir Chapter's Solar Homes Program will continue throughout 2014. This year promises to be a great year for solar in Wisconsin, as Focus on Energy recently restored the cash incentives for solar electric systems on a first-come first-serve basis, worth up to \$2,400 per project. Our partners at H&H Solar energy have also been in contact with numerous banks and credit unions who can offer financing options for home owners interested in going solar. If you can't wait to

get solar panels installed on your home and to support the Sierra Club while doing it, please fill out our request for a free solar assessment survey online: <http://www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/solarhomes.asp>, or contact Stanley Minnick at 608-438-9026 or SMinnick@hhsolarenergy.com.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEES

The Beyond Oil to Clean Transportation (BOCT), Beyond Coal to Clean Energy (BCCE) and Mining Committees met in February to create their campaign plan for 2014. Facing a number of big issues and attacks, the committees have their work

cut out for them.

The **BOCT Committee** will spend the year challenging wasteful highway proposals and building support for local roads and transit systems. Stay tuned for opportunities for you to weigh in: <http://www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Issues/BeyondOil.htm>

The **BCCE Committee** will work to continue to highlight the clean energy jobs growing in other states while Wisconsin becomes a backwater oasis for Big Coal. Additionally, they will support local initiatives to support clean energy and energy

efficiency.

The Mining Committee will continue their work to stop the Penokee mine and draw attention to the dangers of frac-sand mining. Watch for opportunities to attend events and take action around these issues in 2014. <http://www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/PenokeeMine.asp>

ACROSS THE NATION

THE TPP- ANOTHER RAW TRADE DEAL!

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a huge, NAFTA-style trade deal involving the United States and the governments of Australia, Brunei, Chile, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam. Citizens have been kept in the dark about the TPP's details while it has been negotiated for years in secret by and for the world's largest corporations. Everything from labor standards, food safety, environmental standards and human rights will be rolled back and dismantled if the TPP passes. The public deserves the necessary time to debate and fully understand the ramifications of this massive, devastating trade deal that would cost Wisconsin jobs and affect working conditions and environmental standards worldwide. Recently, fast track authority for the TPP was introduced in Congress. Fast track limits legislative review and debate, requiring

Congress to vote the deal up or down without amendments. Once approved, the TPP would actually require changes in local law where it conflicts with the terms of the agreement.

Recently, the Environmental Chapter of the TPP was leaked, and it's a disaster. Similar provisions in previous agreements have already led to a race to the bottom that has resulted in water contamination, habitat destruction, and loss of biodiversity for participating countries. The Sierra Club is also concerned about the TPP's potential to fuel destructive frac sand mining and fracking by speeding up exports of US natural gas to TPP countries with no Department of Energy review. The Sierra Club participated in a press conference organized by Communications Workers of America to oppose the TPP in January. Contact your member of Congress and urge them to get TPP off fast track today.

KEYSTONE XL REPORT IS RELEASED

In January, the State Department released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Keystone XL Pipeline. The report was deeply flawed and authored largely by the company Environmental Resources Management (ERM). This presents a significant conflict of interest as ERM is a member of the American Petroleum Institute, and has ties to TransCanada, the company seeking to build the pipeline.

The report showed that tar sands oil has a significant negative impact on climate change, emitting 17% more carbon than traditional oil. However, in an example of flawed logic, the authors concluded that the Keystone Pipeline itself would not have a significant impact on climate change. They reasoned that tar sands will be extracted whether the pipeline is built or not—and would simply be

moved by other means, such as rail or other pipelines.

The State Department has the choice to either severely limit tar sands expansion by denying permits for both lines or to allow these pipelines and almost certainly ensure more climate change impacts. The Sierra Club and over a dozen other environmental groups wrote Secretary of State John Kerry and asked that decisions about the proposed expansions of the Keystone XL and Alberta-Clipper (the pipeline that carries tar sands from Alberta, Canada to Superior, Wisconsin) take the cumulative climate change impacts of both lines into consideration. Limiting the use of tar sands is the better alternative for our environment.

To get involved in the chapter's Beyond Oil to Clean Transportation work contact Elizabeth Ward at elizabeth.ward@sierra.club.org

AROUND THE STATE

COULEE REGION GROUP LAUNCHES SOLAR PROGRAM

The Chapter's Membership Committee worked with the Coulee Region Group on a project to empower the group by rallying around a signature issue. After much deliberation, a committee decided increasing the local solar energy in La Crosse County would be the issue they focus on. At the Group Meeting on March 25, the Committee officially launched the campaign. If you're in the area, stay tuned for more information or contact Elizabeth Ward (Elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org or (608) 256-0565) if you'd like to get involved with the committee.

CONSERVATION LOBBY DAY


Sierra Club cosponsored Conservation Lobby Day hosted by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters on Tuesday February 11, at the Monona Terrace in Madison. This event brings conservation voters – like you – from every corner of the state to share natural resource stories and concerns with state legislators in the Capitol. Participants received training on citizen lobbying and three major conservation issues, followed by individual meetings with legislators.

Legislators were urged to reject to reject SB 302, a fast-moving bill that would deregulate high capacity wells by prohibiting

the Department of Natural Resources from considering cumulative water resource impacts in evaluating permits, in direct conflict with a recent state Supreme Court decision. Conservation voters also expressed our strong opposition to SB 349, a horrible bill that would strip local control from communities who are trying to regulate frac sand mining, iron mining, and other developments. The good news is that public outcry in response to these bad bills have prevented them from getting a vote thus far, so they are unlikely to be adopted this session.

Lobby day participants also voiced our strong support for SB

411, a bill that would increase DNR staffing levels needed to inspect and regulate the many frac sand mines that have been developed in Wisconsin over the past 3 years. Unfortunately, this bill won't pass this session, but it outlines the need for additional agency resources to properly regulate the frac sand boom in western Wisconsin.



GO SOLAR
with Sierra Club



How it works:

- Sierra Club members can sign-up for a free site assessment at www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org
- H&H provides an estimate and, if the homeowner decides, installs the system
- At the end of the program period H&H provides a rebate to the system hosts and a donation to the Sierra Club based on the total number and size of systems installed

The Benefits:

- You save money and put your values into action
- Wisconsin reduces its dependence on dirty fossil fuels
- The John Muir Chapter raises money to support conservation work in Wisconsin

For more information contact H&H Solar:
solarhomes@hhsolarenergy.com
(608)273-4464
or visit www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org



VICTORIES FOR CLEAN AIR AND WATER!

VICTORY IN THE VALLEY!

In January, the Public Service Commission (PSC) made the final decision on the Valley Coal Plant in downtown Milwaukee, one of the dirtiest coal plants in Wisconsin. For over three years, the Sierra Club has been working with the Cleaner Milwaukee Coalition (formerly the Cleaner Valley Coalition), a diverse coalition of environmental justice, health, and faith groups to move the Valley Plant beyond coal. On January 30, the PSC approved this move.

Juan Carlos Ruiz, chair of the coalition said, "This is a responsible step forward that was only made possible with the help of countless people who rallied around the immediate needs of public health and the hope of a cleaner future. Today marks an important milestone, improving the air and water for all of Milwaukee to enjoy for many years to come."



DNR DENIES OIL SHIPPING ON LAKE SUPERIOR PERMIT

Thank you to the hundreds who took action and asked the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to deny Elkhorn Industries' proposed dock upgrade to ship tar sands oil across Lake Superior. The DNR denied the dock upgrade permit on Dec 23, requesting a full Environmental Assessment of the project. They pointed out that the company didn't own all the land along the waterfront and that proposed sunken railroad ties were not an acceptable permit use. Sierra Club will continue fighting tar sands development in Wisconsin in 2014 as we focus on defeating the proposal to expand capacity of the Alberta Clipper (Line 67) pipeline.

Wisconsin Utilities: Restricting Consumers' Energy Choices

By Elizabeth Ward, Conservation Programs Coordinator, John Muir Chapter

When Wisconsin's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) was first created, the requirement that a certain percentage of energy produced by a utility must come from clean energy sources, was groundbreaking and one of the first in the country. Today, however, neighboring states are way ahead of us with their renewable energy requirements. As part of its 25% RPS, Minnesota recently passed a bill that will increase installed solar by over 3000%. Iowa now generates 25% of its electricity from wind. This has led to many big investments, including utility MidAmerican Energy's announcement of a \$1.9 billion investment in wind energy—the biggest economic investment ever made in Iowa. Additionally, Facebook chose to build its new data center in Iowa to become completely carbon neutral. And Illinois is seriously considering an offshore wind farm to produce electricity for Chicago.

Wisconsin's 10% RPS has been met by almost all utilities in the state and has become a 'ceiling' instead of a jumping-off point. Despite our need to compete with our neighboring states for clean energy jobs and investments, we have seen bills this year that would water-down or undermine the RPS. To stay competitive, the Wisconsin legislature needs to increase the RPS to at least 25% by 2025. Since the current legislature is unfriendly to renewable energy, the next opportunity for promoting renewables will be after next year's elections.

Wisconsin's electricity framework is what is called a "regulated structure," meaning each utility has a designated part of the state and they are the only utility allowed to operate in those boundaries. This creates a monopoly. In turn, Wisconsin has the Public Service Commission (PSC), a state agency that oversees the utilities and approves any rate changes and increases to ensure fairness. Unfortunately, the PSC has become overly political in recent years.

This leaves electricity users in Wisconsin with little choice about the source of their energy. In Madison, Madison Gas and Electric (MG&E) gets the majority of its electricity from coal-fired power plants. MG&E does have a 'Green Power Tomorrow' program that allows customers to pay a premium for clean energy. However, upon further inspection, MG&E has contracts already in place for wind so customers are not necessarily increasing the amount of clean energy used by joining the program. Meanwhile, earlier this year, the PSC significantly increased the price of the program.

Since the legislature won't require more clean energy and the utilities will not respond

to their customer's demands, Sierra Club members have taken matters into their own hands. Members around the state have put their money where their mouths are and have invested in energy efficiency upgrades to their homes, bought electric vehicles, participated in their utility's green pricing program, or even invested in solar panels. In 2013, 400 Sierra Club members and supporters requested quotes or home evaluations through the John Muir Chapter's Solar Homes Campaign.

The desire for clean energy is apparent, but for some, purchasing solar panels is simply too costly. To get around cost obstacles, companies such as Sungevity purchase solar panels on someone's roof, and the homeowner pays a monthly fee to the company or has a lease-to-own program. In many states, this is how Sierra Club's Solar Homes Program operates. This framework is especially attractive to non-profits and government organizations which cannot benefit from tax incentives. Meanwhile, the company that owns the panels can take advantage of these incentives and pass the savings on to the building owner. Often known as 3rd Party Purchase Agreements, this policy is allowable in 22 states. In Wisconsin, it is still unclear whether the law allows companies to create these agreements, causing clean energy businesses to shy away from our state.

Sierra Club is part of a coalition pushing for legislation called 'Clean Energy Choice', which would clarify this gray area and make third-party purchase agreements explicitly legal. In order to encourage this legislation, Sierra Club has been helping pass County Board resolutions around the state. Resolutions have been passed in Dane, La Crosse, Polk, Iowa, Crawford, Eau Claire, Waupaca and Rock County. According to some of the County Board Supervisors working on these resolutions, utilities are seriously pushing back and even trying to stop them.

For consumers who can afford the up-front cost, one of the biggest reasons to take the plunge is the money they will get back or the reduction in their electricity bills. When it is sunny, solar panels often overproduce or create more electricity than is needed at that time. Ideally, when this happens the person gets credit, or paid, for the amount of electricity they added to the 'grid' at the price that they normally pay for electricity. This is called net metering. Like third-party purchase agreements, some utilities have also opposed policies that encourage net metering.

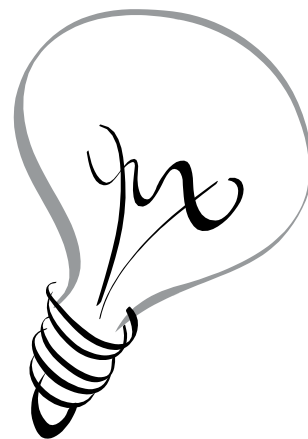
For example, Wisconsin Public Service (WPS), the utility in Northeastern Wisconsin,

recently applied to the PSC to change its net metering policies, drastically lowering the compensation for electricity generated by consumers. Meanwhile, the Dairyland Co-op, which covers Western Wisconsin, has members that have changed their net metering policy to dissuade their customers from investing in clean energy. In response to utilities freezing out consumer choice, consumers are taking a stand with groups like Pro Solar Cooperative, which pushes for better consumer-owned clean energy policies and a decreased emphasis on fossil fuels.

There are murmurs that the utilities plan to go after energy efficiency investments next. It is expected that a number of the utilities will ask the PSC to approve rate cases that increase 'fixed costs', not the energy-use costs. This means that everyone's bill goes up the same, despite energy usage. A low-income person living modestly in an apartment or someone living in a home with energy efficiency upgrades will have the same increase as someone living in an 8-bedroom house with the lights and televisions on throughout the day. Those who have invested in energy efficiency in order to reduce their electricity bills will not see the same reductions they deserve or would otherwise receive.

The Sierra Club will continue to fight any changes to energy efficiency and clean energy incentives and will continue to push the legislature to require the utilities to use more wind and solar.

If you'd like to get involved with expanding clean energy, please contact Elizabeth Ward at Elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org or (608) 256-0565.



WISCONSIN NATIVE SPECIES

White Heelsplitter

(Lasmigona complanata)

The White Heelsplitter is aptly named since the 'wing' on the shell can be quite sharp and when stepped on can 'split your heel' or, at least, cut your foot. The inside of the shell (or nacre) is pearly white, thus the name White Heelsplitter, as compared to the Pink Heelsplitter (which is similarly shaped, but actually more lavender inside). This is one of fifty species of Wisconsin native freshwater mussels.

Unionids --native freshwater mussels -- are found throughout the lakes, rivers, and streams of our state. They are most abundant and diverse in rivers and streams where the running water brings them food and oxygen and takes away their waste. Some species can tolerate lakes and reservoirs with low to no flow, and some can be abundant locally, but the greatest diversity of native mussels is in flowing waters. The White Heelsplitter prefers streams and sloughs with some flow, and is found in big rivers as well.

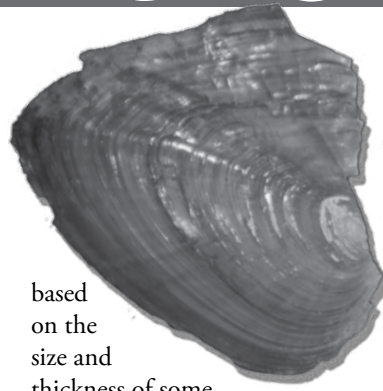
An important factor in Unionid abundance and distribution is its host species; which, for the White Heelsplitter, are green sunfish, largemouth bass, white crappie, and common carp. These common species help explain why it is so widespread and can be locally quite abundant. Our native mussels have to encyst (attach) to the gills (or other highly vascularized tissue) of a fish to complete their life cycle. It is actually the fish blood which allows the mussel to complete its internal development to become a juvenile mussel.

To explain the surprisingly complex life cycle of our native mussels it starts, naturally, with a boy and girl; and with some mussel species you can deter-

mine gender by the different shell shapes. The male releases sperm which the female takes in and fertilizes the eggs brooded within specialized marsupial gills. The fertilized egg develops into a glochidia (pre-metamorphosed mussel), which the female releases onto the gills of a fish. After the glochidia encysts on its host, it develops all its internal organs and can then live independently, dropping off the host and starting life as a free living juvenile mussel.

The fish hosts for the White Heelsplitter help explain its widespread distribution, but not why it varies from being rare to abundant at different sites; so although the fish hosts are an important factor in whether a mussel can occur in a waterbody, the presence of the fish species does not dictate mussels will be there. At the same time, if you lose the fish host, you lose the mussels. They will live out their years, but can no longer reproduce and the population is eventually gone.

Mussels can be very long lived; the short-lived ones live 20 to 30 years, the longer-lived ones can live for 50, 80, 100, and up to 200 years. But no matter how long they live, if they can't reproduce that is the end of that population. Aging mussels are like aging tree rings. They lay down annuli when they quit growing in the winter and put on new growth come spring. If you pick up mussel shells you can see their early annuli, but as they age the lines get closer and closer and are very hard to differentiate. If you make a cross-section of the shell the internal lines are more obvious. White Heelsplitters have been recorded over eighty years of age, and likely live longer



based on the size and thickness of some of the shells, which can reach dinner-plate size. Some really old individuals have been reported from the Bad River Slough, Kakagon River, and Wood Creek Slough in Ashland County.

Native Americans used the mussels large flat surface for plates as well as for burning sweet grass or tobacco, like incense burners. The shells were also used as scrapers for hides, and the sharp 'wing' or heelsplitter part was used for cutting. The pearly part of the shell was used for decoration along with the natural pearls of various shapes and sizes that form inside.

Another common name for the White Heelsplitter is pancakes, since they are so flat compared to other native mussels. Yet another common name is angel wings, because when the two shells are opened side by side they form a shape like a pair of angel wings and are pearly white inside. These common names were given to mussels by the commercial clambers who harvested shells during the pearl button era. Although thin when they are young, the older thicker shells were made into 'mother of pearl' buttons.

Our native freshwater mussels are not as common today as they were in the past, due to declines in water quality, water volume, habitat alteration and invasives species. Unlike our native species the invasive zebra or quagga mussels do not need

a fish host to complete their life cycle and therefore can reproduce without limitation, and do so to our peril! They also preferentially attach to native mussels, encrusting them and ultimately killing them by preventing them from feeding and reproducing. Fortunately we still have many lakes, rivers and streams without invasive mussels and our native mussels are hanging in there. If you see mussel shells, pick them up and check them out. They are not only pretty, but serve as habitat for insects, sponges, crayfish, and for places for fish to lay their eggs.

For more information on our native Wisconsin freshwater mussels check out the Freshwater Mussel Monitoring Program, at <http://wiatri.net/inventory/mussels> - you can pull up a state map with the waterbodies for which we have records and find out what species have been reported. This is by no means a comprehensive list, so feel free to send in shells or pictures from whatever waterbodies you wander.



Lisie Kitchel is a Conservation Biologist with the Department of Natural Resources in the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation. She is trained as a freshwater ecologist and has been studying and chasing mussels for over 30 years, and enjoys enlightening people about the world of our native freshwater mussels.

Mining Update

By Dave Blouin, Mining Committee Chair, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter

Corps of Engineers says NO to Wisconsin

We have good news and bad news to report on the taconite mining issue. First, the good news is that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers told Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that it cannot participate in the development of a joint permitting effort leading to a joint Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Corps (which has federal Clean Water Act authority over wetlands destruction) told the state that it could not participate due to the new iron mining law requirements of arbitrarily shortened and mandated decision deadlines. The development of a separate federal EIS will result in a much longer permitting timeline due to the need for extensive baseline study and analysis of the proposal required due to the federal government's trust responsibility to protect tribal resources. Legislative and other proponents of the 2013 Act 1, or as we like to call it-the Bad River Watershed Destruction Act, were told repeatedly by the Corps that the federal government couldn't work within the timelines established by the new law but that didn't deter them from voting for the bill.

This important decision means the new state law won't result in a mine permitted in the next 2-3 years as proponents had said would

happen. Instead, permitting could take at least twice as long or more.

GTac closes public lands and begins mini-mining

The bad news is that GTac appears undeterred so far by the federal setback. Previously, we reported on Senator Tom Tiffany's latest handouts to Gogebic Taconite in the form of Senate Bill 278 (now 2013 Act 81) and Senate Bill 349. Act 81 made it legal for Gogebic Taconite to bar public access to lands enrolled in the Wisconsin Managed Forest Lands program. This giveaway to GTac hinders citizens or scientist from independently sampling or studying the important and precious resources of the Penokees threatened by the proposed mine.

GTac quickly closed the mine site in advance of small-scale mining called "bulk sampling" at three sites previously disturbed by U.S. Steel in the 1960's. GTac will test the rock's characteristics for processing design. The sampling proposal was the subject of extensive DNR review for storm water and erosion controls, wetlands protections, air emissions and road and access design. GTac received permission to circumvent those costly controls and limits by conducting the sampling in February while roads on-site are frozen.

There are no other anticipated permits required of GTac in the short term. The Pre-application Notice submitted by GTac in June 2013 allows it to submit a mining permit application as soon as June 2014. It's uncertain if GTac will do so given significant baseline studying and monitoring of site conditions has not yet been scheduled, let alone conducted. The new state law requires a decision on the application within 480 days after the application is submitted.

Mining Committee Organized

With the help of a planning grant and expertise from National Sierra Club, the John Muir Chapter is organizing our new Mining Committee to work on the GTac issue. We were very fortunate to have National Club Board member and former President Robin Mann and Annette Rizzo, Director for Conservation Program Effectiveness, join Chapter staff and key volunteers for a two-day planning meeting to determine goals and resources for our committee's work.

The following weekend, our Mining Committee, currently consisting of 10 John Muir Chapter members, met to solidify our 2014 plans around the Penokee Mine and frac-sand mining. I'm really excited to continue the work that we mapped out together and will report more on the committee and our goals in the next *Muir View*.

To learn more about the Mining Committee visit <http://action.sierraclub.org/site/PageNavigator/SubcommitteeApplication.html> – Please bookmark our mining page at: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/mining.asp> and check regularly for updates.



Hearings *Continued from pg. 1*

questions.

Here are a few representative questions:

#4: "Should the WCC work with the DNR to create a voluntary seminar for shooting range operators to be offered throughout the state that instructs them on establishing an environmental stewardship program for recycling lead and how to safely and efficiently remove it from shooting ranges?"

#8: "Would you support the Conservation Congress working with the Department of Natural Resources and the Legislature to modify the state statute to allow launch fees only after adequate free access has been established to the state's waterways and to reinstate the portion of the water resources account required to provide such adequate

free access?"

#21: "Are you in favor of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress asking the Wisconsin Legislature to give the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources authority to develop a hunting season for tundra swans?"

The full 2014 questionnaire and locations of the hearings are at this link: <http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/springhearing.html>. If you attend the hearing, you'll have the opportunity to provide input on the advisory questions. You can also submit a natural resource concern as a citizen resolution if there's an issue that you'd like to see taken up by the Conservation Congress. Go make your voice be heard!



GREEN REVIEW

This issue we examine magazines of interest to Sierra Club members.

Sierra Magazine



We love our *Sierra* magazine and its implicit mission to celebrate and preserve wild places. Our membership brings us twelve issues a year that profile people, ideas, and places of interest to those inspired by the living legacy of John Muir. At times, memberships are available for as little as \$15 a year, making *Sierra* one of the best deals on the planet.

Consider the recent article by Jeff Galbraith which profiles the battle of the Pacific Northwest's Lummi Nation and their resistance to the dollars and jobs that would accompany the massive expansion of a coal terminal. The projected terminal would be capable of shipping 48 million tons a year through ecosystems already stressed from a refinery and the existing coal terminal. Smelt stocks have declined about 90 percent since the 1970s, which assaults and affects the entire biota. This traditional fishing ground in Puget Sound's Cherry Point sustained life and molded native culture for 175 generations of the Lummi Nation. Galbraith captures the words of native elder, Amy George, who asks the tribe to "warrior up" in their actions to save ooligan (endangered smelt), kelp beds, salmon, and more. Implicit in this coverage and perhaps in all *Sierra* articles is the truth that we are working to understand and save ourselves.

Every month, the issues inspire with stories of the wild earth, of remarkable people and special places. Galbraith's story was funded by the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign.

Earth Island Journal

Earth Island Journal owes its genesis to David Brower, who lost the Sierra Club its tax-exempt status and later founded the Earth Island Institute and magazine to support environmental activism around the

world. The institute serves as an incubator for environmental grass-roots projects and connects people with ideas and passion to those with strategies and experience. Projects have included Rainforest Action Network, International Rivers, Climate Solutions and dozens more.

In 1951, Brower became the first executive director of the Sierra Club, long before *Earth Island Journal* was started. In 1966, Brower and the Sierra Club placed full-page ads in *The New*



York Times and the *Washington Post* arguing against a Bureau of Reclamation dam. This "political act" caused the Sierra Club to lose its tax-exempt status --

but it likely saved the Grand Canyon. This same act also restored the voice of the Sierra Club to its activist legacy, which was ignited during early 1900s with their failed attempt to save California's Hetch Hetchy valley from a dam and flooding.

Earth Island Journal celebrates activism and reports on institute projects as well as issues and ideas of interest to those who share the mission to conserve. Recent issues include coverage of Dave Imus' award-winning map of the United States of America. Imus sees the map as a story of the land and the mappist as an artist. Tom Levits explores the science of lab-grown beef and the notion that it could spare the environment the pressure of industrial agricultural farming. He concurrently questions whether an environmental movement that questions the wisdom of GMO crops should embrace the scientific synthesis of meat. Recently personal narratives have made their way into the journal, and an evolutionary shift toward some more literary writing seems to be underway.

Subscriptions to *Earth Island Journal* are as inexpensive as \$10 for four issues a year. Readers are likely to be invigorated by stories of action and deep-thinking for the good of the planet.

Orion Magazine

David Brower didn't found or work for Orion, but many of his projects have been profiled there. Every issue of *Orion Magazine* is a work of audacious art. Find essays, articles, photography, poems, and personal narratives that illuminate the joys and pains of loving a beautiful planet that is under attack. Some of the nation's best writers fill the pages: Wendell Berry, Rick Bass, Michael Pollan, Scott Russell Sanders, Richard Louv, Barbara Kingsolver, Bill McKibben, Janesse Ray, and others. Whether writers are illuminating or lamenting, the ultimate take-away from Orion is always tipped toward engagement with an elegant planet. The writing is so rich that their audience includes lovers of literature who do not self-identify as a nature enthusiasts. The artistry of each edition is intensified by the fact that the magazine is ad-free.

A recent issue includes a poem on kinship by Ursula K Le Guin and an exploration of the notion of personal rewilding via interview with George Monbiot. The reinvention of tornado-flattened Greensburg, Kansas is illustrated by photographs and journalism. Gretchen Leglar explores the human and environmental benefits reaped by Bhutan — a country whose political leadership prioritized the happiness of their people above commercial riches.

A year's subscription of six issues costs \$35, and the cost per issue is reduced with longer commitments. Print and E-editions are available.



Each of these magazines offers sustenance, information, and inspiration to the earth lover and earth warrior in the reader.

Amy Lou Jenkins is the award-winning author of Every Natural Fact. If you have a book you would like to have considered for review contact her through www.AmyLouJenkins.com.

Wilderness Act *Continued from pg. 3*

days and nights I spent enjoying Sylvania Wilderness with friends and colleagues. We always appreciated the huge old trees, lichens, fungi (including edible chanterelles and oyster mushrooms), eagles, loons, and other wildlife that we encountered in this landscape devoid of motor boats, jet skis, cars, ATVs and other noisy engines so prevalent throughout the din of the rest of the world.

Until recently, I didn't realize that Wisconsin also has its share of pristine wilderness. In fact, our state has seven different designated Wilderness Areas, mostly located off the beaten path, but all worth traveling to reach. Gaylord Nelson Wilderness, named for the WI Senator who founded Earth Day, is comprised of 33,500 acres (or 80% of the land area) of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in Lake Superior. It was designated in 2004 and is managed by the National Park Service. Scores of visitors, including our own Elizabeth Ward, took advantage of the frozen conditions when they sauntered out to take in the gorgeous ice caves of the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness Area last winter.

In northwestern Wisconsin, the North Country National Scenic Trail connects the 7,133-acre Rainbow Lake Wilderness area

near Drummond, Wisconsin to the 4,073-acre Porcupine Lake Wilderness. Three northeastern Wisconsin tracts of Wilderness: the 22,033-acre Headwaters; 5,908-acre Blackjack Springs; and the 7,267-acre Whisker Lake; are located southeast of Sylvania within a short distance of one another. All five of the above Wilderness areas are located within the Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest and are managed by the US Forest Service.

Finally, we have the tiny Wisconsin Islands Wilderness, comprised of 29 acres located off the northern tip of Door County, designated in 1970 and managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. I am proud to know that our state includes these special areas that have been afforded the utmost federal protection in perpetuity.

The Sierra Club John Muir Chapter is planning two exciting events to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. The first is a joint celebration of the Wilderness Act and John Muir's 176th Birthday with the Wisconsin Friends of John Muir. This fun event will take place April 19 at John Muir Memorial Park in Montello located in Marquette County, Wisconsin across from the Fox River National Wildlife Refuge. Festivities will begin at 10 a.m. with litter

clean-up, followed by remarks about the importance of public land and Wilderness, and a Muir park hike led by Kathleen McGwin. After lunch folks will gather at Vaughn Hall in downtown Montello to view the John Muir exhibit and listen to a children's concert led by the Prairie Sands Band as they enjoy special birthday cake prepared by Chef Lynn Bult. For details and to RSVP, see: http://www.wilderness50th.org/events.php?useraction=detail&e_id=564

We are also planning a celebration for the 50th Anniversary Wilderness Act for next September in or near Gaylord Nelson Wilderness in Lake Superior at which speakers will discuss the potential impacts of the proposed taconite mine on Lake Superior, the Apostle Islands, the Kakagon Sloughs, and the Bad River Watershed. Plans are still being finalized for that event, so watch for details in the next Muir View.

To learn more about the Wilderness Act and to find specific information about each of our nation's 757 wilderness areas visit: <http://www.wilderness.net>. To find out more about events happening nationwide to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, visit <http://www.wilderness50th.org/>.



save the date...

Autumn Assembly

October 10-12, 2014


Keynote Speaker:

Ron Seely
Wisconsin Center for
Investigative Journalism



Details at:

www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/aa.asp




MALLARDS

Join us in the
"Duck Pond"
July 31st,
2014

Madison
Mallards
vs.
Kenosha
Kingfish

7:05pm

The Madison Mallards are pleased to welcome Sierra Club to a night at the ballpark



SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

TICKETS \$15
Reserved Field Box Stadium seat & official Mallards hat

- \$5 of every ticket donated to the Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter
- 50/50 raffle benefits Sierra Club
- First pitch will be thrown out by a Sierra Club representative

To purchase tickets:
Go to: www.MallardsGroups.com
Enter: Sierra
At the bottom of the page click "buy"
Choose your seats (Green indicates available seats)

Limited number of Sierra Club tickets available. Tickets must be purchased online by July 17 or while supplies last

RIVER TOURING SECTION

2014 Paddling Trips and Instructional Clinics

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. Our goal is 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 Wisconsin

FOR THE COMPLETE TRIP SCHEDULE, INCLUDING AUGUST, SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, VISIT THE WEBSITE AT: [HTTP://WISCONSIN.SIERRACLUB.ORG/RTS/TRIPLIST.HTM](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/RTS/TRIPLIST.HTM)

INSTRUCTIONAL CLINICS

RTS members offer several instructional clinics for a nominal fee. These clinics are a great way to gain skills and confidence. Because we strive to maintain a low student to teacher ratio—typically 4 to 1 or less—we can offer highly individualized instruction. The clinics fill up early. To avoid missing out on the clinic you want to take, reserve your spot now by calling the clinic instructor and sending in your non-refundable fee. All of the clinic teachers volunteer their time. Fees cover supplies and some refreshments. RTS donates the remaining funds to conservation and river protection groups.

WHITewater CLINIC FOR SOLO OR TANDEM CANOES

June 7-8 Wolf River

Class II; Car Camp. Clinic Fee: \$30 per person; plus a camping fee for two nights.

RTS whitewater clinics are for reasonably experienced moving water (river) paddlers who want to learn whitewater skills and novice whitewater paddlers who want to improve their skills. This is for open canoes, not kayaks. Paddlers must provide their own properly equipped canoe. Except for some classroom sessions, separate instruction will be provided for solo and tandem participants. There will be a potluck dinner Saturday night for clinic participants, instructors, and RTS paddlers. Please bring a dish to share. We have reserved the group campsite at the Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure Resort for camping Friday and Saturday nights. If you prefer other lodging arrangements, there are many options available. See

the Wolf River Territory website (www.wolfriverterritory.com)

For information and registration, contact: Registration (Solo or Tandem): Gregg Riemer, 608-257-5239, duNord@sbcglobal.net
Solo Clinic Leader: Rich Krieg, 920-6690-3557, richkrieg@new.rr.com
Tandem Clinic Leader: Pat Wilson, 608-788-8831

WHITewater CLINIC FOR WHITE-WATER KAYAKS

June 7-8 Wolf River

Class II; Car Camp. Clinic Fee: \$30 per person; Camping location and fees to be determined.

Kayak clinic is limited to 10-12 participants. RTS whitewater clinics are for reasonably experienced moving water (river) paddlers who want to learn whitewater skills and novice whitewater paddlers who want to improve their skills. Paddlers must provide their own properly equipped whitewater kayak, which means a bulkhead OR air bags behind the seat AND a properly fitted neoprene spray skirt of course life jacket and helmet. Except for some joint canoe/kayak classroom sessions, separate instruction will be provided for kayakers. There will be a potluck dinner Saturday night for clinic participants, instructors, and RTS paddlers. Please bring a dish to share. We will have a reserved group campsite for camping Friday and Saturday nights. If you prefer other lodging/camping arrangements, there are many options available. See the Wolf River Territory website (www.wolfriverterritory.com)
For information and registration, contact: Kasy Culbertson, 608-576-4226, kasy99@gmail.com

MOVING WATER KAYAK CLINIC

June 24-26 Bark and Crystal Rivers

Class I; Car Camp. Clinic fee \$15 per person per clinic day. River choices will depend upon participant interest and water levels. If you are comfortable on lakes and now are ready to try rivers, RTS has added a KAYAK clinic. Strokes and boat maneuvering more applicable to kayaks will be taught, as well as necessary river reading skills. The class size will be limited to 5 per clinic day. (Some kind of flotation may be required for certain kayaks.) For more information, contact: Kasy Culbertson, 608-222-0746, kasy99@gmail.com

MOVING WATER CANOE CLINIC

June 28 Badfish Creek near Madison

Class I. Clinic Fee: \$20 per person. Confident and competent on lakes, but not ready for rivers? Then this canoe clinic is for you. We'll review the basic strokes—draws, prys, sweeps, forward, back and J-stroke. We'll discuss safety, reading water, and maneuvers—ferries, side slips, and eddy turns. Then we'll practice these skills as we canoe Badfish Creek or Koshkonong Creek. To register or get more details, contact: Carl Zimm, 608-246-0485, beampowered-tetrad@yahoo.com

RIVER SAFETY AND RESCUE CLINIC

August 2-3 Red River

Class I-II; Car Camp. Fee: \$35/person, plus camping fees. Limited to 10 people. Through active, hands-on instruction, you will



learn river rescue techniques. Including how to throw and receive a rope, correctly swim and cross the river, rescue boats and swimmers, handle strainers, release pinned people and boats, and manage rescue scenarios. Note that swimming in the river and moderate physical activity are part of this clinic. One of the goals of the clinic is to improve overall comfort and knowledge in the river/water/rapids. We will paddle the Red River on both days. Recommended to all who might lead or aspire to lead paddling trips. Also recommended for experienced leaders as part of a regular retraining of rescue techniques. To register or get more details, contact: Walt Ruben, 920-946-1440, walt.ruben@kohler.com or Doug Robinson, 608-334-8026, dougknu@gmail.com

PADDLING TRIPS

April 18-20 Little Rivers Exploratory

Class III; Car Camp. Based on water levels, we'll select two or more small rivers in central or northern Wisconsin that can only be paddled in spring. Learn about river restoration and preservation. Wet/dry suit and helmet required. Note: Depending on water levels, we may change the date of this trip. For details, contact: Dale Dean 608-302-5744, daleink55@gmail.com or Doug Robinson, 608-334-8026, dougknu@gmail.com

April 26 Bark River

Class I+; Day trip. Join us for an early spring paddle on a clear stream made so by restored wetlands. As there are 7 bridges, portaging may be needed. Weather and water level dependent. Limited to 8 participants. *For details contact: Kasy Culbertson, 608-222-0746, kasy99@gmail.com*

April 26-27 Popple River

Class II-III; Car Camp. Join us on one of Wisconsin's 5 state-designated "Wild Rivers." This is a river which has fantastic white-water opportunities but generally has sufficient water levels only on a limited basis. We will also attempt a hike to Jennings Falls on Saturday. Learn of the history and challenges facing Wisconsin's Wild Rivers. Wet/dry suit and helmet required. *For details, contact: Larr Zibell, 715-546-2131.*

May 3 – 4 Whitewater Rivers of Central Wisconsin - Exploratory

Class II-III; Car Camp. Rivers to be determined by water levels. Possibilities include Little Wolf, Eau Claire, Big Rib, etc. We'll discuss storm water runoff and how to control it as we paddle these exciting wild rivers. Wet/dry suit and helmet required. *For details contact: Doug Robinson, 608-334-8026, dougknu@gmail.com*

May 10-11 Pine River

Class II; Canoe Camp. Join us for the 38th annual Pine River weekend! We plan to paddle from Highway 55 to Chipmunk Rapids in Forest and Florence Counties. This is a terrific opportunity to canoe and camp on one of Wisconsin's designated "wild rivers." There will be time to reflect and discuss the challenges and changes facing this river. *For details contact: Larr Zibell, 715-546-2131.*

May 12 Pine River

Class III; Car Camp. Continue down the Pine! We will camp at Chipmunk Rapids Sunday night and then paddle the next stretch. Mostly quietwater except for Snaketail Rapids, Meyers Falls,

and Bull Falls. Wet/dry suit, helmet, flotation required, unless you plan on portaging the rapids. *For details contact: Rich Krieg, 920-660-3557, richkrieg@new.rr.com*

May 17 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*

May 17-18 Root River (Minnesota)

Class I; Car Camp. Enjoy a 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. Camping is free but canoes/kayaks need to be licensed. *For details, contact: Sue O'Brien, 507-452-3164, sueob1@gmail.com*

May 24-26 Bois Brule

Class I-II; Car Camp. Jo in us for three day trips on the Bois Brule. On Saturday, we'll paddle from County S to Highway 2. On Sunday, we'll paddle from Pine Tree Landing to Highway 13—this section includes a series of Class II rapids. On Monday, we'll paddle from Highway 13 to Lake Superior. We'll learn about the work to protect this trout stream. Helmets required for rapids. Camping is available at the DNR Campground south of Brule WI in Douglas County. The trip leader will reserve as many sites as possible. This is a busy weekend so please share your site with fellow Sierrans. *For*

details contact: Pat & Bobbie Wilson, 608-788-8831, 608-397-2531 (cell), pbwilson@centurytel.net

May 27 White River

Class I-II; Car Camp. Extend your Memorial Day weekend trip. Join us on Tuesday after paddling the Bois Brule. This is a delightful river with a true northwoods feel. We will take time to clear any debris found. We will gather Tuesday morning at the DNR campground south of Brule in Douglas County. *For details contact: Mary Blandino, 414-546-0375 or Katy Golden, 414-378-1053, katyrenny@yahoo.com*

June 7-8 WHITEWATER CLINICS for Solo and Tandem canoes, Whitewater Kayaks (See Clinics above)

June 14-15 Pike River/Red River

Class II; Car Camp. The Pike is a beautiful small whitewater river and a designated WI Wild River with numerous small drops. The Red has something for all whitewater paddlers. Helmets required. *For details contact: Jim Servais, 920-434-0740 or 920-217-6284*

June 20-24 Sylvania Wilderness Service Project

Quietwater; Car and Canoe Camp. The pristine Sylvania Wilderness is being invaded by non-native thistles. Help the Friends of Sylvania remove these invasives and enjoy the beauty of this special place. You can also practice portaging and canoe camping to prepare for your other summer expeditions. We will begin Friday, June 20, 2014 with a pizza dinner, introductions, orientation, and a movie. We will finish on Tuesday June 24. The first evening will be car camping and the remainder will be backcountry canoe camping. Meals will be coordinated cooperatively to minimize expense and maximize quality. Fees are \$50/ person. We have 11 places open. If interested, we need your reservation by June 10, 2014. See the Friends of Sylvania website for background. Canoes are available for discounted rental. Contact Ms. Wally Brinkmann for registration at wabrinkm@wisc.edu and for questions and details contact trip

leader: Dan Wallace, 608-835-5144, dwallace@src.wisc.edu

June 24-26 MOVING WATER KAYAK CLINIC (See Clinics above.)

June 21-22 Mekan River Class I; Car Camp. This trip is for those who like to paddle small rivers. We will paddle a section above Germania Marsh on Saturday and a section below the marsh on Sunday. The Mekan is a premium trout stream with crystal clear water. It maintains a steady current and at times requires precise maneuvering around tight bends or dead fall. This river is not recommended for beginners struggling with boat control. Come learn about the threats and impacts of irrigation and proposed bottled water facilities. *For details contact: Leo Hummel, 608-322-7014, dhummel@centurytel.net*

June 21-22 Pike River/Wolf River

Class II+; Car Camp. Practice whitewater skills from the WW clinics before they get rusty. The Pike on Saturday. Section II of the Wolf on Sunday. *For details contact: Phillip Johnsrud, 715-445-4777, johnsrudp@tds.net*

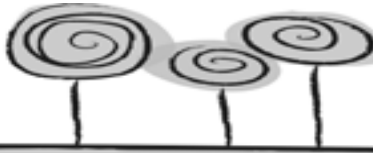
June 28 MOVING WATER CANOE CLINIC (See Clinics above.)

July 12 – 13 Quiet Rivers of Southern/Central Wisconsin - Exploratory

Class I; Car Camp. Explore one or two quiet water rivers in southern or central Wisconsin. River choice will depend on water levels, possibilities include: Lower Wisconsin, Sugar, Mekan, Lemonweir, or Platte. Plan to pick up trash along the way and explore the varied geography in southern Wisconsin. *For details contact: Doug Robinson, 608-334-8026, dougknu@gmail.com*

July 19-22 Wisconsin River

Quietwater; Canoe Camp. This trip is on the lower Wisconsin. View the narrowing valley formed by the limestone cliffs. Start at Wauzeka and camp on the Wisconsin. Take out at Wyalusing State Park. The camping is primitive—no facilities. For details contact:



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222 S. Hamilton St., Suite 11
Madison WI 53703

Donate online at: www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org

Carl Wisler, 262-542-9533, carl.wisler@att.net

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED: Each trip and clinic includes the name and contact information of the trip leaders. You must call the leaders prior to the trip to register and to get the logistics of the trip (when and where it departs.) Trip leaders can provide information about the trip or clinic and help you assess your abilities to participate. Trip leaders reserve the right to limit participation based on the number of people registered, participant skill levels, trip difficulty, and other reasons.

GEAR: You are responsible for providing all of your gear—boat, paddles, life jacket, bail bucket, and so on. You'll also need to provide weather-appropriate clothing. This means a wet or dry suit for early and late season runs and for whitewater as well as gear to minimize sun exposure such as a hat and sunglasses.

All participants MUST wear a properly fitted and securely fastened life jacket on all the trips and in the clinics. For Class II and higher whitewater, participants should wear a life jacket designed for whitewater, a whitewater helmet, and have a boat that is properly outfitted with floatation and thigh straps. These items may be required for some Class II trips (see trip description and talk to the trip leader) and are absolutely required for Class III and higher water.

You are responsible for providing all of your camping equipment—tents, sleeping bag, food, etc. Trips marked "Car Camp" means you'll return to a

camping site for the evening. "Canoe Camp" means you need to carry all your equipment with you in your canoe. "Canoe Camp with Portage" means you'll have an opportunity to carry all of your gear at some point on the trip.

PADDLING RESOURCES: Wisconsin guidebooks include: Paddling Northern Wisconsin, Paddling Southern Wisconsin, and Whitewater; Quietwater. In addition, you'll find information about safety about other issues on the following web sites: American Canoe Association: <http://www.americancanoe.org>. American Whitewater: <http://www.americanwhitewater.org>. The latter includes current water levels for many Wisconsin rivers.

CLASSES OF WATER: We want your RTS experience to be fun. We also want it to be safe. The International Scale of River Rating Difficulty (see below) is a guide for assessing the difficulty of a stretch of water and will help you decide if a trip is appropriate for you and your skill level. Except for the occasional flatwater/quietwater lake trips, all of our trips are on rivers. Many of these trips are suitable for paddlers with solid flatwater canoe/kayak skills. Trip leaders are always happy to discuss the nature of the river with you.

International Scale of River Rating Difficulty

The International Scale of River Rating Difficulty is a guide for assessing the difficulty of a stretch of water. Some rivers will not clearly fall into a neat system. Temperatures below 500 F should change a rating to be one class more difficult than normal.

Class I - Moving water with few riffles and small waves. Few or no obstruc-

tions.

Class II - Easy rapids with waves up to three feet and wide clear channels that are obvious.

Class III - Rapids with high, irregular waves often capable of swamping an open canoe. Narrow passages that often require complex maneuvering. May require some scouting from shore.

Class IV - Long, difficult rapids and constricted passages that often require precise maneuvering in very turbulent waters. Scout from shore often necessary and conditions make rescue difficult. Canoeists and kayakers should have the ability to roll.

Note: The scale includes two additional Classes—V and VI—but since RTS is not offering trips at that level, we didn't include that information. See the American Canoe Associate Web Site for a complete description.

LIABILITY WAIVER and REQUIREMENTS: All participants are required to sign a liability waiver prior to the trip or clinic 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: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>.

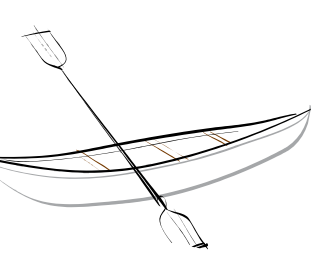
TRANSPORTATION: You are responsible for transportation to and from the river. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. We can identify people who have space in their car and people who need rides, but we do not make transportation arrangements.

OTHER: We do not allow non-paddlers, glass containers, or alcoholic beverages

on our trips while we are on the water. Pets are prohibited unless the trip announcement explicitly mentions that pets are allowed.

"CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California."

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS? Please see our web site at: or <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/rtts/> or contact: Rich Krieg, RTS Chair, at richkrieg@new.rr.com, 920-660-3557.



JOHN MUIR CHAPTER CALENDAR

ExCom Meetings

May 8 Conference Call

June 12 Conference Call

2014 Events

April 1 Spring Elections

Find your polling place <https://myvote.wi.gov/>

April 3 Tar Sands Rally & Public Hearing 1:00 pm
St. Paul, MN

elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org for details

April 14 Conservation Congress Hearings 7:00 pm

Find your county location <http://dnr.wi.gov/About/WCC/>

April 19 John Muir Birthday & Wilderness Act
Celebration 10-4 pm

*John Muir Memorial Park, N1383 CR-F,
Montello, WI rsvp www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org
or 608-256-0565*

April 22 Earth Day

July 31 Sierra Club night at the Madison Mallards Game
*Tickets at www.mallardsgroups.com
password: Sierra*

October 10-12 2014 Autumn Assembly

*Check the John Muir Chapter website, or e-mail or call the
Chapter office for updated information.*

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

Phone: (608) 256-0565

E-mail: john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org



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