

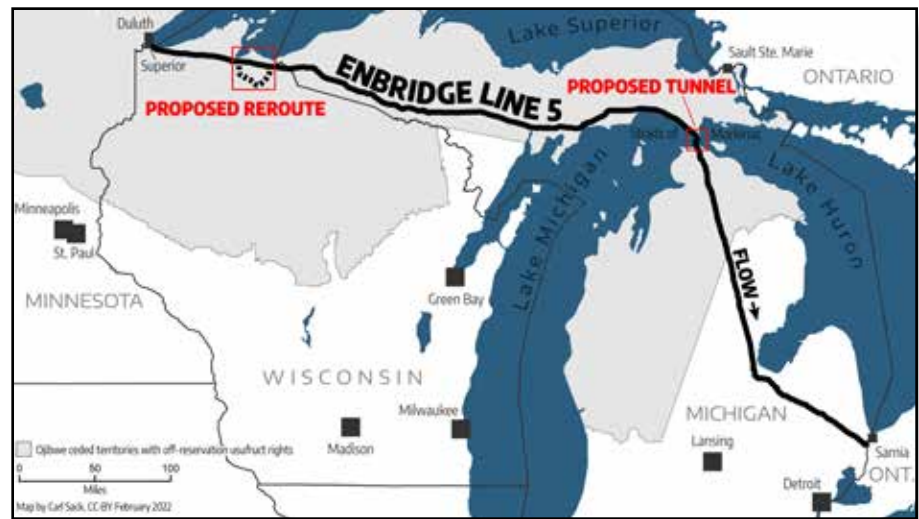


WISCONSIN Sierran

NEWS OF THE WISCONSIN CHAPTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB

STOPPING LINE 5: WHAT'S GOING ON NOW, AND WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The years-long efforts to shut down Enbridge's Line 5 tar sands pipeline are continuing and heating up. This pipeline, part of Canadian company Enbridge's vast mainline network, starts in Superior, Wisconsin, and travels across the state, through the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and the Straits of Mackinac, and ends in Sarnia, Ontario. The tar sands products—crude oil and natural gas liquids—that flow through this 70-year old pipeline are extracted in western Canada by clear-cutting boreal forest, poisoning nearby waters and devastating ecosystems and First Nations lands.



Credit: Carl Sack

Currently, Enbridge is operating Line 5 illegally on the Reservation of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and they have been for more than a decade. The Band has resolved not to renew the easements that allow Enbridge to operate on some parcels of land on their Reservation, and has directed Enbridge to remove the pipeline from their lands and watershed. In 2019, they sued Enbridge, and last year, a federal judge ordered Enbridge to remove the pipeline from Bad River's lands by June 2026. This shut down

order is a huge deal, and it's not soon enough. The natural movement of the Bad River is eroding river banks, bringing the pipeline dangerously close to exposure and potential rupture, which would devastate the area.

Both Bad River and Enbridge have appealed the court's decision, and in February of this year presented oral arguments in front of the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago. As of the writing of this article, no decision has been made.

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DON'T SIT OUT THIS YEAR!

We don't know where we'll be at the end of this year, but we know what we're facing. We also know we have the tools, know-how, and leaders, we have strong passions and dedication to our causes, and we have you as our members and supporters. Together, we can and will make a difference, and we're asking you to support us as much as you can, in any way you can.

In this newsletter, you'll read about a number of statewide and local environmental and political issues that are at the forefront of our agenda this year. **Underlying our commitment to justice is a focus in democratic processes where people's voices and protection of the environment and planet are of the utmost importance.**

If we are truly to have an equitable, just and sustainable future, that means raising all voices, especially those most affected who also bring wisdom and have stories to tell regarding impacts to themselves and the environment. As people who care about Wisconsin's nature and resources and our population's well-being, we know you expect this from us.

One ongoing example is our support for the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa's fight against the Enbridge tar sands Line 5 pipeline that has threatened their lands and waters for far too long, despite demands to remove it. The pipeline impacts the Bad River Band's sacred homeland that their culture and way of life depend on, and where they have centuries of ties to and understandings of the land and nature; yet dominant white culture and money continue to have far too strong an influence.

Our members, supporters, staff, lawyers, volunteers and allies all continue to fight the proposed reroute and shut down Line 5. You can too by going to <https://tinyurl.com/Line5ACOE> and telling the Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a full review of the proposed reroute and ensure that no environmental shortcuts will be permitted. Enbridge's record proves that tar sands pipelines are unsafe, and we won't rest until Line 5 is stopped and we're off tar sands and other fossil fuels.



Another critical environmental justice fight is ending the energy burden faced by communities of color in Milwaukee, as well as other low-income residents throughout the state. Some pay 6 - 10% of their income or more for their energy bills, and are also impacted by fossil fuel pollution and unhealthy, inefficient residences. In addition, it is often harder for them to access the clean energy funding available to other people. But we're working in partnership with front line organizations such as Walnut Way and Citizen Action – Northside Rising to rectify these issues.

We demand health and safety for our residents, for Wisconsin's environment, and for our planet. That shouldn't be too much to ask, but as Kermit the frog said, "It's not easy being green." We know that – and are prepared for what's ahead.

This isn't a year to leave anything on the table. We won't, and we're counting on you not to either.

**Don Ferber
Gail Syverud
Co-chairs**

THE WISCONSIN SIERRAN

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Please submit articles by mail or email to:
754 Williamson St.
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wisconsin.chapter@sierraclub.org

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.

Deadline:

The deadline for submission of articles to the October 2024 issue is midnight on August 10, 2024.

Change of Address:

You can update your contact information online at myaccount.sierraclub.org.

Continued from page 1

But the story doesn't stop here: Enbridge is pushing forward with a project to expand Line 5 around Bad River's Reservation, endangering an even broader area in order to keep pumping oil that's ultimately intensifying the climate crisis.

With Line 5, Enbridge poses a threat to our climate, puts us at constant risk of an oil spill and endangers Tribal treaty rights. Their proposed Line 5 reroute jeopardizes waters through construction. When Enbridge rushed through construction of the Line 3 replacement pipeline in Minnesota, they punctured aquifers that have leaked hundreds of millions of gallons of water, and released harmful drilling fluids—and they plan to use the same processes and contractor in Wisconsin.

Eleven Ojibwe tribes, including Bad River, reserve hunting, fishing and gathering rights through treaties with the U.S. government. The 1842 Treaty of La Pointe reserves these rights where Enbridge has proposed the Line 5 reroute, and the company's construction practices and the constant threat of a spill put these rights in danger.

For countless reasons, this reroute is dangerous, and we need to be prioritizing moving away from fossil fuels, not focusing

on extending their lifetime. Enbridge has applied for permits from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The company is awaiting a response while the agencies process and respond to the tens of thousands of comments submitted by the public that overwhelmingly oppose Line 5.

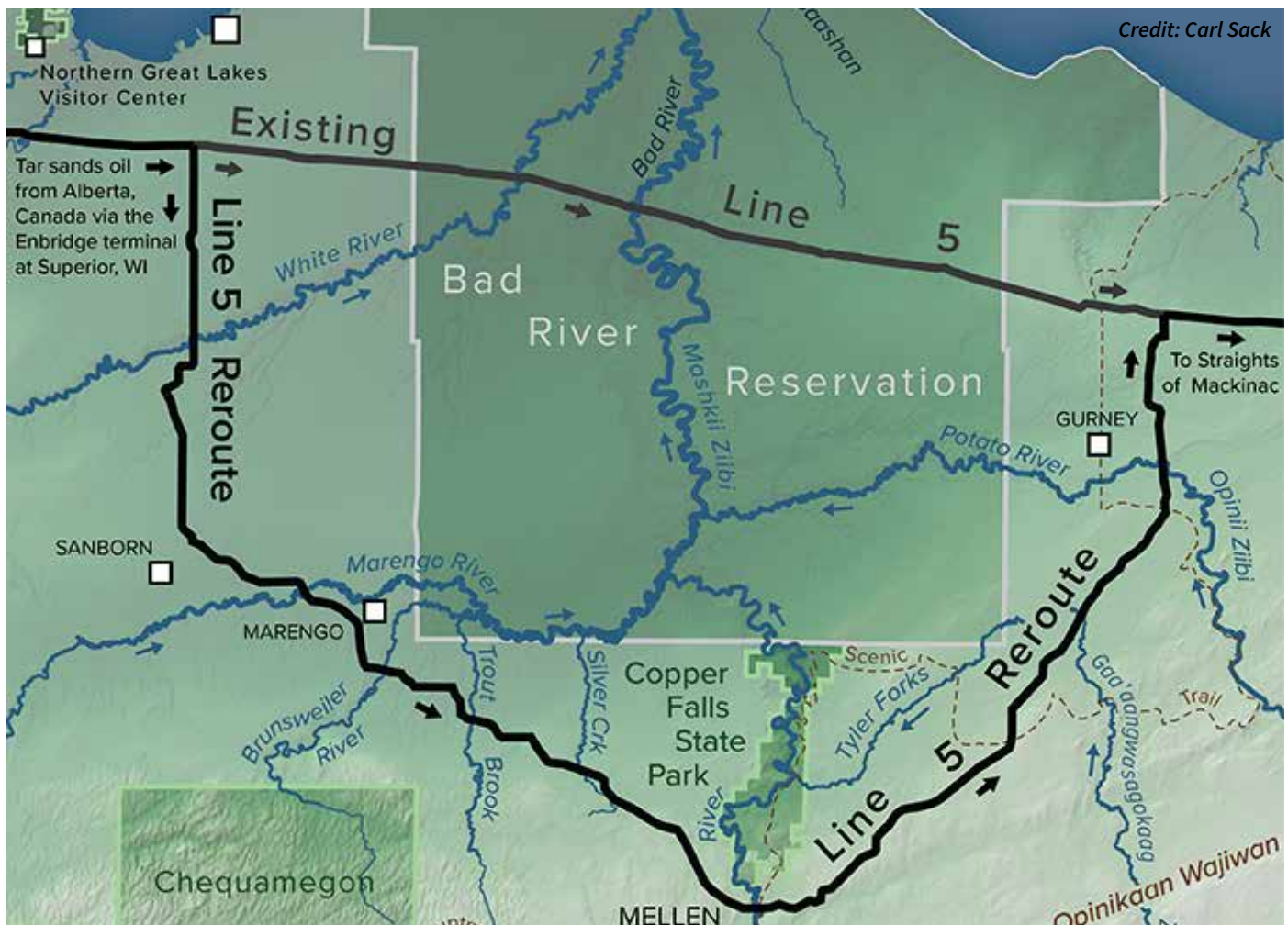
What can you do now? Here are two of the major actions we're pushing in our efforts to protect climate, waters and treaty rights:

- ❑ **Call your representatives** and ask them to support a thorough environmental review at the Army Corps.
- ❑ **Call President Biden** and ask him to stop Line 5 by revoking the presidential permit that allows it to operate.

Look up contact information for both of the actions above at <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials/>

Check out our latest action at sc.org/Line5WI

Want to get involved with our organizing efforts and help expand this fight? Email jadine.sonoda@sierraclub.org to hear more about our volunteer team. We'd love to have you join!



I-94 EXPANSION PROJECT APPROVED, DESPITE BEING UNDER FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS INVESTIGATION

For more than a decade, Milwaukeeans, Sierra Club and our allies have opposed the proposed expansion of 3.5 miles of I-94 East/West in Milwaukee for a variety of reasons. Highway expansion projects increase greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, water pollution, water runoff and flooding. They add noise to nearby neighborhoods and make accessing areas on the other side of the highway extremely difficult, especially if you do not

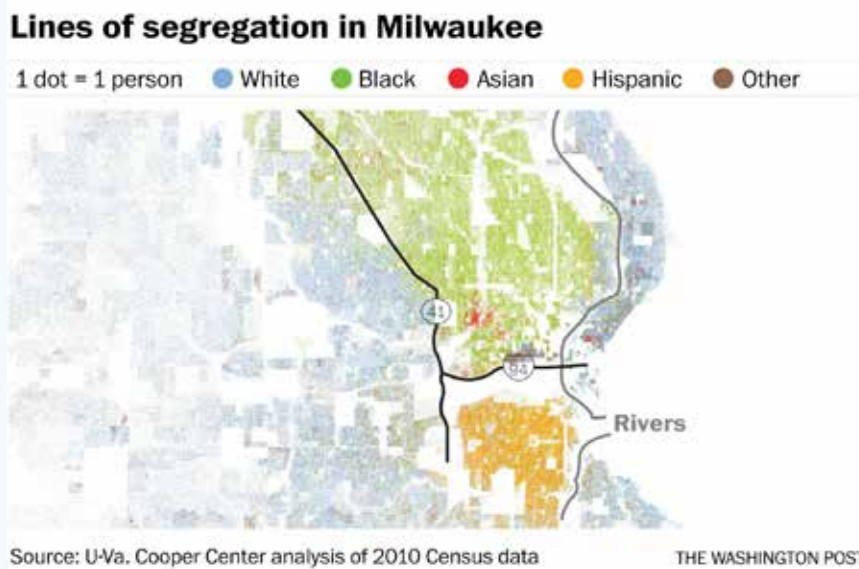
have a car. **Added lanes also makes traffic congestion worse and crashes more deadly.** These projects are extremely costly to taxpayers and pull much-needed resources away from walking, biking and public transit. **In many cases, these projects are in Black or Brown neighborhoods, exacerbating existing racial segregation.**

All of these concerns are true about the proposed expansion of I-94, and the contentious project is now under investigation by the Federal Highway Administration for a Title VI civil rights complaint. Unfortunately, just days before this newsletter went to print, Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WISDOT) announced that the project's Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the federal Record of Decision (ROD) had been completed, approving the expansion project. As of writing this article, Sierra Club and our allies are still reviewing the FEIS and determining our next steps on this project.

Attorney and Sierra Club - Wisconsin Chapter Legal Chair Dennis Grzezinski explains, "The agencies have been moving forward with expansion alternatives with the knowledge that they will have discriminatory impacts, contrary to the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and of climate and environmental justice directives of federal executive orders and state policies. This project is located in the most heavily racially segregated metropolitan region in the country. This stretch of the highway corridor has a larger proportion of

Black and Hispanic residents than can be found in any other community in the region. The project will result in adverse impacts including increased carbon emissions, air pollution, water pollution, flooding, and fatal traffic crashes, which will disproportionately impact Black and Hispanic communities."

The civil rights complaint was filed by dozens of complainants after 32 signatories had previously submitted formal comments on WISDOT's Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. WISDOT has also released a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Analysis that confirmed that the 8-lane expansion alternatives will result in more GHG emissions over the course of the project than the 6-lane alternatives.



The expansion of I-94 in Milwaukee has received opposition from racial justice, religious, environmental, public health and transportation advocacy organizations for more than a decade. In 2017, then-Governor Walker called on the Federal Highway Administration to halt the project by revoking its Record of Decision, citing local opposition, pending challenges and high project costs to taxpayers. Governor Evers reintroduced the project in 2020, reigniting the opposition. WISDOT agreed to conduct a Draft SEIS, which was released in late 2022. The final EIS was released in March 2024, along with the federal Record of Decision. It is extremely disappointing that this project has received federal and state approval while still being investigated for civil rights violations, and just before WISDOT will be required to create a GHG reduction plan. Advocates continue to look for remaining opportunities to stop or improve this project. Please check our website and social media for more up-to-date information.

Cassie Steiner
Senior Campaign Coordinator

LOCAL RESISTANCE TO NEMADJI TRAIL ENERGY CENTER GROWS IN SUPERIOR AND BEYOND

In Superior, Wisconsin, conversations about the proposed Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) are heating up. This gas plant, first proposed in 2017, has been stalled for the last seven years as utilities try to push it through local, state and federal permitting. If built, this gas plant would be constructed on the bank of the Nemadji River in Superior, directly adjacent to the St. Francis Cemetery, where there is an Indigenous burial ground. The plant would be powered by gas, a fossil fuel made up primarily of methane, which is a potent greenhouse gas that exacerbates climate change and makes our air unhealthy. And the financial burden of construction and operation would be borne by utility customers for decades to come.

NTEC is co-proposed by three utilities: Dairyland Power Cooperative, Minnesota Power, and Basin Electric Power Cooperative. These utilities claim there's a need for the gas plant, but a Sierra Club analysis has shown that the same demand could be met by a portfolio of clean energy and storage resources. A recent study from the Union of Concerned Scientists also questions the reliability of gas plants, especially during extreme weather events, which are becoming ever more common. Climate change is resulting in flooding, cold snaps, heat waves, wildfires resulting in poor air quality and more, and NTEC would only amplify these problems.

The gas plant is also of concern to Tribes in the region, and both the Fond du Lac and Red Cliff Bands of Lake Superior Ojibwe have pushed back on this project throughout the permitting process. In 1918, almost 200 Fond du Lac graves were dug up from their initial resting place and moved to mass graves at St. Francis Cemetery because of an infrastructure project that never materialized. The Band has stated that they believe the current resting site at St. Francis Cemetery will be adversely affected by the construction and operation of NTEC. Red Cliff has also raised concerns about cultural sites, threatened species, medicines, climate change and wetland destruction.

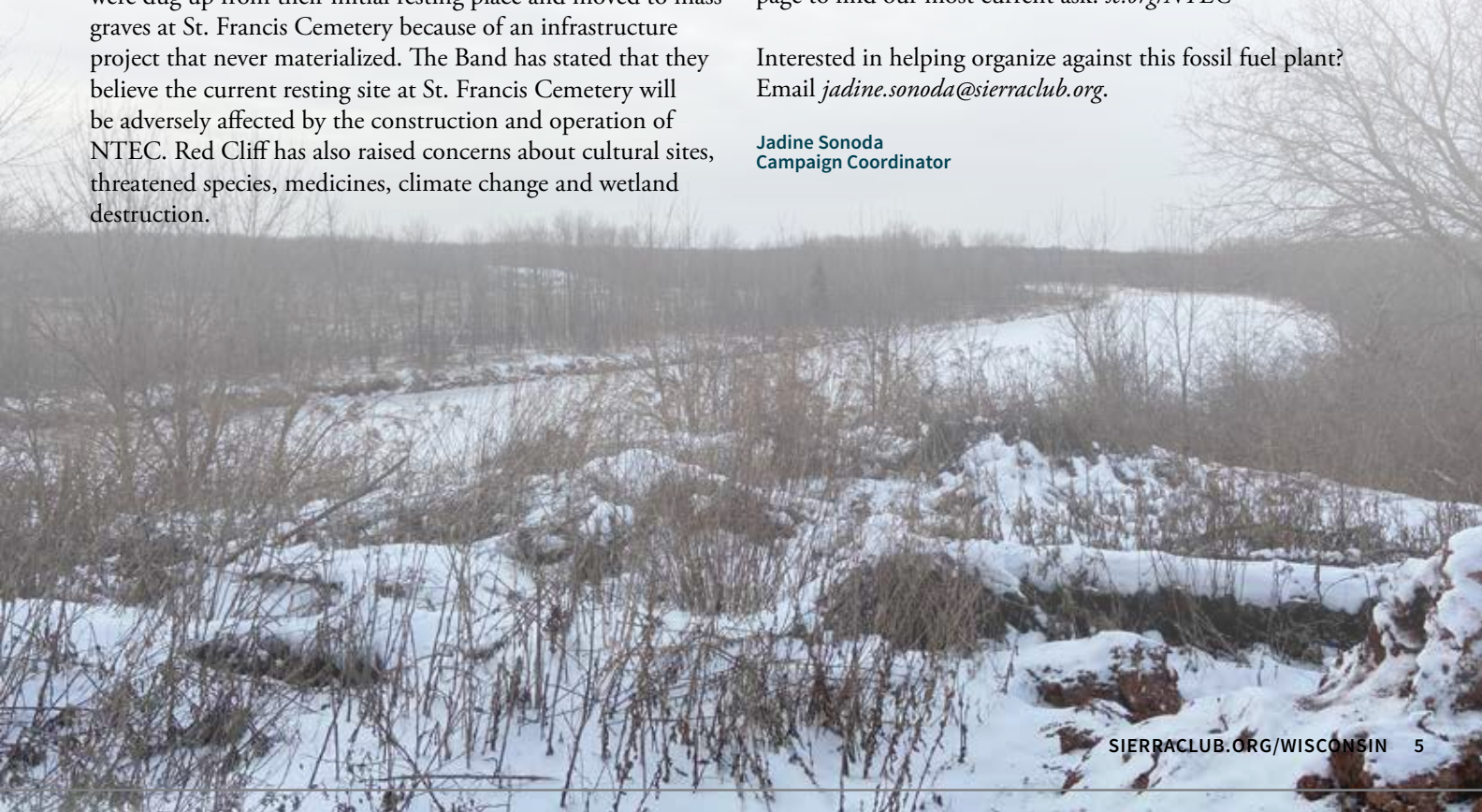
Local leaders and community members have also been raising their voices and outlining their concerns with the project. In particular, Superior Mayor Jim Paine and four city council members, Jenny Van Sickle, Nick Ledin, Garner Moffat and Ruth Ludwig, have concerns about the impacts on climate change, environmental justice and the Fond du Lac burial grounds, local water and wetlands, economic concerns and how NTEC would strain the city's utilities. In 2018, an explosion at the Husky Refinery in Superior caused significant damage, totaling roughly \$550 million, injured workers and triggered the evacuation of thousands of residents due to the release of toxic chemicals. This incident has come up time and again, weighing heavily on a community who wants to prevent similar industrial accidents in the future.

Local leaders have been joined by community members who are detailing their own opposition to the plant. At a January City of Superior Plan Commission meeting, the majority of public comments were in opposition to the plant, urging the utilities to cancel their plans for the sake of residents' health, climate, and environmental justice.

So far, Dairyland, Minnesota Power and Basin Electric have refused these calls to cancel this project and invest in cleaner, safer options. How can you help? If you are a rural electric coop member, attend your coop's annual meeting and share your support for clean energy rather than fossil fuels like gas, and no matter where you are in the state, check out our action page to find our most current ask: sc.org/NTEC

Interested in helping organize against this fossil fuel plant?
Email jadine.sonoda@sierraclub.org.

Jadine Sonoda
Campaign Coordinator



LOCAL GROUPS IN ACTION

Sierra Club Wisconsin is organized into six local groups, each with its own officers, activities, conservation priorities, programs, and activities. We work together on statewide and regional issues, and are excited to share updates from each of them.



SOUTHEAST GATEWAY GROUP

Covering Walworth, Racine and Kenosha Counties
www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway

Check out our latest newsletter or follow us on Facebook and Meet-up to find the latest happenings!

<https://www.facebook.com/SierraClubSoutheastGatewayGroup>

<https://www.meetup.com/Southeast-Gateway-Group-Sierra-Club-Hikes-and-Activities/>

CHIPPEWA VALLEY GROUP

Covering Barron, Buffalo, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk and St. Croix Counties
www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/chippewa-valley

UPCOMING EVENTS:

❑ GAYLORD NELSON EARTH GREEN AWARD EVENT

Monday, April 15, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

First Congregational UCC Community Room

310 Broadway St., Eau Claire

Reception with appetizers, buffet, wine, beer and a short program to **honor Kathy Stahl, restorer of native prairies with the Prairie Enthusiasts-Chippewa Savanna chapter.**

More information: <http://d.pr/c0Hz7e>

❑ BICYCLE RIDE ON THE CHIPPEWA RIVER TRAIL

Sunday, April 21, 2024, 10 a.m.

Bicycle ride on the State Trail from the parking area on State HWY 85 in Caryville to the Tyrone overlook.

View spring ephemerals, great views of the Chippewa River and the newly planted prairie at Tyrone.

The total round trip distance is 20 miles.

More information: <https://d.pr/ISTBan>

- ❑ The JONAH Environmental Task Force, in collaboration with the Eau Claire County Office of Recycling and Sustainability and Beaver Creek Nature Preserve, invites you to the **ANNUAL EARTH WEEK OPEN HOUSE** on Thursday, April 25, 2024, from 4-8 p.m. at the Brewing Projekt, 1807 North Oxford Ave in Eau Claire. The Chippewa Valley Sierra Club group exhibit will be among 40 community organizations and businesses that promote sustainability.

COULEE REGION GROUP

Covering Crawford, Grant, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau and Vernon Counties

www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee

This spring, the Coulee Region Group will be tabling at the **LA CROSSE EARTH FAIR ON APRIL 28** and conducting a cleanup of our adopted roadside along a wetland. We are also looking to follow up our support of a successful Transit Equity Days with a **"Transit to Trails for All" activity, where we'll ride the city bus to a nearby land conservancy-owned property for some time in nature.** We are always looking for volunteers to help with putting together our monthly group newsletter—please let us know if you're interested!

FOUR LAKES GROUP

Covering Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Rock and Sauk Counties

www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/four-lakes

Check out the Four Lakes Group Facebook page for updates: www.facebook.com/4lakesSierraClub/

FOX VALLEY GROUP

Covering Brown, Calumet, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Outagamie, Waupaca and Winnebago Counties

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2024**, time TBD as of printing. See group Facebook page. Location: Mosquito Hill Nature, N3880 Rogers Rd, New London, WI 54961
Mosquito Hill Nature Center is an environmental education and recreation facility operated by the Outagamie County Parks Department. The center is open year-round on 441 acres adjacent to the Wolf River.
Activities: Tentatively, the group will be working on conservation activities, including **trail repair, tree planting and invasive plant removal.** **Watch the Fox Valley Sierra Club Facebook page and website for updated information.**

www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley

<https://www.facebook.com/foxvalleysierra/>

- **MONTHLY MEETINGS** are held the 2nd Thursday of each month (except July and August). Most meetings begin at 7:00 p.m., with the building opening around 6:30 p.m. for setup, socializing and snacks. Everyone is welcome. Most meetings are free.

We welcome anyone who loves the outdoors and wants to meet others with the same love. We welcome anyone who is concerned about the natural environment and wants to learn more. Help us protect our natural heritage by participating in our meetings, outings, educational events and political actions to explore, enjoy and protect northeastern Wisconsin. For more information, visit our website or email FVSierraGroup@gmail.com.

GREAT WATERS GROUP

Covering Washington, Ozaukee, Waukesha and Milwaukee Counties

www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/great-waters

- Once again Great Waters Group will be joining Milwaukee Riverkeeper on April 20 to help with the **SPRING RIVER CLEANUP!** We're asking members to choose among more than 90 sites in the Milwaukee area where they can join with friends, neighbors, and other volunteers to pull trash from our waterways. The Great Waters Group is sponsoring three of the sites. Sign up here: <https://milwaukeekeeper.org/restore/spring-cleanup/>.
- In 2024, Great Waters Group is focusing on these issues:
Addressing the energy burden that disproportionately impacts Black and Latinx neighborhoods in Milwaukee. Partnering with other area groups to ensure the implementation of Milwaukee's Climate and Equity Plan. Encouraging local communities to pass Rights of Nature resolutions. Partnering with local schools on outings

Areas where we could **particularly use volunteer help** include pulling together **content for and editing our quarterly newsletter, keeping our website up to date, and social media.** Please reach out if you're interested in any of these tasks!

ISSUES AT A GLANCE

BACKPACKS FOR KIDS

The Four Lakes Group's Land Equity Access Team is working with local education partners like One City Elementary and a set of public libraries in Madison to help children and families in Madison connect with and explore the outdoors through the Backpacks for Kids program. Outdoor education backpacks provide tips and tools for kids to explore the wildlife and nature in their own neighborhoods.

The backpacks each have a different theme, are specific to the neighborhoods the school or library is in, and range from kindergarten level through 4th grade. Themes include:

- ❑ **Wildlife:** Basic learning about animals through observation, like tracks

- ❑ **Circle of Life:** Learning about connections between animals, plants and other aspects of nature
- ❑ **Water:** Exploring water systems in the neighborhood and animals that live in and above the water.
- ❑ **Trees:** Identifying the types of trees that are present and the role they play
- ❑ **Geology:** Learning how the local landscape was shaped by the Ice Age and other geological facts

The backpacks include tools like binoculars, markers and guidance for parents and caregivers, as well as suggested destinations in the neighborhood or nearby sites accessible by bus. As the program gets underway with current partners, the Four Lakes Group is working to continue providing the backpacks to more sites throughout the city in the coming year.

FOUR LAKES GROUP ORGANIZES COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING IN MADISON

Six volunteers with the Sierra Club and the Arbor Day Foundation got together on Saturday, October 28, to plant 10 new native, locally-sourced trees at Odana Hills Park in Madison, WI. Jake Johnson, a member of the Executive Committee of the Four Lakes Group, planned a community tree planting project in coordination with the Madison Parks Department, finding good places for new trees and working with the city to dig holes: "We had the goals of planting new trees, creating more canopy, involving the community and providing habitat for wildlife, and we organized this fun event where volunteers learned how to plant a tree, treat its roots, and care for the planted tree by watering and mulching it. It was so nice to work with some passionate volunteers who made this a fun and productive event. In a time of rapid climate change and unrest in the world, planting trees is a great way of creating hope and creating something beautiful and positive for the community and the world." Johnson planned and ran seven community tree planting events in Dane County in 2023, and volunteered at a handful of other planting events. "I'm looking forward to planning more events this winter for the spring of 2024," says Johnson. If you would like to be notified of tree planting opportunities, send your contact information to Jake at treesofhope23@gmail.com.



WE ENERGIES' GAS RUSH

While we've seen great strides in moving away from fossil fuel infrastructure, WEC Energy Group (WEC), the owner of We Energies (WE) and Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) is going in the opposite direction. WEC is proposing to build 3,000 mw of new gas. This is a massive amount. For comparison, the state's largest coal plant, We Energies' Elm Road Generating Station in Oak Creek is 1,263 mw.

The science is clear—we need to move to clean energy and will not be able to stop the worst impacts of climate change if we continue to use fossil fuels. In the scientific findings released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), methane is named specifically as an extremely potent greenhouse gas—more than 80 times as powerful as carbon dioxide. Methane is the main component of the gas that is burned in some power plants and is what many utilities claim as 'clean.'

WEC's announcement is especially harmful as many of their customers are suffering from high energy bills. Gas infrastructure is extremely expensive and will become a stranded asset, leaving customers on the hook to pay for it. Meanwhile, WEC refuses to retire its remaining coal plants like Weston near Wausau. We Energies customers have already experienced two large rate increases in the past two years. These increases follow a 2021 analysis that found that in some areas of Milwaukee, Black, Hispanic, and Latinx households may pay over 10% of their income for utilities, or risk getting their power shut off. This is double that of neighborhoods with white-majority households. This proposal by WEC will hurt those suffering from high energy bills even more.

2023-24 LEGISLATIVE RECAP

As another legislative session (January 2023 to June 2024) comes to an end, the legislature has again failed to address the most urgent issues facing Wisconsinites. The legislature made no meaningful process on issues like climate change, habitat destruction, water pollution, and the extinction crisis. Instead, we saw disgraceful attacks on our democracy, efforts to undermine science-based natural resources management, and a prioritization of partisan agendas over the well-being of the people they were elected to serve.

It can not be understated- the inaction by the Legislative Leadership is unacceptable at a time when people are unable to drink their water and climate change is already wreaking havoc. The time to act is now, and there is no time to wait for politics.

Here are some of the lowlights from this session include:

- ❑ **Blocking action on PFAS:** The legislature is blocking the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from establishing safeguards on PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) pollution and the legislature is even blocking the DNR from using the \$125 million that was set aside to address PFAS pollution.
- ❑ **Undermining our land and wildlife:** Despite the clear science and decision by the DNR, the legislature continues to propose legislation that forces DNR's hand on wolf management, threats to our northern forests, and more. Additionally, the Joint Finance Committee has continued to block efforts to use the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship fund to protect some of Wisconsin's most special places.
- ❑ **Attacks on democracy:** Governor Evers has been a strong protector of our democracy and natural resources, leading to the veto of the egregious bills that the legislature brought forward. In an attempt to work around him, the legislature moved forward with constitutional amendments that would make voting more difficult, including voter ID and making elections more difficult for local governments to run.

Look for the full legislative scorecard in the October edition of the *Wisconsin Sierran*.

ELECTING ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS

2024 is a critical election year, and as one of only a few environmental organizations to endorse candidates, the Sierra Club will be highly involved, which makes our endorsements sought after. We do so to help elect candidates who will support legislation and actions that preserve and protect the environment, and who will support our issues and concerns.

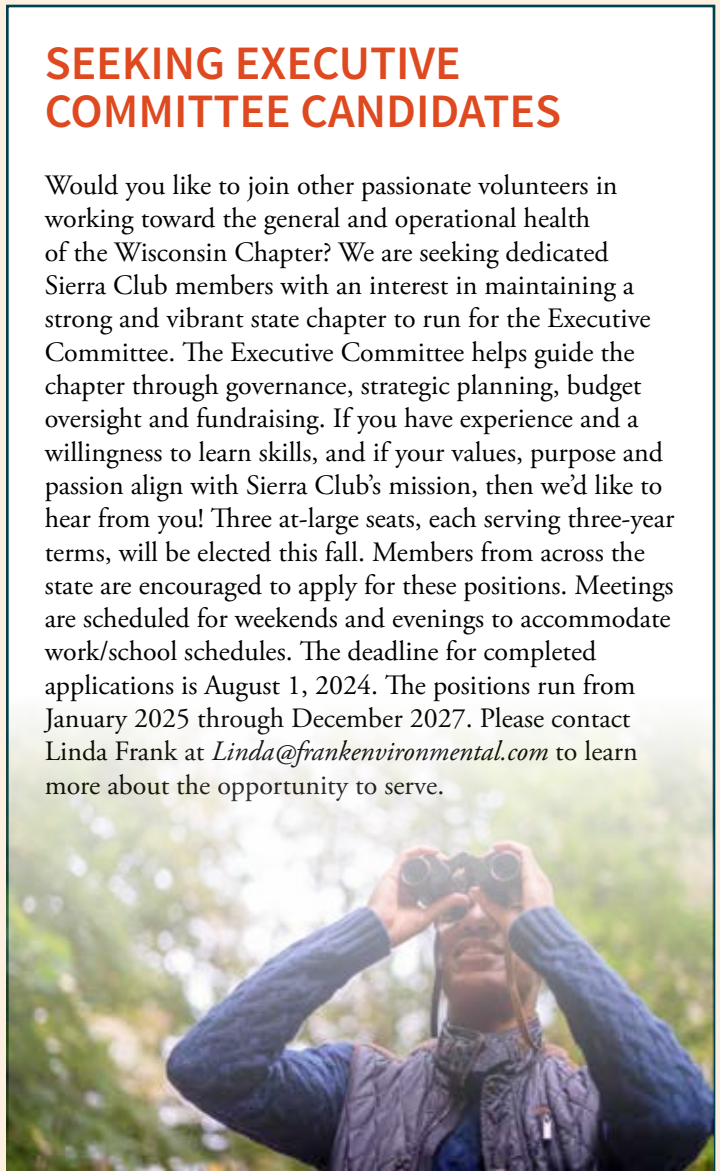
Our chapter’s political committee makes candidate endorsements for both state and federal elections based on the voting records of elected officials and questionnaires sent to unelected candidates. Joining our political committee is a great way to get involved, discuss who we endorse, and help us elect environmentally friendly candidates who support our positions. We also have political teams in our groups which offer opportunities to get more involved locally.

We support candidates by promoting our endorsements to our members and the public, and help get out the vote. We also train members to work on candidate campaigns, and have many easy ways to help support our political work such as texting, making calls, door-to-door canvassing, drafting support letters, and more. Please contact Chapter Volunteer Coordinator Heather Wittrock at heather.wittrock@sierraclub.org if you’re interested in helping with our political work in this vital election year.

By Dave Blouin
Political Chair

SEEKING EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES

Would you like to join other passionate volunteers in working toward the general and operational health of the Wisconsin Chapter? We are seeking dedicated Sierra Club members with an interest in maintaining a strong and vibrant state chapter to run for the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee helps guide the chapter through governance, strategic planning, budget oversight and fundraising. If you have experience and a willingness to learn skills, and if your values, purpose and passion align with Sierra Club’s mission, then we’d like to hear from you! Three at-large seats, each serving three-year terms, will be elected this fall. Members from across the state are encouraged to apply for these positions. Meetings are scheduled for weekends and evenings to accommodate work/school schedules. The deadline for completed applications is August 1, 2024. The positions run from January 2025 through December 2027. Please contact Linda Frank at Linda@frankenvironmental.com to learn more about the opportunity to serve.



Support the Wisconsin Chapter

When you make a donation to the Wisconsin Chapter you allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities and to promote the enjoyment of nature.

Please be as generous as you are able. Your contributions, above and beyond membership dues, are an important part of the Chapter’s budget.

\$50
 \$100
 \$250
 \$500
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Mail to: Sierra Club-Wisconsin Chapter, 754 Williamson St., Madison, WI 53703

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Wild Girls: How the Outdoors Shaped the Women Who Challenged a Nation

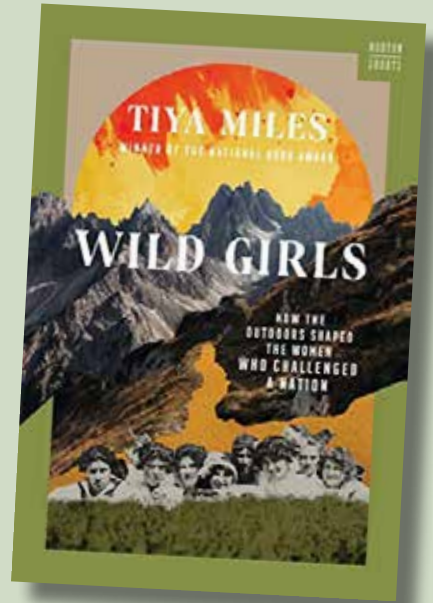
by Tiya Miles, 2023, Norton Shorts, 173 pages (with index)

Tiya Miles, who won the 2021 nonfiction National Book Award for *All That She Carried*, explores the power of outdoor and wild experiences for women. Her research includes American women: Harriet Tubman, Louisa May Alcott, Harriet Jacobs, Octavia Butler, and Indigenous female athletes who defied societal norms. The exploration illuminates how women’s wilderness experiences and their resistance to their expected gender roles of domesticity supported their contributions to the nation.

Wild Girls begins with Miles growing up in Cincinnati. She encounters nature and the majesty of the Ohio River, which she walks on one frozen winter. During the antebellum era, this same river functioned as a lifeline for slaves seeking escape. The Ohio River experienced several unusual years of freezing over, allowing Tubman and others to escape from Kentucky to Ohio. Though Tubman left only snatches of testimony about her life, her strength and determination were surely fed by her relationship with the natural world and the egalitarian nature of the sun and stars. She wrote of the “night the stars fell” after witnessing the Great Meteor Storm of 1833.

Consider with Miles how Amos Bronson Alcott devoted himself to abolition and transcendentalism, which promotes everyone finding their original relationship to the universe to become their best selves. Still, he urged his daughter Louisa May to be a quiet, indoor girl. To our benefit, the most famous Alcott preserved her wild streak and gave voice to Jo March in *Little Women*.

Like Alcott, Josephine Langley of the Blackfeet Nation was supposed to learn her place in society, but on an even lower rung of the social ladder. American Indian residential schools suppressed every trace of Indigenous culture. Surprisingly, Langley’s relationship with physicality, learned in the natural and cultural world of her people, served her as she played and then taught the fledgling sport of basketball. The Fort Shaw girls’ basketball team captivated audiences with their athleticism and winning performances. They triumphed over numerous teams in Montana towns, sending waves of excitement throughout the state. Their thrilling exhibition games at the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair garnered widespread admiration and some judgmental gawking. Basketball also granted the girls temporary liberation from the rigid discipline imposed by the boarding school system. As fierce and determined athletes, they cracked some prevailing



stereotypes surrounding female fragility and the supposed incapability of Indigenous individuals in terms of physical and mental prowess. Others saw women sweating and being physical as a sign of their incivility.

Miles moves through time to more contemporary authors and movers and shakers, and she seems to arrive at the same place as transcendental thinkers. Each person finds their best selves not in rigidly defined roles and expectations but rather in their original relationship to the wild world and their natural selves. And we all need to bring our best selves to the troubled world.

Amy Lou Jenkins’ books include *Every Natural Fact* and *Corners: Voices on Change*. If you have a book for possible review, contact her through JackWalkerPress.com.

Support Your Passion
for a Just and Sustainable World

Create a legacy that protects and restores the natural world for future generations by naming Sierra Club’s Wisconsin Chapter in your will or trust. Or, name Sierra Club Foundation as the beneficiary of your retirement plan for the benefit of your local chapter and leave less highly taxed assets to your loved ones.

 To learn more about the advantages of making a planned gift and to become a member of the Rachel Carson Society, please contact us.

 **SIERRA CLUB**
WISCONSIN CHAPTER

Julia Curtis • (800) 932-4270 • giftplanning@sierraclub.org • myplan.sierraclub.org

CHAPTER AWARDS

NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS

Each year the Wisconsin Chapter presents seven awards that honor outstanding volunteers, elected officials or organizations that champion environmental protection. Have you noticed an environmental champion in your group or community? Is there somebody you know who is making a difference and deserves to be recognized? Nominate them today and let us celebrate those that stand out.

NEW ACTIVIST AWARD: Given to a person who has been a Wisconsin Chapter activist for less than two years and who is an enthusiastic participant in issues and the organization. This recipient possesses a willingness to leap into new roles and champion environmental issues.

WILDFLOWER AWARD: Given to Sierra Club leaders in the Wisconsin Chapter, including an individual who exemplifies all that is wonderful in the environment and the club; A mentor for new and existing activists; or An educator that promotes a positive image for the Club.

MERIT AWARD: Given to Sierra Club leaders in the Wisconsin

Chapter. Recipient may be an Issues champion that has effectively battled environmental challenges; a consistent leader in the environmental movement (i.e. organization leadership roles, organization builder); or one who actively carries the Sierra Club message to decision-makers and the concerned public.

LD ROCKWELL AWARD: Presented to an individual who has provided exceptional service to the Wisconsin Chapter political/electoral program.

GOOD CITIZEN AWARD: Given to organizations and individuals external to the club who are championing innovative programs or processes that protect the environment.

TORCHBEARER AWARD: Given to organizations and individuals external to the club, such as decision makers that consistently promote legislation, regulations or practices that protect the environment.

JJ & PAT WERNER AWARD: The chapter's highest honor, given to Sierra Club leaders in the Wisconsin Chapter who have shown an undying commitment to its goals and missions throughout the years. This award may also be given to a spiritual leader and facilitator promoting the health of the groups and chapters.

Nominations are due August 15. Awards will be presented during a special celebration, likely in November. The form to nominate can be found at sierraclub.org/wisconsin/awards. Contact the Awards Chair, Lacinda Athens, with questions: lacinda.athen@gmail.com

A BIG WIN PAIRED WITH A CONTINUING THREAT

Friends of the environment and our Wisconsin state parks were justifiably thrilled last December when the Court of Appeals announced its decision to uphold two earlier judicial rulings in reversing Kohler Company's permit to build a new golf course on 247 acres north of Kohler-Andrae State Park. Kohler had until January 5, 2024, to appeal for review to the Wisconsin Supreme Court. It did not file for appeal.

However, the land swap that gave part of the lakeshore to the Kohler company is still in place, and Kohler could come back with another similar proposal. We must remain vigilant to protect the lakeshore from development and to assure conservation.

"...reversing Kohler Company's permit to build a new golf course on 247 acres north of Kohler-Andrae State Park."



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

LOCALLY GROWN, NATIONALLY KNOWN EVENT

Our annual celebration of local food and grassroots activism will be held the evening of May 1. Healthy food and a healthy environment go hand in hand. This year we invite you to take a trip around Wisconsin with us as we explore sustainable food producers and others that you might encounter if you were to visit markets around the state.

This popular and fun-filled event will be held online so friends from across the state can join in the fun. The event is free to attend but will also offer the opportunity to make online donations to support our work. Find out more and register to attend here: <https://bit.ly/LGNK2024>. If you are interested in sponsoring this event, please contact Jacinda Tessmann at jacinda.tessmann@sierraclub.org.

ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENT: NATIONAL SIERRA CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The annual election for Sierra Club's Board of Directors is now underway and your participation is critical for a strong Sierra Club. Voting for board members is exercising one of the most important responsibilities of membership: helping continue our legacy of a democratically elected volunteer board.

So, what exactly is the national board? Our organization's Board of Directors is an all volunteer team that collaborates on important decisions that determine our priorities, policies and financial health. The national board provides primary guidance in setting our goals, determining priorities and balancing national versus local interests. As the Club's highest governing body, the board consists of 15 members, five of whom stand for election every year.

Members will receive the ballot either by mail or electronically. The ballot will be accompanied by information on each of the candidates and where Sierra Club members can find additional information located on the Sierra Club's website: sierraclub.org.

Heather Wittrock
Volunteer Coordinator



2024 WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS SPRING HEARING

Every spring the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) holds a Spring Hearing, an opportunity for all residents to voice their opinions on conservation and natural resource issues. This year there will be in-person events on April 8, and an opportunity to vote online if you can't attend the in-person event.



The annual survey allows you to weigh in on important state issues and show public support for things that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) could ultimately influence or change here in Wisconsin. If you aren't familiar with the WCC, it is a state-funded group focused on collecting input from Wisconsinites that serves as an advisory partner to the Natural Resource Board, the governing body of the DNR.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT? Wisconsin lawmakers, the DNR, and the media look at the overall results of the Spring Hearing survey. The results provide a gauge of public opinion that agencies can turn to and which the legislature leverages when drafting bills and when voting throughout the year.

A great example comes from the environmental analysis of the Line 5 pipeline. In it, the DNR referred to the WCC vote showing concern for the pipeline as one indication of the public's thoughts on this issue.

GIVE YOUR INPUT: You can vote in person on April 8, starting at 6:00 PM. (There are hearings in every county in Wisconsin- find your location at sierraclub.org/wisconsin.)

The online survey is open from **Wednesday, April 10th at 12 noon through Thursday, April 13th at 12 noon.**

Allow about 45 minutes to take the full survey and read the questions fully. We have developed several resources to help everyone, including a voter reference guide (available below), to help save you time and highlight the critical questions.

SHARE WITH OTHERS! It's important that you make your voice heard in this survey. Encourage your family and friends to participate as well. We want the survey responses to be inclusive of all natural resource users. Anyone old enough to read the questions is encouraged to participate. (Multiple family members per household may respond.)

“Anyone old enough to read the questions is encouraged to participate.”

2024 CONSERVATION CONGRESS VOTER GUIDE -- WCC SPRING HEARING QUESTIONS

Question	Position	Background
Do you support DNR including information on lead alternatives and the impact that lead ammunition and fishing tackle have on our ecosystems and public health in hunter education courses and hunting and fishing regulation materials?	YES	As responsible stewards of the land, it is our responsibility to reduce lead in the environment to ensure a diverse and viable wildlife population for future generations.
Would you support eliminating lead, statewide, from firearm ammunition used for hunting by 2030?		Lost tackle directly impacts populations of loons, swans, eagles, and osprey. In the last 27 years, Northern Wisconsin's Common Loon population has decreased by 22%. A recent study that sampled 1200 eagles in thirty-eight states, including Wisconsin, found nearly half of all bald and golden eagles suffer from chronic lead poisoning.

Question	Position	Background
Do you support DNR using their resources and working with the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin to expand nesting box monitors and to help educate the public about the impact of pesticides on grassland bird populations?	YES	The Department of Natural resources estimates that there has been a 30% drop in breeding birds since 1970.
Do you support the DNR and other conservation groups creating an awareness campaign focused on the adverse impact outdoor cats have on Wisconsin's wild bird populations?		There are a number of factors for this, but pesticides, insecticides, and rodicides are contributing factors, as well as outdoor cats and clear windows. The more we can do to educate the public about the declining bird populations and things we can do to help, the better chance we have of slowing this decline.
Would you support the WCC and legislature creating a new statute that prohibits the use of wake boat ballast systems on Wisconsin's lakes and rivers?	YES	These boats create hazardous wakes that create a safety hazard to others using the lake; damage the environment; and erode the shoreline. Particularly concerning is the churning of the lakebed, destruction of aquatic plants & spawning beds, transportation of invasive species, and swamping of loon nests.
Should the Legislature, the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Health develop and enact protective limitations on PFAS compounds for acute and chronic toxicity in surface water, wildlife health, groundwater, fish consumption, and human health?	YES	PFAS are dubbed "forever chemicals" because they're very difficult to break down, and, what's more, are carcinogenic, interfere with our hormone systems, and have made their way into Wisconsin's waterways and drinking water.
Do you support the elimination of the use of herbicide, 2,4D in aquatic ecosystems in the state of Wisconsin?	YES	2,4D is a weed killer (used to kill things like dandelions), but can contaminate the air, water, and soil near here it's applied and can unintentionally harm other plants and species.
Would you support regulations by DNR to require that all ballast systems used in boats shall have a reasonable practical means of inspecting the system to confirm that no water is retained in the system (tanks, piping, valves, etc.)?	YES	These boats create hazardous wakes that create a safety hazard to others using the lake; damage the environment; and erode the shoreline. Particularly concerning is the churning of the lakebed, destruction of aquatic plants & spawning beds, transportation of invasive species, and swamping of loon nests.
Would you support the WCC and legislature modifying existing statutes to prohibit generation of intentionally magnified wakes for wake surfing through the use of ballast, design features, operational procedures or any other means on lakes smaller than 1500 acres and less than 20 feet deep and maintain a distance from shore and other lake users of 700 feet?	YES	
Do you support a ban on the shining of wildlife in the state of Wisconsin from Sept 15th thru December 31st?	YES	Hunting at night with dogs, ATVs, and snowmobiles raises public safety concerns, is highly disruptive to people who live in rural areas, and contributes to a greater likelihood of illegal poaching activities.



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CALENDAR

APRIL - JUNE

Rural Electric Cooperative Annual Meetings
<http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin>

APRIL 2

Spring Election and Presidential Preference Vote
<https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>

APRIL 8-13

Conservation Congress
In Person Spring Hearings April 8 at 6:00 p.m. in each county
Online voting will take place from 12:00 p.m. on April 10 to 12:00 p.m. on April 13.
Visit <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/about/wcc/springhearing> to learn where your in-person hearing is located and/or for information for online voting.

APRIL 11

Recycling & Solid Waste
7:00 p.m.
4693 N Lynndale Dr, Appleton, WI
<https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/great-waters/events>

APRIL 15

Gaylord Nelson Earth Green Award Event
5:30 p.m.
First Congregational UCC Community Room
310 Broadway St, Eau Claire, WI
<https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/chippewa-valley/activities-events>

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APRIL 20

Earth-Friendly Eating
6:30 - 8:30 p.m. online
<https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/great-waters/events>

APRIL 22

Earth Day

MAY 1

Locally Grown, Nationally Known online event

MAY 7

Book Club Discussion on *A Field Guide to Climate Anxiety: How to Keep Your Cool on a Warming Planet* by Sarah Jaquette Ray
7:00 - 8:00 p.m. online
<https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/calendar>

JUNE 1

National Trails Day
Visit <https://sierraclub.org/wisconsin> for events happening near you.

Chapter Awards nominations due

ExComm applications due

AUGUST 13

Fall Primary Election
<https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>

NOVEMBER 5

General Election
<https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>

For the most up-to-date event information, visit our website at sierraclub.org/wisconsin/calendar. Any events that do not have a website listed can be found on our website calendar.



OUR MEMBERS IN ACTION

In January, members of the Tar Sands Team joined local activists for an Art Build in Ashland, where they made critter hats depicting animals who are put at risk by Line 5. From a sturgeon to a wood turtle and a loon to a snowshoe hare, each of these animals is an important member of our community and ecosystem. In February, these critters marched around during Book Across the Bay (a local 10K run) festivities, raising awareness of Line 5, especially the connection between the pipeline and climate change. This was especially relevant because the race route had to be significantly adapted due to warm winter temperatures and too little ice and snow.

