

News from the Sierra Club Kansas Chapter

WAYPOINTS

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Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve
Photo | Stuart Bolt

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VOLUME 9
ISSUE 8

The 2026 ExCom Application DEADLINE IS APPRAOCHING



April ExCom meeting in Manhattan | Photo Gerry Snyder

It's time to apply!

Your Sierra Club needs leaders. We hope you'll answer the call.

- Kansas Chapter **(4 Positions Available)**
- Southwind Group **(5 Positions Available)**
- Wakarusa Group **(3 Positions Available)**
- Flint Hills Group **(2 Positions Available)**

[Fill out the candidate application NOW](#)

The strength of the Sierra Club comes from members who are willing to contribute their ideas, energy, and leadership. If you've ever thought, "someone should do something about that," this is your opportunity to become that someone.

- **August 18** (midnight) - **Candidate Application Deadline.**
- **September 2** - Official Nominees Announced.
- **September 30** - Voting Begins.
- **November 11** - Ballot Return Deadline.

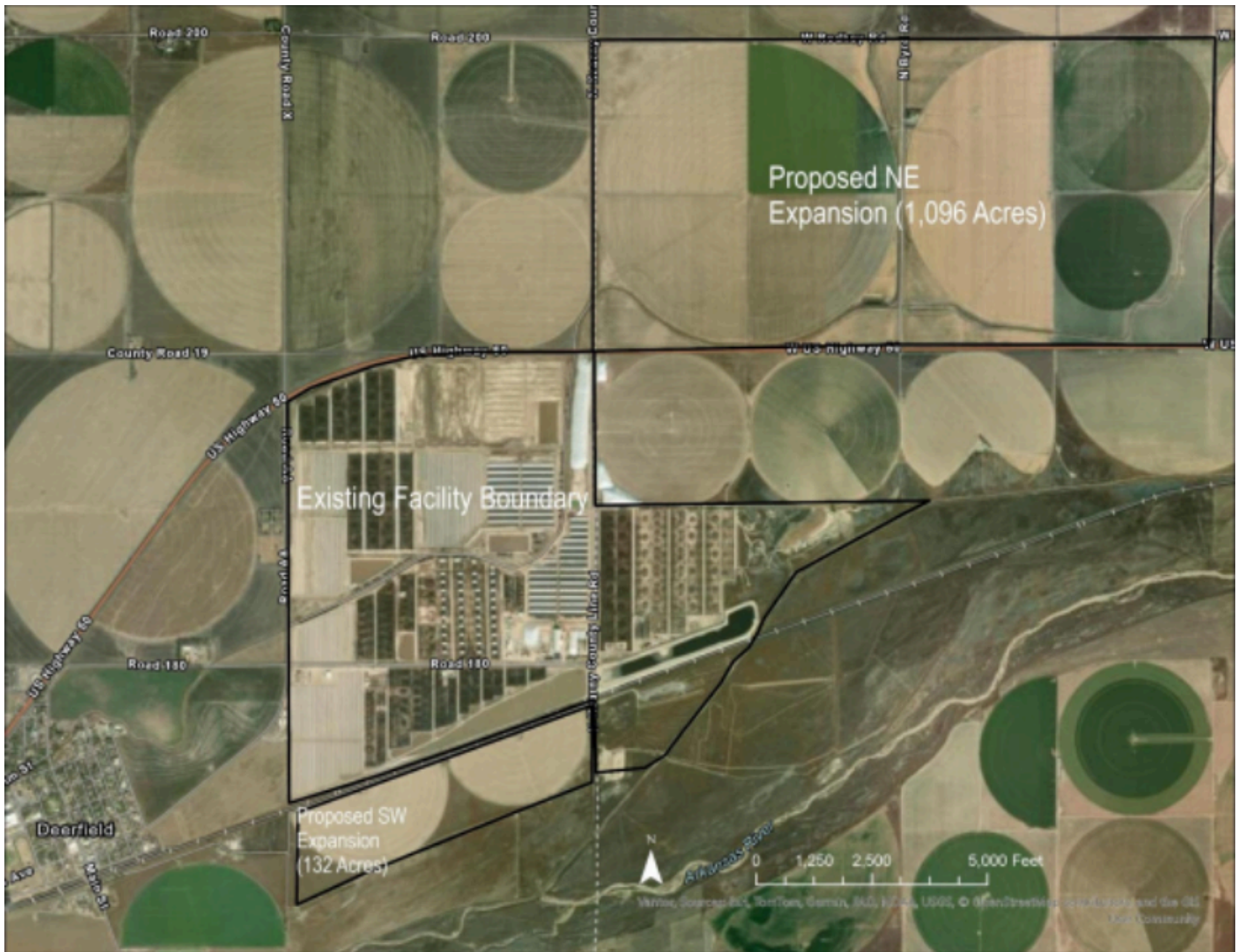
[More dates and details listed on the website.](#)

Your voice matters. Please participate in this important democratic process. Together, we can help shape the future of the Sierra Club Kansas Chapter.

Want to get involved, but not ready to join an Executive Committee? [Start HERE.](#)

Fill out [this form](#) to set up an introductory meeting with our Chapter Leaders. We want to hear about your interests, experience, and availability!

KDHE Uses Outdated Grandfather Clause to Permit the Largest Animal Factory in Kansas



Dairy Development, LCC Permit Site | KDHE permit issued to Kansas Dairy Development, LLC (pg. 11) obtained by an open records request

Craig Volland, Agriculture Chair, Sierra Club Kansas Chapter

The dairy industry is booming in Kansas. About 11 miles west of Garden City, **Kansas Dairy Development, LLC (KDD) is expanding to become the largest concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) in Kansas.** This expansion will add two square miles to its already large footprint next to the Arkansas River (see above for the plan view) and confine up to 98,000 female dairy calves and 163,000 mature dairy cows. By EPA's scale, the new total of 261,000 head is equivalent to 212,000 animal units in its CAFO waste production.

[Read the full article here.](#)

[Join our CAFOs Team](#) to help with the advocacy effort against polluting industrial agriculture.

Sierra Club Forces **CANCELLATION** of Turtle Race

After seeing the Douglas County Fair turtle race advertised on Facebook, our Chapter Turtle Team rallied quickly to demonstrate opposition.

To make it easy for locals to reach the Douglas County Fair Board, the Chapter set up an online letter writing tool programed with a pre-written letter illuminating the harm turtle races have caused the ornate box turtle population in Kansas. The tool was emailed directly to local Wakarusa group members and advertised on all Chapter social media channels. In just a few days, 18 letters through the tool had been sent (others were also sent independently) and the turtle race's cancellation was announced.



Chapter social post responding to the proposed turtle race

[Please join our Chapter-wide Turtle Team](#) to help with continuing Ornate Box turtle conservation efforts.

KDWP Challenge Wrap-Up

Celebrate Your Kansas Adventure With a Gift From Us

Stuart Bolt, Outings Chair, Sierra Club Kansas Chapter

July 4 was the last day to complete the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks's 250th Anniversary Challenge and we hope it gave you a reason to get outside, explore Kansas, and make memorable discoveries along the way.



Kanza Nature Walk Events: Parkville Nature Sanctuary (left) & Black Hoof Park (right) | Photos Eliese Holt

If you completed the challenge, we'd be delighted to celebrate with you!

After you receive your KDWP certificate, send us:

- a photo/scan of the KDWP certificate
- a photo of you on one of your Kansas adventures
- a short paragraph describing your favorite adventure

Email these items to me <boltstuart@yahoo.com> by September 30, 2026.

With your permission, we'll feature your photo and story in a future edition of Waypoints and on our social media channels so others can share joy in your Kansas adventure.

As a thank you, you'll receive *either* the beautiful photo book "Kansas Landscapes" *or* the Kansas Adventure Bucket List card pack, including 50 scratch off bucket list adventures around the state of Kansas.



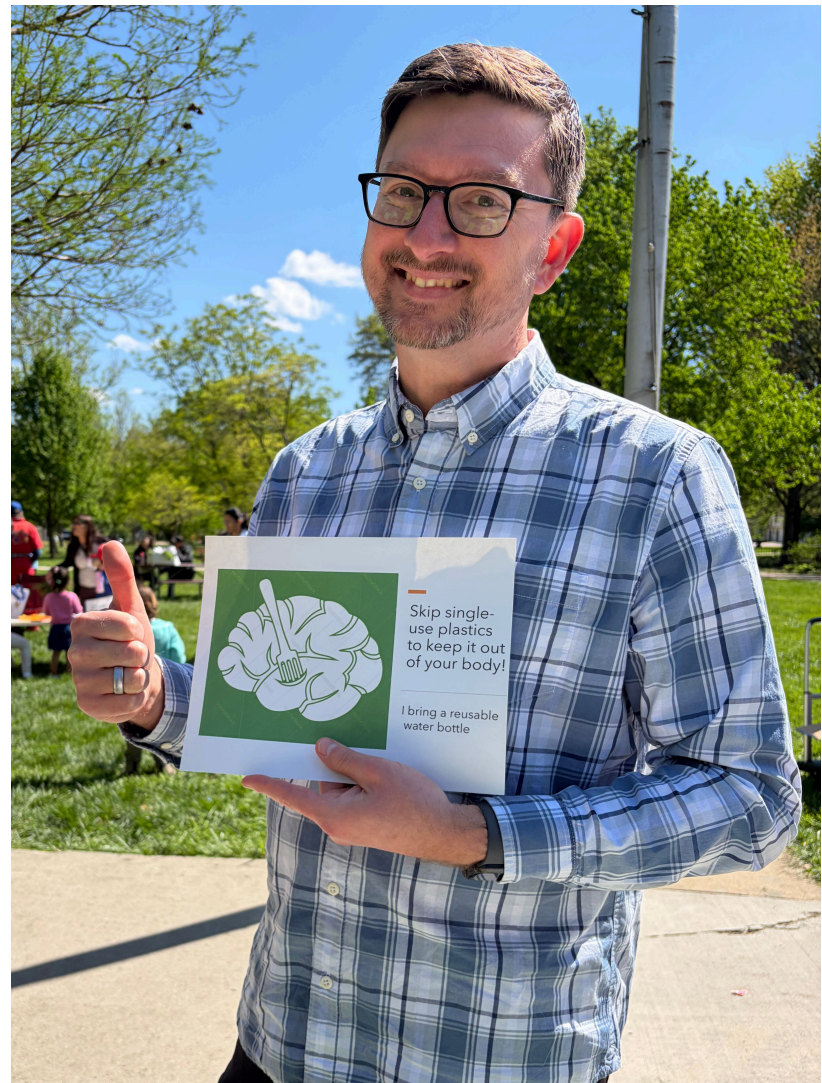
Kanza June Nature Walk at Cedar Niles Trail (left) & Kaw River Clean up (right) | Photos Eliese Holt

There's more to look forward to—stay tuned for exciting Kansas Chapter outings coming this fall!

Microplastic Concerns Encourage Sierra Club to Introduce New Plastic Restrictions in Lawrence

Nancy Muma, Wakarusa Group Chair, Sierra Club Kansas Chapter

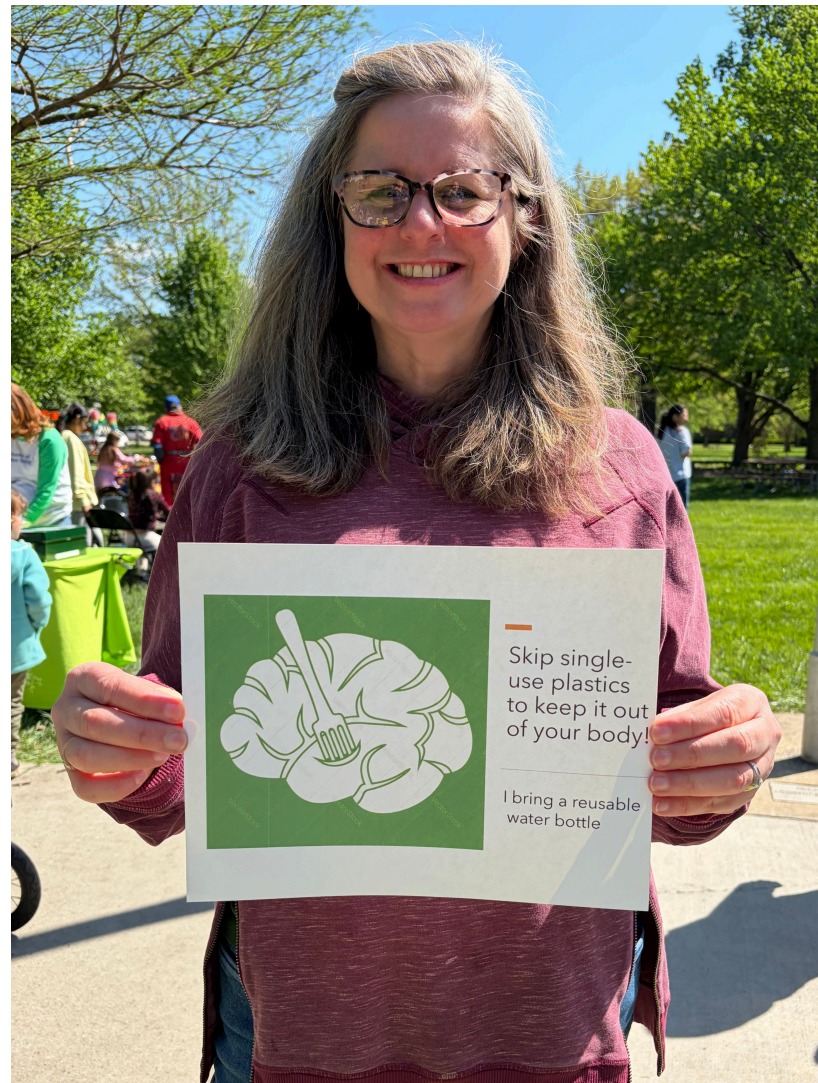
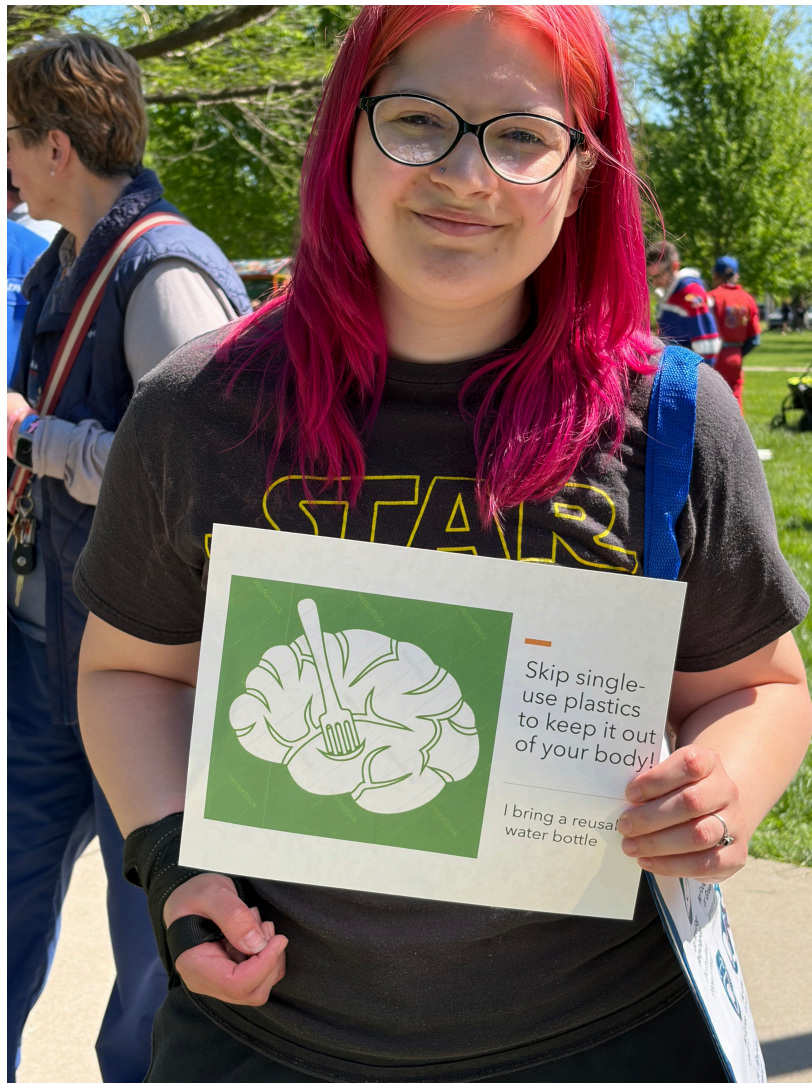
Margaret Kramar, Wakarusa Group Secretary, Sierra Club Kansas Chapter



Volunteers holding plastic-refusal signs at the Wakarusa Group Earth Day table | Photos Nancy Muma

Did you know that the plastic knives and forks from last weekend's picnic are shedding micro and nanoplastics that are heading for your brain, lungs, intestines, and liver?

In 2024, researchers determined the amount of plastic found in the brains of the deceased has risen 47% since 2016. And the health consequences don't stop there. **Microplastics and plastic chemicals have been associated with a host of maladies ranging from miscarriage, obesity, hypertension, endometriosis, cognitive dysfunction, and even changes in the timing of puberty.**



Volunteers holding plastic-refusal signs at the Wakarusa Group Earth Day table | Photos Nancy Muma

What can we do to protect ourselves?

We can start by detecting and eliminating the single-use plastics we use in our daily lives. Don't drink water or other beverages out of plastic bottles. Avoid cooking or reheating food in

plastic containers. Replace plastic bags, eating utensils, cups, food containers, and disposable wrap with non-plastic alternatives.

Most importantly, spread the word. If you live in Lawrence, **encourage the Lawrence City Commissioners to ban Styrofoam food containers and cups**. Due to its low density and texture, Styrofoam materials break apart easily. Animals mistake it for food and show toxic effects after substantial exposure. We need to follow the lead of twelve US states and over seventy nations, including the European Union, Canada, India and China in banning Styrofoam cups and food containers.

Sierra Club Kansas Chapter in the News!

- [Kansas loves clean wind energy. The Trump administration keeps blocking it | Opinion](#)
- [Protestors speak out against data centers as leaders participate in planning conference](#)
- [Data centers use a lot of water. What concerns should residents have?](#)
- [Evergy exec says 'data centers are going to happen' | Exclusive](#)

What do Democratic socialists want? A look at their platform

Chicago Tribune Editorial

Who doesn't love a good wish list? Come dream with us right here.

First step, we abolish capitalism. Without that most ultimate of evils? No more bills. No more debt. We're all carefree now.

That's the basic premise of the Democratic Socialists of America's vision. If you haven't looked at the platform lately, we offer you the following condensed version.

In addition to abolishing capitalism (step 1), the DSA proposes eliminating the Senate and the Electoral College, subordinating the presidency and Supreme Court to Congress, and placing major industries under public ownership.

Housing, health care and energy all become public goods.

Oh, and we don't need defense or public safety, so we can defund the Pentagon and get rid of prisons. The lamb will live among the wolves and will not be bitten.

While it's tempting to dismiss all of the above as fringe politics, that might be a dangerously cavalier approach for sensible Democrats. The DSA's influence has grown inside the Democratic Party.

The obvious question is why a platform this absurd has gained so much ground.

It's a question many are trying to answer and understand. The DSA's vision has found an audience among what pollster Nate Silver calls "highly educated, downwardly mobile" young Americans.

Silver came out recently with new data analysis

showing that the people most likely to vote Democratic in elections have postgraduate degrees but make \$30,000-60,000 per year. That tracks with the DSA, too, which Silver points out. The organization revealed in 2021 that 80% of its members have a college degree but make less than \$60,000 a year.

Many DSA supporters appear to have done what society told them to do: Earn the degree, work hard, play by the rules. Yet many haven't found the economic security they expected, and they struggle to afford the kind of life they desire, despite doing what they believed would lead them there.

It's not hard to understand how the DSA's message might appeal to this group.

The DSA comes tantalizingly close to diagnosing what frustrates so many young Americans: the influence of money in politics, a widening wealth gap and an economy that no longer seems to reward playing by the rules. The DSA's diagnosis of the problem often contains kernels of truth, but its prescription is where it veers off course.

Recent Echelon polling suggests younger Democrats respond more favorably to the phrase "free market economy" than to "capitalism," perhaps reflecting frustration with today's version of American capitalism rather than markets themselves, which is an important distinction. It could also be that these college-educated younger folk sat through a lot of classes where a professor with tenure and financial comfort was talking about "late-stage capitalism" and

not using the term as a compliment.

Rather than repairing the broken rung on the economic ladder, however, the DSA proposes tearing the ladder down entirely, dousing it with gasoline and lighting a match.

In opposing concentrations of private power, the DSA proposes concentrating enormous power in public institutions. The platform says remarkably little about why Americans should assume that public power is inherently less susceptible to abuse than private power.

It all sounds so wonderful before you get to the hard part.

The DSA's imagined "day without capitalism" begins like a burned-out parent's dream.

No commute. No bills. More time with the kids. A leisurely walk to school instead of a frantic morning. It's an appealing vision.

The problem with wish lists is that they have a way of describing everything we'd like to receive while saying very little about who will pay for it.

The DSA's platform and messaging skip over the part where someone still has to build the smartphone, stock the grocery shelves, finance the next medical breakthrough and create the jobs that pay for the myriad government services the DSA promises.

None of these things appeared by accident. Neither, for that matter, did the freedom to advocate replacing our existing economic system.

Alas, history teaches us that liberty has rarely endured where governments control nearly every major sector of the economy.



AFP via Getty Images

Federal meddling has thwarted at least three wind farm projects in the state so far.

Kansas loves clean wind energy. The Trump administration keeps blocking it

BY TY GORMAN

Special to The Kansas City Star

Millions of dollars of investment and jobs that should be moving forward are being kept from Kansas and Missouri by the Trump administration. The Pentagon is using Federal Aviation Administration red tape to keep businesses from investing in Kansas. The federal meddling has prevented at least three Kansas wind farm projects — projects totaling 3,650 megawatts of affordable electricity — from coming onto the grid.

Stalling these projects means no construction jobs, diversified farmer revenue, local taxes for Kansas communities or new electricity as demand

surges.

Throughout the country, the Department of Defense is holding up nearly 300 wind projects by failing to sign off on cursory agreements with the FAA. On May 31, a number of regional renewable energy trade groups filed a lawsuit in federal district court. We need our representatives and local leaders to demand faster rulings to break this illegal logjam, especially with the tax credit deadline approaching.

The fact is that more than twice as many Kansans support building new wind farms in their local area as oppose it. There is even broader support for solar projects held up near airports, and hundreds of millions in low-income home efficiency dollars

that the administration is also withholding without congressional authorization.

In Kansas, wind energy has brought a lifeline to small towns and allowed local families to keep family farms unable to survive from corporate agribusiness monopolies and mechanization. Registered Republicans have overwhelmingly benefited from clean energy investments in Kansas, yet the current administration employs underhanded tricks to keep Kansas out of the clean energy business.

Trump's attacks on rural investment that Kansas towns need are deeply unpopular and out of step with his party. The Pentagon has decided that it can unilaterally stop clean energy development on private lands, withholding revenue from farmers and other landowners who might rely on energy payments to keep their land and farms profitable.

According to polls, the Kansas public overwhelmingly wants clean energy. Wind power has invested \$33 million in local communities and nearly \$73 million in extra income to farmers and ranchers through energy lease payments. The clean energy industry has created nearly 10,000 jobs in Kansas, and there are nearly 5,000 megawatts of additional wind projects that are looking to be built in the state.

Our representatives need to protest this ridiculous de facto moratorium the Trump administration has placed to stop renewable energy investment in our region — and the benefits that come with it.

Ty Gorman is senior campaign organizing strategist for the 501(c)(4) nonprofit Sierra Club.

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Take Action:

Tell Kansas Legislators We Need Solar Energy!

Let's work together to expand solar access and development across Kansas by reducing regulatory and cost barriers.

SIGN THE STATEWIDE PETITION NOW



Sierra Club's plan to make solar accessible in Kansas

1. Legalize and popularize Plug & Play / "Balcony" solar.

2. Ease restrictions on Community Solar.
3. Remove unreasonable HOA restrictions on rooftop solar.
4. Encourage localities to adopt SolarApp+ for instant solar permitting.
5. Help small businesses claim 100% bonus depreciation for new solar.
6. Continue support for utility-scale solar and battery energy storage.

[Join the Energy Committee](#) to help us achieve these solar goals in Kansas.



what is a **WAYPOINT?**

Waypoint: *noun.* A stopping place on a journey; an endpoint of the leg of a course, especially one whose coordinates have been generated by a computer.

Submit Waypoints **Content**

Waypoints is the monthly newsletter of the Sierra Club Kansas Chapter.

Articles are edited for style and content and may be rejected at the discretion of the editors.

Editors: Eliese Holt and Mimi Moffat.