



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group
OCTOBER 2026

"State trifectas 'are the most powerful tool for 2027 policy outcomes on clean energy.'" -
Caroline Spears, executive director of Climate Cabinet. <https://tinyurl.com/mojo9263enviro>

Sierra Club Mission: To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

October 16, 5:30 p.m.

Action Gathering: Elections

Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship, 401 West Ave. S.

Join us at **5:30 p.m. on Friday, October 16**, for pizza, education, and action. This month, we'll be back at the UU Fellowship on West Avenue.

This month we'll be talking about the upcoming election - how can we help strong pro-environment candidates get elected, and what should we encourage our officials to act on once they're elected! Please email CRSlerraClub@g-mail.com or call or text 608-315-2693 with questions about this event. **EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

VOTING HAS STARTED!

Request an absentee ballot from your municipal clerk now and return it to an official drop box or your clerk's office. Absentee in person voting is October 20 through October 30. Get more information about voting at myvote.wi.gov. Voters will see three proposed amendments to our state constitution on their ballots. Please research these referendums before voting. See the Wisconsin Chapter's Election Center here: <https://tinyurl.com/wisc-26electioncenter>.

Oct. 1 - ORA Trail Farm Tour

We hope to see you at 5:30 at the new ORA Trail Farm, W5723 HWY 33, for a talk, hike, and camp fire! Josh Hein, Trail Farm Project Manager, will be our guide! RSVP (optional) by calling 608-315-2693 or here: <https://tinyurl.com/crsc2ora-rsvp> and consider carpooling (use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/crsc2ora>).

Oct. 14 - Highway Clean-up

Our fall clean-up of River Valley Drive will be Wednesday, October 14 at 5:30 p.m. Meet at the Gillette Street pumping station to get bags and vests. If you have questions, please call Pat at 608-788-8831.



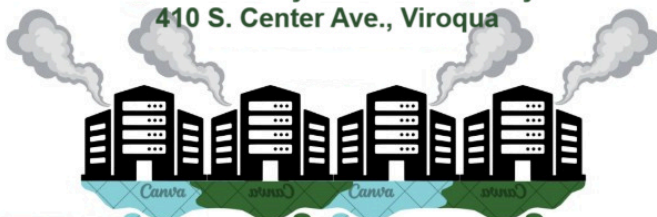
Oct. 29 - Viroqua Action!

YOU'RE INVITED!

Let's talk about data centers

Coulee Region Group Action Gathering - Data Centers
October 29, 5:30 pm

Vernon County Historical Society
410 S. Center Ave., Viroqua



*Pizza will be provided

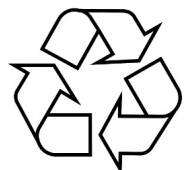
WEEK
WITHOUT
DRIVING
October 1-8

How do you get around? What if you couldn't drive? How do limited transportation options affect individuals' access to full lives? How do car-centric policies affect greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, family finances, health, and safety?

Learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/wwdlacrosse> and see flyer attached.

At 3 p.m. on Wednesday, October 21 join CRSC members and friends for a tour of Harter's Quick Clean Up Material Recovery System Recycling Center, 28 50 Larson Street, La Crosse.

We'll tour the recycling facility and mattress recovery center. Optional happy hour after! See flyer attached.



Oct. 6 - VS. GOLIATH: Port Arthur



Join us at **7:00 p.m. on October 6** for a virtual screening of VS GOLIATH: Port Arthur. What happens when ordinary people take on billion-dollar industries?

Port Arthur, Texas is the biggest oil and petrochemical hub you've probably never heard of. John Beard Jr. worked in an oil refinery there for decades, as did his father before him, in the refinery town of Port Arthur, Texas. After retiring, John watches Port Arthur get hollowed out economically, while his neighbors die from pollution-related illness, as more dirty plants appear and expand. Experiencing the climate-driven devastation wrought by Hurricane Harvey, John is called to fight back. He becomes a leading opponent of fossil fuels

in his community, as he takes on the latest extractive frontier threatening Port Arthur and the world: liquid natural gas export terminals. Following the film, join Bill McKibben, and others for a live Q&A.

Screening link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUVGcqyVHtA>

Wolf Awareness Week - Oct. 18-24!

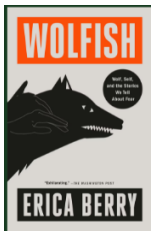
Our theme this year is "Wolf families," using a different lens each day to examine Wisconsin wolf families - how wolf families survive together and the challenges our Wisconsin wolf families still face today.

Sign up for our educational week and receive an email for each day with fun content, an opt-in activity you can do on your own, as well as invitations to join us for special virtual evening events throughout the week. You will automatically receive a special 2026 custom Wolf Awareness Week sticker in the mail and also be entered to win a 1,000-piece wolf jigsaw puzzle by Sam Zimmerman / Zhaawanoogizhik, an Ojibwe artist whose work we featured during Wolf Awareness Week last year!



Learn more and sign up here: <https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/wolvesaction>

Oct. 20 - Chapter Book Club



This month's book club falls within Wolf Awareness Week, so we will be discussing Erica Berry's book *Wolfish: Wolf, Self, and the Stories We Tell About Fear*. *WOLFISH* blends science, history, and cultural criticism in a years-long journey to understand our myths about wolves, and track one legendary wolf, OR-7, from the Wallowa Mountains of Oregon. While charting OR-7's record-breaking journey out of the Wallowa Mountains, Erica simultaneously details her own coming-of-age as she moves away from home and wrestles with inherited beliefs about fear, danger, femininity, and the body.

Sign up for the book club by calling 608-315-2693 or visiting <https://tinyurl.com/wisc-wolfbook1026>.

CRSC Board Elections!

The Coulee Region Group is guided by a board of seven directors elected from the region's membership. The board usually meets monthly online to discuss club priorities and plan activities and events for our group. Three directors' terms expire at the end of the year. We will hold elections in December.

To nominate someone or yourself to serve from 2027 through 2028, please email CRSierraClub@gmail.com with name, contact information, and a short statement about the nominee's background and why they would like to serve. Please email by October 31 if possible. If you aren't a member, you can join at <https://tinyurl.com/crsc-join>.



<https://sustaininstitute.com/upcomingevents>

CRSC Enviro Education Grants!



Every year, the Coulee Region Sierra Club offers grants of up to \$200 each for environmental education programming for students in grades K through 8. Teachers, schools, and programs that serve students in the

eight-county CRSC area (Crawford, Grant, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties) are eligible to apply. The deadline will be January 8, 2027. Learn more at <https://sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee/education>.

CRSC hopes to promote student exploration, protection, and enjoyment of the natural environment.

Projects must:

- Provide hands-on experience for students to learn about and explore the natural environment.

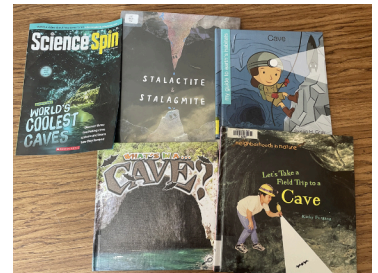
- Promote a world which allows all life forms to live and prosper.
- Show students that they can make a difference in their environment, whether rural or urban.
- Be completed within the school year. A follow-up report will be due upon completion.

Grant recipients will be asked to

- Take pictures and write an article for the CRSC newsletter
- Be open to making a presentation to at a local Sierra Club meeting
- Be accessible to local media if publicity is desired

To apply, visit the link. For questions, please email CRSierraClub@gmail.com or call or text 608-315-2693.

Please help spread the word in your community, too!



September Action Gathering Report

We gathered at the First Congregational Church on September 18. Chris Miller, CRSC board member, presented an outline of the program and showed an excellent video that explains why so many cities are clogged with dangerous car traffic and how some cities have tackled these traffic jams by challenging conventional wisdom with the goal of highlighting effective strategies for sustainable public transportation and urban mobility that truly serves the needs of a "sustainable city." Watch the video here: <https://youtu.be/M8Tobzn1qeM?si=pSodOYXGWExxvZ7t>

Cathy Van Maren, CRSC board member and organizer of La Crosse's Week Without Driving event, talked about why we even need a week without driving, since non-driving is the natural state of humans. We looked at the history of cars and car infrastructure, the role of marketing and lobbying in maintaining this car-centrism, and the very real problem of "car brain" or motonormativity.

In the city of La Crosse, the Wisconsin DOT estimates that 40% or more of residents (more than 20,500 people) do not drive cars. In our state, it's about 31% of residents. Yet, most transportation funding and planning prioritizes cars. We then looked at some of the challenges non-drivers have in our area.

The Scenic Mississippi Regional Transit service, that provides rides from La Crosse to Tomah, Viroqua, and Prairie du Chien, will stop at the end of this year, leaving a gap for many non-driving students, workers, patients, and travelers. Even though La Crosse's city bus system is one of the best in the state, service is slow, infrequent, and not 24/7. Many neighborhoods are not served by this bus. There are other connections in our area, but sometimes they are hard to get to. For bicyclists and walkers, conditions vary. Some improvements are nixed for budget reasons or because decision-makers are reluctant to

replace parking spaces with safe biking spaces.

Week Without Driving is supported at all levels by the Sierra Club because goals align. The Sierra Club's Outdoors for All and Transit to Trails initiatives bring attention to the need for more and better public transit in order for everyone to access wild, natural, and green spaces, from national parks to city recreation facilities. Reducing car emissions by improving and supporting cleaner travel options is key to the Sierra Club's climate action goals. Fewer cars also mean less air and water pollution from exhaust and tire wear, another important Sierra Club priority. And better transportation options mean that everyone, no matter their age, income, ability, or status, can get to their lives which is an important goal of the Wisconsin Chapter Transportation Access and Equity Team.

Several personal action items were presented, from pledging to try going a week without driving, to completing a WWD Bingo Card or participating in local WWD events. Chris prepared a letter to state legislators in support of Regional Transit Authority enabling legislation, a way for local governmental units to join together to effectively fund and administer regional transit systems that connect communities and provide a more comprehensive non-car travel network.

Learn more about Week Without Driving at <https://tinyurl.com/wwdlacrosse>. View the Powerpoint presentation at <https://tinyurl.com/crscaction-0926wwd> and the updated informational handout at <https://tinyurl.com/WWDCRSCActionHandout>. If you would like to email your state legislators encouraging them to support RTA enabling legislation, find a template here: <https://tinyurl.com/crsc-rtaletter>.

Youth Action

Saanvi Muduganti is a student at Onalaska High School who is very interested and active in local youth climate action and environmental initiatives. We're delighted that she will help inform us about local student environmental events and actions through monthly columns!

This summer, Wisconsin's Children's Trust's Corps Coordinator Saanvi Muduganti advocated for federal climate action by writing to Representative Mark Pocan in support of the congressional resolution, the Children's Fundamental Right of Life and a Stable Climate System. These efforts paid off when Representative Pocan became one of the 90 cosponsors of the resolution, recognizing the government's responsibility to protect young

people's right to a safe, livable future.

She also joined youth plaintiffs from [Dunn v. Wisconsin Public Service Commission](#) on a virtual congressional meeting with Senator Tammy Baldwin's staff to share their climate harms and urge her to cosponsor the resolution.

Now, join the fight for children's climate rights! Call or email Senator Baldwin at www.baldwin.senate.gov/contact and urge her to cosponsor the [Children's Fundamental Rights to Life and a Stable Climate System resolution](#) (S.Con.Res.18)!

More October events

10/ 1: The Driftless - Land, Air, & Water. 4 pm, UWL Student Union. www.uwlax.edu/events/?e=34886

10/ 2: Community Pasta Supper, 5 to 8 pm, Kickapoo Valley Reserve. <https://kvr.state.wi.us/Events/Calendar>

10/ 3: Perrot State Park Volunteer Work Day. Noon. <https://explorelacrosse.com/event/perrot-state-parkvolunteer-work-day/>

10/ 3: ORA Trail Farm Dahl Family Fun Fest. 11-6. <https://www.oratrails.org/calendar/>

10/ 6: Dr. William Green - This is the Route of My Forefathers: the 1837 Ioway Map. 6:30 pm. Pearl Street Books. <https://www.uwlax.edu/events/?e=34968>

10/ 7: Fall Migration - The Return Flight South 10 am La Crosse Public Library. <https://www.lacrosselibrary.org/event/hold-monday-mornings-main-36589>

10/ 7: Deer in the Driftless. 6 pm. S1005 Knudson Ln, Coon Valley. <https://cooncreekwatershed.org/>

10/ 7: Seed Collection at Boscobel Bluffs, 9 to 3. <https://tinyurl.com/mvc-boscobelseeds>

10/ 7: Enviro Wednesday at the Nature Place, Myrick Park, La Crosse. 7 pm. <https://tinyurl.com/tnp-enviroweds26>

10/ 9: Green Corn Celebration Ho-Chunk Tribal Office Building, Black River Falls. <https://www.blackrivercountry.net/event/green-corn-celebration/>

10/ 9: Science Cafe - How Soil Works! 6:30 pm. JavaVino <https://www.facebook.com/LaCrosseScienceCafe/>

10/10: Fall Fest at Wildcat Mountain State Park. Noon to 6 pm. <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/events/130311>

10/10: Forest Fungi Hike, 8 am, La Crosse Blufflands. <https://tinyurl.com/mvc-forestfungilax>

10/10: Prairie Stargazing, 7 pm, Tunnelville Cliffs. <https://tinyurl.com/mvc-tunnelvillestars>

10/12: Indigenous Peoples Day. Myrick Park, La Crosse.

10/12: Driftless Dialogue: The Forest and Flood Resilience, 5:30 pm, Kickapoo Valley Reserve. <https://kvr.state.wi.us/Events/Calendar>

10/13: Seed Collection, 9 am, Sugar Creek Bluff. <https://tinyurl.com/mvc-sugarseeds>

10/14-17: La Crosse Adventure Film Fest. <https://lacrosseaf.com/event-schedule>

10/14: Indigenous Voices of Hear Here 10 am La Crosse Public Library. <https://www.lacrosselibrary.org/event/hold-monday-mornings-main-36589>

10/14: Unpasteurized Inga, 2 pm, Black River Falls Public Library. <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064529508403>

10/17: Seed Collection, 9 am, Sugar Creek Bluff. <https://tinyurl.com/mvc-sugarseeds2>

10/17: Black River Trail Classic. <https://nurun.co/brtc>

10/21: Common Loons in the Upper Midwest, 7 pm, The Nature Place, La Crosse. <https://natureplacelacrosse.org/calendar/free-bird-program-2-2026-10-21/>

10/21: Native Plant Gardening for Pollinator Conservation. 5:30 pm. Franciscan Spirituality Ctr, 920 Market St., La Crosse. <https://tinyurl.com/fsc-pollinator1026>

10/24: Outdoor Walk & Yoga, 9 am, Lunda Community Center, BRF. <https://www.blackrivercountry.net/event/outdoor-walk-yoga/2026-10-24/>

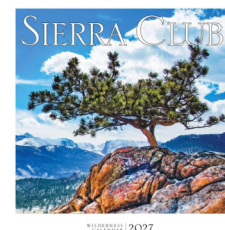
10/25: Native Bees of Wisconsin, 1 pm, The Nature Place, La Crosse. <https://www.wisconsinsciencefest.org/event/badger-talk-native-bees-of-wisconsin/>

10/27: Seed Collection, 9 am, Plum Creek. <https://tinyurl.com/mvc-plumcrkseeds>

10/28: La Crosse Citizens Climate Lobby 6:30 pm. 401 West Ave S, La Crosse info@lacrossecccl.org

Order 2027 Calendars!

It's calendar time! Wall calendars are \$19, engagement calendars are \$20. Calendar sales help pay for our Environmental Education grants and High School Environmental Stewardship awards. Contact Maureen Kinney at CRSierraClub@gmail.com or call 608-797-8442 to order yours.



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**WEEK
WITHOUT
DRIVING**
October 1-8

How do people
who don't drive
get around?

*Join us during Week Without
Driving to look at how we can make
life more accessible for everyone!*

ALL WEEK

Fill out a WWD Bingo card

*Prizes include bus passes, gift
cards, bike and commuter gear,
and more!*

Try a DriftCycle bike FREE
with a special promo code!

Ride the MTU with elected
leaders!

Share your transportation
story!

Do your own walk or bus
stop audit!

Visit our display at the La
Crosse Public Library, Sept.
22 - 30 & the Transit Center.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Oct. 1: WWD Kick-Off AND Community
Ride with Drift Cycle on the marsh trails

Oct. 2: Bike Ride with Elected Officials

Oct. 3: Walk audit - *check website for details*

Oct. 4: Film: Cycling Cities - a journey to
Europe's most beautiful cycling cities

Oct. 5: Free Day on MTU and Ride with a La
Crosse Area Transit Advocates Guide

Oct. 6: Smith's Bike Shop Commuter Station!

Oct. 7: Bus to Brunch

Oct. 8: Smith's Bike Shop E-Bike Day!

*Learn more, sign up for events, download a WWD Bingo Card,
and find out how to share your experience and ideas at
tinyurl.com/WWDLaCrosse*

CO-SPONSORS: Coulee Region Sierra Club, Drift Cycle Bike Share, Independent Living
Resources, La Crosse Area Planning Committee, La Crosse Area Transit Advocates, La Crosse
Bike Ped Advisory Committee, La Crosse Climate Action Plan Steering Committee, La Crosse
MTU, Smith's Bike Shop, Sustainability Institute, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of La Crosse,
UWL Sustainability, Wrench and Roll, YWCA La Crosse

CALL
608-315-2693
for more
information.

weekwithoutdriving.org 



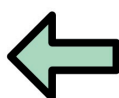
Let's tour HARTER'S QUICK CLEAN UP MATERIAL RECOVERY SYSTEM RECYCLING CENTER



Wednesday, October 21 at 3:00 p.m.
2850 Larson Street, La Crosse

We'll tour Harter's recycling center and their nearby mattress recycling facility to see where much of our waste goes. Please consider bringing ear plugs.

Getting there: Parking is limited - use the parking lot at 2800 Larson Street or park along the large brick wall at 2850 Larson St. or use the gravel lot behind 2831 Larson St. **Consider carpooling - offer or seek a ride by calling 608-315-2693 or at <https://tinyurl.com/crsc2harters>.**



PLEASE sign up so we can contact you in case of last minute changes. Fill out the form at <https://tinyurl.com/rsvp-crsc2harters> or call us at 608-315-2693.

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO ALL!