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May to September 2012

Arkansas Beyond Coal Update - Energy Town Halls Planned

Special points of interest:

- Beyond Coal—Energy Town Halls in Arkansas
- Lake Maumelle Watershed Update
- Central Arkansas Group Summer 2012 Meetings
- May Outing Planned to Pinnacle Mountain Peak
- Fall Canoe Clean-Up on Maumelle River in October
- Ray Hanley honored by Arkansas Children's Hospital
- Spring Picnic held May 5



By Lev Guter, National Sierra Club Field Organizer, Beyond Coal Campaign: Arkansas

The Arkansas Governor's Office is currently creating a draft energy plan that will encompass a vision and policy of how Arkansas will produce its energy for the next 3-5 years. Of course, the dirty energy, fossil fuels utility industry will want the Governor's Energy Plan to be chock full of business-as-usual dirty energy fuels like coal, oil and irresponsible fracking. While Governor Beebe and his staff are in the process of formulating the draft energy plan, we want to have a voice and influence what the plan will look like. If the grassroots communities of Arkan-

sas do not speak up, the dirty fossil fuels industry will have their say over what the Energy Plan shapes up to be.

The Governor, within the next few weeks, will hopefully be unveiling a very preliminary draft of what the Energy Plan will ultimately look like. We at the Sierra Club are eager to see this very early draft, so we can see what is good about it, and what needs to be changed. We need this Energy Plan to protect the environment, and to get Arkansas off of burning dirty coal and moving toward a future of increased renewables, like wind and solar. We also want the Energy Plan to tackle the low-hanging fruit of energy waste, by making sure there are incentives to encourage energy conservation and efficiency. If we use less electricity, we do not need to produce more energy in the first place.

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Lake Maumelle Watershed Zoning Code Update

By Kate Althoff, Lake Maumelle Watershed advocate

The proposed ordinances intended to regulate land use in the Lake Maumelle watershed remain tabled by the Pulaski County Quorum Court. The court voted on December 20, 2011 to postpone further consideration of the proposed ordinances until the local office of the United States Geological Survey release a particular report on their modeling work of the Lake Maumelle watershed. The only release date the USGS is willing to commit to

is the Spring of 2012. In the meantime USGS and Central Arkansas Water have explained to the members of the Quorum Court the work of USGS and thus the report itself are not designed to provide relevant information for the proposed ordinances. Regardless, there has been no movement by the Quorum Court to proceed with the proposed ordinances. It is believed that several members of the Quorum Court would like to wait until after the Primary election in order to avoid fall out from voters.

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CAG Meetings May to September At Oyster Bar

The Central Arkansas Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month (except August & December) at the Oyster Bar, 3003 West Markham, in Little Rock.

6:30 p.m. social time

7 p.m. program begins.

May 15: David Lyon, President of Sierra Club Central Arkansas Group will give a presentation on some of the new EPA regulations. There are 2 big rules affecting coal plants and one for natural gas drilling.

June 19: Frank Kelly will talk about Green Building and renewable energy. Frank is Chairman of the Arkansas Renewable Energy Association, an Arkansas based 501(c) 3 non-profit organization where he is active in helping develop policy to promote the adoption of renewable energy systems in Arkansas. Frank is also an active member of and has served as Advocacy Chair of the Arkansas chapter of the US Green Building Council .

July 17: Dan Scheiman is the Bird

Conservation Director at Audubon Arkansas and he will discuss Audubon programs that he is developing for Arkansans .

August: **NO MEETING**

September 18: Steve Hodge will speak on Stagnant Valleys and Air Pollution.

For information on CAG activities including outings and the spring picnic, check <http://arkansas.sierraclub.org> & follow link to CAG.

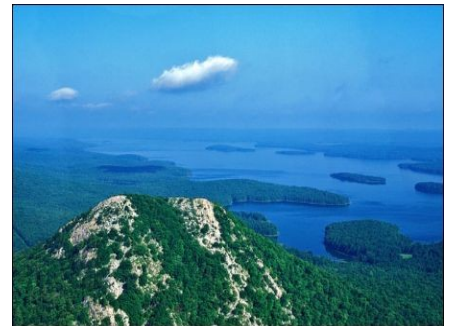
Climb Pinnacle Mountain on May 12

Joe Wankum is planning a hike to the top of Pinnacle Mountain for May 12., 2012 The trip will start mid-morning and ascend the east side of the mountain then descend the west side and return on the base trail.

Joe is going to limit the hike to 6 people so contact him to sign up at jbwankum@aol.com. He will provide participants the time, length, and the exact location to meet up.

The East route starts out as easy uphill, then flat, then STEEP. The last 1/4 mile involves stepping from rock to rock on rounded boulders or sloping, at times slippery rock. A few rocks move when stepped on but most are set in place. Some steps may be 18" or more. If you have any ankle/ knee/hip joint problems or have any trouble stepping up or down steps up to 18", this is not the

hike for you. You will need a good sense of balance to complete this climb safely.



Fall Canoe Clean-Up Planned for October 6



Saturday, October 6, 2012 we will have another Canoe Clean-up of the Little Maumelle River which will be jointly sponsored by the Sierra Club Central Arkansas Group and Pinnacle Mountain State Park. This is a favorite annual outing for our

Club and a great cause to keep our waterways clean.

Look for flyers for this event at our monthly meetings and we will also be sending out email reminders during the summer. To sign up now, email Carolyn Shearman, tuc-shea@gmail.com.

Arkansas Beyond Coal Update continued...

The Governor, sometime later this year, but before the 2013 legislative session, will turn many of the policies that wind up in the final Energy Plan into a legislative package of bills and regulations that he will propose the Arkansas Assembly and the Arkansas Public Service Commission.

Sierra Club's goal is to influence the Governor NOW, so that by the time the Energy Plan is broken up into pieces of proposed legislation and regulations, they reflect policies of which the environmental and public health communities approve.

Therefore, the Sierra Club is go-

ing to host a series of town hall style meetings for grassroots community members all across Arkansas to attend. If we are not being invited to the backrooms where industry and government meets, then we need to have our voice heard out in the open! Hosting town halls across Arkansas will give us, Arkansas' residents, the ability to voice our opinions to the media and to the public so that the Governor knows what Arkansas truly wants in our Energy Plan.

The Grassroots Energy Town Halls will take place throughout late June and into July, 2012. The locations will include Little

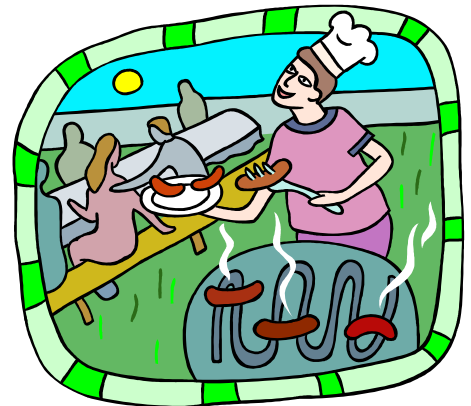
Rock, Fayetteville, Conway, Jonesboro and Arkadelphia. Not only are we inviting the entire community, but the Governor and his staff as well. Since we want to make sure clean energy is a priority for the Governor, we will invite the Governor to the town halls to speak his opinions, and listen to our questions. We are working now to solidify dates and specific locations, but please contact us to help us the in planning stages! We need to make sure we have incredible turnout at these series of town hall meetings. Contact lev.guter@sierraclub.org to be a part of the planning and promotion!

Spring Picnic at Murray Park Held May 5

Our Spring Picnic was held in Murray Park on May 5 at Pavilion #2 from 4pm until dark. We had food and soft drinks for all. As always, it was a good chance for everyone to socialize by the Arkansas River and even take a walk on the Big Dam Bridge afterward to work off those burgers and other good food.

Gary Cawood and Rel Corbin did the burger flipping this year instead of Bob Stodola who is recovering nicely from surgery. However, we expect Bob back in charge for the Fall Picnic!

In the meantime we all wish Bob a big Get Well Soon.



Sierra Club and Petit Jean State Park Eagle Watch



On January 15 the Sierra Club Central Arkansas Group and Petit Jean State Park sponsored an Eagle watch at Holla Bend Wildlife Management Area bordering the Arkansas River. There were a number of Sierrans who participated and, yes,

they did see eagles, both mature and immature ones!

Park Interpreters BT Jones and Rachel Engebrecht gave a talk about eagle behaviors and habitat in the park Recreation Hall and then lead a car caravan over to Holla Bend WMA for the watch.

Sierra Club, Central Arkansas Group

Central Arkansas Group
The Arkansas Chapter of the Sierra Club
1308 West 2nd Street
Little Rock, AR 72201

Lake Maumelle Watershed Update continued..

Special interest has used this delay to further influence the final version of the ordinances most notably a group of small land owners that current live in the watershed. The officers of Citizens Protecting Maumelle Watershed including me have been closely monitoring the proposed changes and so far have found them to be of no harm to water quality. The next time this

issue is expected to be on the agenda for the Quorum Court is May 22nd at which time a group of technical consultants will provide additional information. While the Quorum Court will not vote at that time it may be a good opportunity for the public to gain a better understanding of the issue.

The position of Sierra Club Central

Arkansas Group remains at neutral. We believe the proposed ordinance doesn't go far enough to protect water quality and yet we do not want to campaign against the progressive action of implementing zoning for the first time at the county level. If you have questions you may contact Kate at ktalt-hof@aol.com.

Ray Hanley Honored by Arkansas Children's Hospital

Ray Hanley is a founding member of Sierra Club in Arkansas and former chair of the Central Arkansas Group of Sierra Club.

Ray is also President and CEO of the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care. He received the 2012 Betty A. Lowe, MD, Award, an

honor given by the Arkansas Children's Hospital Foundation to an individual who, through personal initiative, service and leadership, has made a significant contribution to the health and well-being of the children of Arkansas. And, Ray has written 15 books on Arkansas history.

