

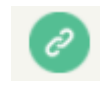
EXPLORE. ENJOY. PROTECT.



Dallas Sierra Club Newsletter - July, 2021



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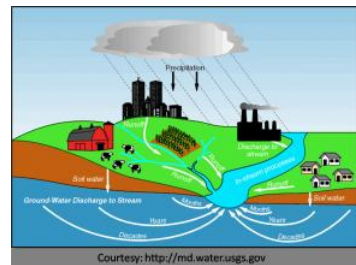


[Check out our website](#)

Dallas Sierra Club General Meeting via Zoom - Tuesday, July 13

Increasing Urban Ecosystems: Stormwater Best Management Practices

Please join us as we welcome our Eco Action Committee colleague, Jayce Proctor, as he helps us to better understand the relationships with humans, wildlife, and stormwater protection in the context of local urban development. This presentation will first discuss the state of 13 urban wetlands in Frisco, Texas, and their patterns of attracting waterfowl. This will be followed by relating the types of wetland management practices at these sites to the broader perspective of stormwater best management practices to ensure a hearty local ecosystem.



From 6:45 to 7:00 p.m. you can log in to the meeting, chat, and ask questions. The meeting will begin at 7:00 with announcements, followed by our speaker's presentation.

How to join the meeting via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/99535860396>

One tap mobile: +13462487799,,99535860396#

Dial in: +1 346 248 7799 - Meeting ID: 995 3586 0396

Videos of prior General Meetings are on YouTube

[Click here](#) for a list of meetings with varied topics such as national parks,

Critterman, beautiful photos from around the world, wild animals, activism, and more.



Dallas Sierra Club Outreach Speakers Program - Speakers for Your Group

The Dallas Sierra Club provides outdoor/environmental education in the form of entertaining and informative presentations by Dallas Sierra Club members with expertise in the topics offered. These presentations range in length from 30 minutes to one hour and cover a variety of topics in the general categories of outdoor adventure, environmental education, and general ecology. These talks are appropriate for a wide range of audiences including youth groups, school classes, civic and social groups, nature and gardening clubs, church groups, etc. Any group

interested in an available topic is welcome to contact us. To see available topics and to schedule your speaker, [click here](#).

Note from the Chair

by Dan Moulton

EPA Announces \$50 Million to Fund Environmental Justice Initiatives Under the American Rescue Plan

WASHINGTON (June 25, 2021) ♦ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced that it will provide \$50 million for Environmental Justice (EJ) initiatives through funds allocated to EPA under the American Rescue Plan (ARP). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress designated this funding for grants, contracts, and other agency activities that identify and address disproportionate environmental or public health harms and risks in underserved communities through a range of local initiatives.

"We know how important it is to put funding to work in environmentally overburdened, economically underserved areas, and today we're excited to let our communities know that thanks to the American Rescue Plan, help is here," **said Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "EPA is drawing on its many years of experience working with communities and organizations that strive for environmental justice to ensure these funds will deliver real-world results for those who need it most."

At an event today at the Ashburton Filtration Plant in Baltimore, Maryland, Administrator Regan announced that \$200,000 is going to the YH2O mentoring program in Baltimore City ♦ an on-the-job training program that prepares young adults to be employed in full-time jobs within the water industry. Participants are involved in water quality monitoring, sampling, and reporting as they develop skills to improve water quality in urban and rural communities and ultimately transition into water infrastructure jobs.

Moving forward, EPA will also work to award an additional \$50 million provided under the ARP for enhanced air quality monitoring, including plans to use a portion of these funds to solicit proposals from community groups, state, local and tribal air agencies to conduct monitoring of pollutants of greatest concern in communities with health outcome disparities.

EPA is assisting under-resourced communities by quickly getting out ARP funding to leverage important programs that improve air quality, drinking water, revitalization of brownfields, diesel emissions from buses in low income communities and communities of color. Under EPA's State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement (SEJCA) program, the agency is awarding its first competitive grants focusing directly on the unequal impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has had on communities of color, low income communities, and other vulnerable populations. Projects include training, developing citizen-science tools, pollution monitoring, and educational campaigns to enable EJ advocates, scientists, and decision-makers to address pollution and create thriving communities.

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 was signed into law on March 11, 2021. It provides funds to address health outcome disparities from pollution and the COVID-19 pandemic. To learn more about the ARP, visit: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319/text>

Several Texas cities, including Houston and Austin, are receiving ARP funding. I saw no mention of Dallas?
Contact Information: EPA Press Office (press@epa.gov)

Conservation / Eco Action

by Victoria Howard, Conservation Committee Chair

Update on Oncor's White Rock Lake Clear Cutting: What's Being Done?

As many know, last fall Oncor Electric approved and carried out the clear cutting of a large swath of land by White Rock Lake. With their intent to minimize growth under their power lines, Oncor also unleashed a torrent of chemicals to make sure that new growth was slow to return. (If you need a refresher on the issue, please refer to the articles and photos from *D Magazine* in these two links -- [October 6, 2020](#) and [October 7, 2020](#).)

After angry Dallas citizens and City Council members alike raised hell in protest, Oncor agreed to pay to repair the damage and sponsor the replanting of countless native species. The advocacy group, **Friends of the Old Fish Hatchery**, with the help of Dallas Parks and Recreation and Texas Discovery Gardens, have since helped to implement the replanting of many native species such as:

- Coreopsis tinctoria
- Eryngium yuccifolium Rattlesnake Master
- Echinacea angustifolia Coneflower
- Arnoglossum plantagineum Prairie Plantain
- Salvia azurea Pitcher Sage
- Ipomopsis rubra Standing cypress
- Elymus virginica Virginia Wild Rye
- Ravenna humilis Pigeonberry
- Brickellia eupatoriodes Brickell bush
- Evidence of Black Land Prairie (new growth) from seeds scattered

On Sunday June 13th, volunteers began removing some invasive plants by hand, and within the next few weeks, they will also be planting more potted plants that will soon be ready from Texas Discovery Gardens. Additionally, in about three weeks time, this will be followed up by the broadcasting of Bluebonnet seeds. The abundance of rain during the last few months has really helped the new plantlings to thrive and visible changes are occurring.

Going forward, volunteers to help plant and maintain the area are always welcome and needed. Workdays where lots of volunteer help will be needed will occur come fall. Please consider signing up to help by contacting the Dallas Sierra Club's Kathryn Bazan at: Kathryn@dallassierraclub.org

Membership

by Wendel Withrow, Membership Chair

While we have all been socially distanced for the last year, your Membership Committee has been working on two very exciting new projects. The first is a creation of a professional short video on 'Who is the Dallas Sierra Club' to use in recruiting new members and inspiring long-time members to re-connect. We will shoot the film this summer and have it ready for cooler weather and being able to meet again in person, whether at a general meeting or on the trail.

The second new project is a collaboration with *GreenSource on the Air* which is a live Zoom 'radio' show the third Thursday of each month. The next show will be August 19th and be produced and sponsored by Dallas College which has funded *GreenSource on the Air* for the entire year. The monthly shows are hosted by myself and our own Dallas Sierra Club 'Rock Star' Conservation Chair Victoria Howard.

Watch for these two new ways to encourage new members and to energize our more experienced members to re-join the fight for clean air, clean water, and a healthy life for all of our community.

Outings

by Mark Stein, Outings Chair

Sierra Club outings can resume! As of late June, the Sierra Club announced that chapter and group outings could begin after July 4. Local outings had been suspended from March 2020 until July 5, 2021.

Step one to resume outings is to bring certifications of previously certified leaders into compliance with Club requirements. Sierra Club outings leaders need to update an Outings Leader Training class every four years and first aid training every two years. Our Dallas Group requires leaders of overnight trips to complete a 16-hour Wilderness First Aid class every four years. WFA classes haven't been available in North Texas for more than a year. We're offering a grace period to extend the validity of Wilderness First Aid training until classes are offered in North Texas in 2022.

Objectives for Dallas Sierra Club outings in 2021 include refresher training for previously certified leaders on September 1, day hikes and overnight outings in fall 2021, and an Outdoor Leader Training weekend for new leaders in October. A hiking trip to Big Bend National Park is scheduled for February 9-13, 2022.

Political

by David Griggs, Political Chair

ENVIRONMENTAL GAINS SEEN IN DALLAS CITY COUNCIL ELECTION

There is good news to report on the recent city council race in Dallas. The results could have positive impacts on environmental and social justice policies locally. Sierra Club-endorsed candidates in the May 1st general and June 5th runoff elections were victorious in over 90% of the endorsed races in major cities across Texas.

Locally, all 14 of the single-member seats on the Dallas City Council were up for election. The Dallas mayor's four-year term was not up this year. Eight of the council members were seen as reliable environmental votes, which provided a slim environmental majority during the past two years. Therefore, the direction of the council on environmental issues was at risk.

The Dallas Group sent membership endorsement cards to local Sierrans in both the general and runoff elections. For the runoff, the Group hosted a Zoom PAC fundraiser for the Sierra Club Political Committee of Texas that raised enough money to contribute to the campaigns of each of the endorsed candidates. Young Sierrans in Dallas also volunteered for some of the campaigns and helped with canvassing.

The results were quite positive. Five Sierra Club endorsed incumbent candidates won on May 1st, and in the runoff, our endorsed candidates won in every race. In all, seven champion incumbent council members were re-elected. In three open seats, our progressive endorsees won in every race; and in District 14, our candidate upset the incumbent, increasing the environmental majority from 8 to 11, resulting in the strongest progressive tilt on the Dallas City Council in recent memory.

Thanks to all who voted in the elections and to those who volunteered and/or contributed to the Sierra Club Political Committee of Texas (TurnTexasGreen.org) during this municipal election cycle. Your support made a huge difference!

"So-called 'global warming' is just a secret ploy by wacko tree-huggers to make America energy independent, clean our air and water, improve the fuel efficiency of our vehicles, kick-start 21st-century industries, and make our cities safer and more livable. Don't let them get away with it!"

~ Chip Giller, Founder of Grist.org.

Anklejive.com



IEEFA Conference is available online

One might expect the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis to harbor fossil fuel apologists rather than champions for renewable energy and the environment. Happily it does not. The virtual IEEFA conference June 14-24 provided great information, inspiration, and cautionary tales related to the progress and future of the global switch to renewable energy. There were videos from the Philippines, Bangladesh and Navajo nation as well as analysis of China, Europe and the USA. I especially recommend the keynote, "Two Energy Economies, One World," by Michael Leibreich. It is all available in online recordings at <https://ieefa.org/ieefa-energy-finance-2021-conference/>

- Chris Guldi

Celebrating Juneteenth

by Cherelle Blazer, Senior Director of the Sierra Club's International Climate and Policy Campaign.

Saturday is June 19th, or "Juneteenth" -- traditionally a Southern Black holiday celebrating liberation and commemorating the day on June 19th, 1865, months after the Civil War had ended and years since the Emancipation Proclamation, that soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, and spread the news that slavery had ended, freeing those people who were still in bondage even after the war was over.

Growing up in Texas, Juneteenth was always something my family celebrated. It was OUR Fourth of July: Black Liberation Day. Part family reunion and part community celebration. Black families all over the community would get together at neighborhood parks to celebrate life even in the face of oppression. There was always laughter, dancing, music, joy, soul food, and most of all, love. It was life affirming, it was culturally affirming, and it was my favorite holiday.

Today Juneteenth has become a national celebration of Black people and a call for the fulfillment of the promise of liberation. It's the commemoration of having made it through the horrific nightmare -- of forced slavery, of segregation, Jim Crow, and even current oppression which we see in the form of continued police violence, political disenfranchisement, and disproportionate amounts of pollution being dumped on Black communities. It is time for

the liberation to be complete, for harm to end and restitution and repair to be made.

That's why this year the Sierra Club is calling for reparations for Black people. It is impossible to accomplish our mission of creating a healthy, safe, and sustainable future for all without acknowledging and materially addressing the past and present economic, cultural, psychological, and spiritual impacts of racism on Black communities.

As a 129-year-old organization, the Sierra Club has work to do both internally with staff and volunteers, and externally with our community partners. Though it is a difficult walk, we are dedicated to justice and accountability. We invite you as our membership, and the rest of the United States, to come along with us on this journey towards liberation and repair.

The Movement for Black Lives defines reparations as a concept rooted in international law that involves specific forms of repair to specific individuals, groups of people, or nations for specific harms they have experienced in violation of their human rights, which are essential to collective liberation and well-being. Reparations include five key components: Cessation/Assurance of Non-Repetition, Restitution and Repatriation, Compensation, Satisfaction, and Rehabilitation.

Communities that have been treated as [sacrifice zones by big polluters](#) have been calling for reparations for years. So much of the wealth in the U.S. was built on a foundation of theft and enslavement, and by returning some of that wealth to the people it was stolen from, we can begin to undo the intergenerational harm done to Black communities.

To learn more about reparations, please read this [explanation from the Movement for Black Lives](#). You can also read [our press release](#) from Sierra Club President Ramon Cruz and Executive Director Mike Brune, and this blog from Mike Brune as well.

The above article is available online [here](#).



A birdbrain idea?

As you enter Puy du Fou, a historical theme park in Les Epesses, France, you might come across a curious new attraction: crows collecting trash in exchange for treats. No, the birds aren't the park's newest cleanup crew. In fact, the performance is merely a training exercise. But Puy du Fou president Nicolas de Villiers says there's an alternative motive to the workout as well—to send a message to park visitors: Don't litter. "We want to show humans that they should pick up waste by themselves," he says. "People have been a bit shocked seeing the crow doing this game. We're not educating the crows, we're educating human beings."

The whole thing actually started by accident. Puy du Fou hosts a number of live bird shows featuring falcons, owls, vultures, and crows. In one show, a crow is supposed to pick up a rose and offer it to a princess. But during a particular performance, instead of picking up a rose, the crow grabbed a piece of trash and brought it to the princess. For Villiers, that sparked the idea for both a new game for the birds, and an educational program for park goers. To make it work, the park's falconer taught six rooks to deposit cigarette butts and other small bits of garbage into a box in exchange for treats. Villiers says the crows now play the game for an hour or so four times a week near the entrance of the theme park.

Kaeli Swift, a corvid researcher at the University of Washington, says she sees the trick as benign for the corvids and probably useful for us humans. Corvids, she says, are known to ravage through trash on a regular basis, but rarely, if

ever, eat the cigarette butts and various other garbage items they happen to find. "I think it's sort of a shame campaign to encourage people to recognize that if a crow can pick up garbage, then we definitely can too," she says. Lessons in litter aside, Swift says it could also be a great way to for people to learn about corvids and how incredibly intelligent these birds are. Corvids are among the smartest birds in the world. They can recognize human faces, and have also been known to hold grudges against researchers who have short-changed them in treats. They also often hold funerals for their dearly departed. Recent research suggests they even have the ability to plan for the future. And now, they serve to remind us of our impact on the environment, for good or for bad.

"If you throw something dirty on the ground nature will answer, and the nature that answers is the crow," says Villiers. "They are very smart. Sometimes I think they're smarter than us." (The above article is [here](#).)

Watch a one minute video about this [here](#)



Et Cetera

When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe. - John Muir

Only if you have been in the deepest valley, can you ever know how magnificent it is to be on the highest mountain. - Richard Nixon

I was hiking in the valley of a thousand hills, and while I knew there might be a few drop-offs, I took a nasty tumble over a small cliff. A little knoll edge can be a dangerous thing.

Recommended reading

[Texas Nature and Environmental Centers Guide](#) by Dan Moulton

This book serves as an environmental education reference, and also as a nature center travel guide. It's a virtual short course on environmental science for non-scientists. Teachers and group leaders (including parents) can use this book to help plan field trips and locate educational resources. The appended Environmental Primer will familiarize you

with major environmental issues facing us, and direct you to websites where you can learn more about specific environmental problems and potential solutions.

Available at local and online bookstores

[A Walk in the Woods](#) by **Bill Bryson**

Bryson recounts his travails on trails as he and a friend walk part of the Appalachian Trail. The comical yet heartfelt memoir is made all the more surreal by the fact that Bryson had no actual experience in hiking. This classic is for hikers and non-hikers alike.

Available at most libraries, and at local and online bookstores

[Strangers In Their Own Land](#) by **Arlie Russell Hochschild**

This is a thought-provoking book that gives insight into why some conservatives think the way that they do. I have wondered why some people seem (to me) to vote against their own interests, and this book showed me why. - Kirk Miller

Available at the Dallas, Richardson, and Plano libraries, and at local and online bookstores

Previous book recommendations are [here](#).

Limerick

Last December, when out on a trail,

I was hit by a cold, wintry gale.

Did the source of my pain

Come from storm's freezing rain?

I don't know, but it sure hurt like hail.

- by Kirk Miller

What do you think?

What things would you like to see in the newsletter - changes, improvements, reading recommendations, feedback on articles? Please let us know. This is YOUR newsletter. Feedback is welcome (comments, suggestions, letters to the Editor, etc.). Please submit items to newsletter@DallasSierraClub.org

Previous issues of our newsletter are available [here](#).

Calendar

Here is our calendar for the next two months. For complete listings, visit us at www.DallasSierraClub.org.

July 13, Tuesday - General Meeting

Increasing Urban Ecosystems: Stormwater Best Management Practices - Everyone is invited. Details are on our home page now.

August 4, Wednesday - Dallas Sierra Club Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee (Excom) is the elected governing body of the Dallas Sierra Club and meets at 6:30 p.m. via ZOOM. For more information, contact the Dallas Group Chair.

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