



# GREAT WATERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

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Fall, 2018 NO. 3



*The natural beauty of Kohler Andre State Park could be compromised by the Kohler Company's plans for a golf course in the area now being contested in court. See story Page 4.*

## Oil shipments threaten port

The recent initiation of High Hazard Flammable (HHF) ethanol barge shipments by U.S. Oil, a large scale fuel storage and distribution company, brings systemic risk to Milwaukee and Lake Michigan.

Common sense tells us that putting large amounts of hazardous materials in continual close proximity to valued waters, residents, boats and infrastructure is not a good idea, but the company was still able to obtain a long term lease from Port Milwaukee in 2014.

According to a May 24 story in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* U.S. Oil spokesperson Alison Fiebig said the company expected to make three to seven ethanol boat shipments a year. Each tanker barge holds 100,000 barrels, which means there will be almost 500 HHF ethanol tanker truck

loads traveling our streets on their way to the port for each barge.

Ethanol fires are notably dangerous and difficult to extinguish. Ethanol tankers are designated by hazmat placard 1987. An ethanol spill near Rockford, Ill., caused a 50-mile long fish kill in the Rock River in 2009. What would protect the world record brown trout in Milwaukee's harbor if there was a spill?

Now is the time to speak up for common sense and for business operations in Port Milwaukee that protect our lakefront, our water supply and our city's reputation.

For more information see [saferails.org/mkeharbo](http://saferails.org/mkeharbo)

## Fall Programs

**What are we doing to make a difference on the planet?**

*Sept. 17, 6:30 p.m. at the Wauwatosa Public Library*

Helen Bannan-Baurecht, Great Waters Group and Sierra Club National Outings Leader, will facilitate a discussion aimed at encour-

aging each of us to answer the question: What am I doing to make a difference for the environment?

It can be something as simple as running errands on foot or bicycle. Have you made changes around your home to save energy and reduce your carbon footprint? Have you begun gardening with native plants? Do you tolerate dandelions more and chemical fertilizers

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## Notes from the Chair

I like listening to NPR and WPR. I like watching PBS, especially Nature, Nova and Frontline, and CBS' 60 Minutes, and I will record them if I can't watch when they are broadcast. But these days in the land of Trump I especially like to watch the late night comedians.

We are lucky here in the Milwaukee area that we can watch three of them, one after the other, without having to record them: first Steven Colbert, then Jimmy Kimmel, followed by Seth Meyers. You could watch all four if you recorded Jimmy Fallon. And that's disregarding the Late Late show.

But I do record them, at least their first 25 minutes, because my wife goes to bed earlier than I do and loves to watch them in the morning because she gets up earlier than I do. And that's how we get much of our political news, in a fashion where we can take it with a grin and a guffaw rather than slapping our foreheads in amazement at the latest outrageous action to come out of Washington. That can be wearing if you have cable and watch

the continuous news channels. We don't have the temptation – no cable, just converter boxes.

But now it's time to get serious. Elections are coming in November, and, as we have found out, they have consequences. Most people who follow the news (even if they watch the cable stations – save one) have made up their minds already as to which party or candidate they favor. So the results will most likely be based on turnout. And some people need a little encouragement or maybe help with registering. So we need to give it to them.

I'll be out there knocking on doors. I hope you will also find a way to contribute, but at least to vote in this very important election.

But I'll still keep watching late night. We all need some relief.

– Bill Moore

# Foxconn water diversion faces court fight



*Signs for Foxconn like this one in India can be found all over the world, and it's important that local governments keep a close eye on the company's impact on the environment.*

*Adapted from The Wisconsin Gazette*

Midwest Environmental Advocates, the League of Women Voters Wisconsin, Milwaukee Riverkeeper and the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy have gone to court to challenge the proposed diversion of Great Lakes water for the new Foxconn plant near Racine.

The organizations contend that the diversion violates the terms of the Great Lakes Compact, and they have asked that a hold be put on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' diversion approval during the ongoing legal challenge.

They have also requested that the city of Racine not begin "any construction work on new water infrastructure related to the proposed diversion of water from Lake Michigan."

## Save the date for party

Put Sunday, Dec. 2, 2018 on your calendar. The annual GWG Holiday Party and Fundraiser will be held then from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Wil O Way Recreation Center in Wauwatosa. More details will be forthcoming.

If you'd like to help us organize this event, please contact [janeta16@sbcglobal.net](mailto:janeta16@sbcglobal.net).

If you'd like this and other activity information faster, sign up for our GWG e-letter by sending an email to: [gwg.e-letter@wi.rr.com](mailto:gwg.e-letter@wi.rr.com).



*Group leader Donald Harris of Urban Economy Center has an enthusiastic audience during the Nearby Nature Summer Youth Program at the Samuel Clemons School in Milwaukee.*

# Nearby Nature project keeping kids busy

By David Thomas  
Nearby Nature Chair

The Nearby Nature project, an Environmental Justice initiative, addressing environmental issues in urban communities impacted by poverty and racial injustice, has had a busy summer.

Our Youth Programs sponsored in partnership with Urban Ecology Center and three community youth centers served approximately 50 young people. Daniels-Mardak Boys and Girls Club was the first, starting a spring pilot program that kicked off with a trash cleanup along Lincoln Creek.

As school ended we transitioned to summer programs with Boys and Girls Club and added Lighthouse Youth Center in the Garden Homes community and Samuel Clemens elementary school Community Learning Center. During weekly visits, educators offered games and exercises that emphasize connections to water and wildlife.

In July, my wife Diane and I had a great experience joining the Milwaukee Water Commons for its Water School outing at Mauthe Lake. The MWC Water School cultivates neighborhood water leadership throughout the city via partnerships and educational events. We took participants paddling – some for the very first time – and assisted a Leave-No-Trace experience.

At the beginning of August, Linda Moreno, a resident in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, was awarded a “Community Engagement Fellowship” to assist our work in these neighborhoods. Several of us continued advocacy for the 20-acre green space along Lincoln Creek from Congress to Hampton Avenues.

With help from Linda, we have started contacting neighbors in the area to seek support for improvements to the space, which is now largely covered with noxious invasive weeds and trash.

In August we held two events along Lincoln Creek. On August 18  
(Continued on page 7)

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## Nominations being accepted

Would you like to be more active on environmental issues? Here’s an opportunity to step forward to help get more folks outside to explore and enjoy nature, as we as work to protect habitat and improve sustainability. And it can be fun to work more closely with others in your Sierra Club community.

We are accepting nominations for two openings on our Executive Committee for the 2019-2020 term. If you want to explore being an Ex Com member or nominating someone else, contact Ed Anderson at 414-520-2751.

## Bikers, hikers to visit Perrot State Park

### Camp, Hike & Bike Over Weekend at Perrot State Park

Perrot State Park is one of Wisconsin’s finest state parks, and it has plenty of opportunities for active nature lovers: biking and hiking and ending at the Elmaro Vineyard. While recreating, we will learn about what makes this area so important to Wisconsin wildlife. Troubadour Eddie Allen will entertain us Saturday evening.

The price of the campsite will be split by the group. Except for Saturday night potluck, all meals are on your own. Hotel Trempealeau on Friday night is highly recommended.

**Date:** September 7 - 9

**Location:** Perrot State Park, Trempealeau, Wisconsin.

**Leaders:** RSVPs or for more information, contact Chris Zapf ([zapfchristine@sbcglobal.net](mailto:zapfchristine@sbcglobal.net) or 414-429-8069) or Bill Moore ([environ1@global.net](mailto:environ1@global.net) or 262-785-9022).

# Suit contests Kohler Andre plan

By Barbara Richards  
Conservation Chair

Friends of the Black River Forest (FBRF) have filed suit to halt plans by the Kohler Company to annex five acres of Kohler Andre State Park in the building of an 18-hole golf course.

The parkland would be added to the 275 acres owned by Kohler where 50% of the trees would be removed. A decision is expected in October on the suit challenging the Department of Natural Resources wetlands permit for the project.

The DNR had admitted that irreversible damage to wetlands would be caused by this proposal, but it issued the permit anyway. A lack of information in the permitting process made it difficult for citizens to make public comments.

FBRF lists five issues of concern raised by the Kohler plan, including further impairment of the Black River which has been designated for

cleanup by the county; the cumulative impact of wetland and forest destruction; siting of the course in an area that is subject to shore line changes; pesticide use, possibly including glyphosate, on the completed course; and air quality and noise issues if the course is used for major championships.

In a statement, the FBRF pointed out: “This fight is important because every one of the environmental crises in our state began with one permit, which opened the gates to serious air, water and land contamination. We can stop this before the lake is further impaired and this rare coastal landscape is stripped of its unique characteristics. Also the DNR has set precedent giving our Kohler Andre State Park land to the Kohler Company for its private profit.”

For further information:

<https://www.sheboyganpress.com/story/news/2018/03/16/environmental-group-taking-wisconsin-dnr-court-over-kohler-golf-wetlands-permit/408698002/>

# Republican proposal would tax emissions

By Mike Arney

An interesting thing happened in climate politics this summer. For the first time in ten years, a Republican introduced a bill that would put a price on carbon emissions.

The Republican is Carlos Curbelo of Florida, co-founder of the Climate Solutions Caucus in the House. The bill is HR 6463, the “Modernizing America with Rebuilding to Kick-start the Economy of the Twenty-first Century with a Historic Infrastructure-Centered Expansion Act”, It’s also known as the Market Choice Act.

The legislation would replace the gas tax with a broader, \$24 per ton carbon tax and use most of the additional revenue to fund infrastructure improvements. Some revenue would also go to the poor to shield them from rising energy costs.

The bill also includes a moratorium on Environmental Protection Agency regulation of greenhouse gases. Electric vehicle drivers would be made to pay their fair share. Citizens’ Climate Lobby supports a more aggressive carbon tax in which 100% of the revenue is refunded to households.

But the Market Choice act raises some interesting questions. Is it possible we could tackle climate issues sideways, in the guise of infrastructure funding? How can this spark of Republican interest in climate action be fanned? Can we afford to wait beyond this administration for climate legislation? Would you care if Donald Trump got the credit for saving our climate?

For more information, contact Mike Arney at [milwaukeeewest@citizensclimatelobby.org](mailto:milwaukeeewest@citizensclimatelobby.org), 414-350-2728

## Fall Programs

(Continued from page 1)

less? Have you tried to practice energy efficiency at work?

Start thinking about what you’ve done—or what you’ve observed others doing. Send your observations to ([bannan@uwosh.edu](mailto:bannan@uwosh.edu)). Your ideas will help her organize themes to channel our exchange of ideas. Then attend the meeting and learn from others as others learn from you!

### Oil Company in Port of Milwaukee threatens decades of clean water efforts and community safety.

Oct. 15, 6:15 p.m. at the West Allis Public Library

Eric Hansen of Citizens Acting for Rail Safety - Milwaukee Area (CARS MKE) will give an overview of the situation at Port Milwaukee where the first shipments of High Hazard Flammable (HHF) fuel were received in more than a decade this spring.

U.S. Oil Co. has a lease from the port and has expanded its Jones Island terminal. CARS MKE is working with other groups to inform the public of the risks of moving HHF material through the city and across Lake Michigan. Hansen will suggest what you might do to join the effort to inform the public of the new risk to our community and its only source of clean water.

### Comprehensive plan to draw down greenhouse gases.

Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m., Wauwatosa Public Library

Bruce Wiggins, community social justice advocate and activist, will discuss the book *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming* edited by Canadian Naturalist Paul Hawken. It is available for sale and in local libraries.

Wiggins will explain the book’s argument that “aims to reverse the accumulation of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere, not just stop additional accumulation.” We recommend you read the book but need not have done so to benefit from this discussion.



*Cyclists wear masks to dramatize the impact of dirty coal while participating in the Clean Power Coalition of Southeast Wisconsin ride around the Oak Creek power plant.*

# Cyclists put focus on renewables

Approximately 35 members of the Clean Power Coalition of Southeast Wisconsin held a “Ride for Renewables” around the coal plants in Oak Creek to promote clean energy.

The Aug. 11 ride started on the south side of the plant and wound its way north through a public access bike trail on the grounds of the power plants. Participants heard Charlie Michna, a local farmer who has lived just south of the coal plants all his life discuss how residing next to dusty and noisy coal trains, as well as a massive coal pile, has impacted his and his wife’s health.

The riders moved on to Haas Park on the north side of the plant, where layers of coal dust were discovered coating the playground several times. Three residents from that side of the plant spoke about their experiences and their frustrations with the utility and the lack of regulatory oversight.

At that point, CBS 58 News interviewed several riders and residents, who made it clear that renewable energy is the ultimate solution. On the last leg of the trip, riders biked down to the public access fishing pier just below the stacks for an up close and personal view of the plant.

If you are interested in getting involved the Clean Power Coalition of Southeast Wisconsin is looking for additional volunteers. Email Miranda Ehrlich at [miranda.ehrlich@sierraclub.org](mailto:miranda.ehrlich@sierraclub.org) to learn more.

# State launches plan to support commuters

*Adapted from an article in gmtoday by Ashley Hayes and other sources*

Commute to Careers, an \$8 million multi-agency initiative intended to support statewide efforts to eliminate transportation barriers for urban and rural workers, was announced by Gov. Scott Walker on July 16.

The program will be funded by the Wisconsin Departments of Workforce Development (DWD) and Transportation (WisDOT). It is to be a public/private partnership with private funds replacing the public funds over time. It is focused on low income individuals and persons with disabilities

It will be implemented in two phases:

- \$8 million will be invested during the current biennium – \$3 million from WisDOT for transportation equipment and \$5 million in grants from DWD. The DWD grants will target the transportation needs of low-income workers, with at least \$1 million allocated to address the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities.
- An additional \$8 million in funding will be requested in the 2019-‘21 biennial budget – \$3 million in WisDOT funding for additional transportation equipment and \$5 million in DWD funding for continuation of the grant program.

A Request for Proposals for the private sector was to be released on July 23. This has been endorsed by the Survival Coalition which is comprised of more than 30 statewide disability organizations.

# Volunteers needed to help with North Country Trail

The North Country Trail stretching from upstate New York to North Dakota is under construction, and this is your chance to help. We will camp two nights, beginning Friday evening, September 14, in Copper Falls State Park group overflow site #2 and work Saturday and Sunday.

A \$20 charge covers materials, camping fees and Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner and Sunday breakfast and lunch. Friday night supper is not included. You will need to provide personal sleeping gear and a tent. To participate in this service outing call or email either of the Sierra Club Trip Leaders by September 12.

Dates: September 14-16.

Location: North Country Trail near Mellen, WI and Copper Falls State Park.

Leaders: Dan Buckler ([daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com](mailto:daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com), 330-261-2088) and David Thomas ([david@thomerwald.net](mailto:david@thomerwald.net), 414-344-1044)

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*The blessing of the waters is a Native American ritual in the Boundary Waters area where maintaining tradition and beauty is a constant challenge.*

# Senators target Boundary Waters

The challenges to the Boundary Waters Wilderness that were highlighted by Dave and Amy Freeman's bicycle trip to Washington, D.C., and reported in the Summer GWG newsletter haven't gone away.

The Boundary Waters and Lake Superior continue to face more pressure for sulfide mining companies, with US senators and representatives giving the companies legislative support.

Early this summer a rider was attached to the unrelated National Defense Authorization Act by Minnesota Democratic Senators Tina Flint Smith and Amy Klobuchar to make it easier for sulfide mining to be developed in the Lake Superior watershed. The rider would have nullified lawsuits that challenged the legality of a land exchange that was to give 6,500

acres of public land to PolyMet a low cost. After citizen comment, Congress removed the rider.

Also US Representative Tom Emmer (R-Minn.) attempted to stop an ongoing study by the US Forest Service of the possible harmful impacts of sulfide mining near the Boundary Waters. His amendment was withdrawn.

## Coalition seeking plan for renewables

A coalition led by Citizen Action, 350-Milwaukee and the Sierra Club is working to bring together multiple groups to create an aldermanic resolution to develop a renewable energy plan for the City of Milwaukee.

The object is to bring those providing jobs and those needing jobs together around renewable energy development. This will also include keeping energy costs low for lower income households. To help you can contact any of the lead organizations by sending a message on Facebook.

## Tosa Green Summit planned

Five recycling collections and 22 exhibitors will participate in the eighth annual Tosa Green Summit from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 8. at the Wauwatosa Civic Center and City Hall parking lot. There will be a limit of three boxes for shredding, and no TVs or computer monitors will be accepted.

The event is sponsored by Waterstone Bank, Outpost and Firefly Real Estate. Bring your family and enjoy this free informational open house where you can learn how to help make your community green and sustainable. If you have questions, find us on Facebook or contact Jeff Roznowski at 414-803-9500

### Volunteer Leadership Council (VLC) Contact List

Chair William Moore 262-785-9022  
 Vice-Chair Crystal Hoecherl, 414-614-3034  
 Roy Krueger, Treasurer 262-544-6893  
 Crystal Hoecherl, Secretary 414-614-3034  
 Heather Hansen, JMC Delegate 812-360-0652  
 William Baurecht, Program Chair 414-882-7218  
 Chris Zapf, Volunteer Chair 262-786-9584  
 Ed Anderson, Membership Chair 414-520-2751  
 Rashi Grewal, Fundraising Chair 908-240-7043  
 Rose Both, Political Chair 262-751-4802  
 Karen Samelson, Publicity Chair 414-481-1596  
 David Thomas, Nearby Nature Chair 414-810-2286  
 Dan Buckler, Outings Chair 330-261-2088  
 Janet Anderson, Communications Chair 414-258-5624  
 (Communications, E-Letter, Facebook, Website)  
 Barbara Richards, Conservation & Newsletter Chair 414-259-0731  
 Dave Wehnes, Website Super Administrator 414-453-1689  
 Dale Hofmann, Newsletter Editor 414-476-8636  
 David Hetzel, Newsletter Reimbursement 414-228-9512

## Communications help wanted

Do you have a little extra time to volunteer with us in our Great Waters Group? We are all volunteers, and with our increasing membership, we could use your help to get our messages and activities out to the public.

We are looking for YOU to join our Communications team to help get information out to our Great Waters Group members via our multiple media sources.

Please contact Janet at [janeta16@sbcglobal.net](mailto:janeta16@sbcglobal.net) . Thank you!

# Perspectives key on bias issues

By David Thomas  
Nearby Nature Chair

The Sierra Club has a mission to tackle racial bias in the environmental movement, and it recommends a number of sources to members and others interested in joining that effort. Statistics on employment, education, housing, income, health care and incarceration show people of color at a disadvantage compared to the white population. This is called “white privilege.”

I’ve just begun to delve into Robin Diangelo’s book *White Fragility, Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*. Diangelo first encountered the concept of white fragility in “diversity” workshops where so many white people were indignant at the thought that they had any connection to racism at all.

Another essential read along these lines is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s *Letter From Birmingham Jail*. In it Dr. King suggests that “the greatest stumbling block in the stride toward freedom is... not the KKK but the white moderate who is more devoted to order than to justice.”

The YWCA’s ongoing “Unlearning Racism” classes are a place to examine this deeply. The Sierra Club Great Waters Group agreed to pay the tuition cost for two people, starting with volunteer leaders but open to any active member who requests the tuition assistance. As of this writing, the offer is still open. To take advantage of this opportunity, email me at [david@thomerwald.net](mailto:david@thomerwald.net).

## Explore Havenwoods area

Havenwoods State Forest is a beautiful property on Milwaukee’s north side, anchoring the northern end of the Great Waters Group’s Nearby Nature campaign, and you’re invited to explore it. Bring a lunch to enjoy at the end of the hike.

**Date:** Saturday, Oct. 20, 10:30a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Location:** Parking lot beside the Nature Center – 6141 N. Hopkins St. Milwaukee.

**Leader:** Dan Buckler. Please RSVP at [Daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com](mailto:Daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com) or 330-261-2088

## Kids staying busy with Nearby Nature project

*(Continued from page 3)*

Rashi Grewal led a cleanup in the 35th and Congress greenway and on August 19, Dan Buckler led a nature walk along the creek starting in Meaux Park.

Future events include:

**Saturday, Sept. 22 from 10 a.m. to noon** – Action Team and community meeting at Havenwoods State Forest. Lunch will be included, so please RSVP to [david@thomerwald.net](mailto:david@thomerwald.net).

**Saturday, October 13 at 2 p.m** – Nearby Nature Fundraiser hosted  
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*Demonstrators for the Peoples Climate Movement will gather throughout the country in September to promote action on jobs and justice.*

## Milwaukeeans to join in climate demands

The Peoples Climate Movement will bring tens of thousands of people across the country together and into the streets to demand bold action on climate, jobs and justice on Sept. 8. Milwaukee area participants will gather at Zeidler Park, 310 W Michigan Street, at 1 p.m. for a rally and then join a march to City Hall before returning to Zeidler Park for voter registration.

The theme for this day of action is “Rise for Climate, Jobs, and Justice.” It will take place four days before the Global Climate Action Summit and will help build support for bold, equitable, and justice-oriented climate action.

by Sheila Larkin and Cheri Briscoe at St John’s on the Lake, 1840 N. Prospect Ave, Milwaukee. Great Waters Group Fundraising Chair Rashi Grewal convinced her musical group, the Gutekunst Flute Choir to perform a concert titled “Water Water Everywhere”. Please join us for desserts and beverages, great musical entertainment and an update on the Nearby Nature project. Admission is open, and donations to the Nearby Nature project are gratefully accepted.

Car-pooling or green transportation is encouraged. Parking is limited on the street or the surface lot on the south end of the St John’s tower. Use the #30 bus line. By bike, use the lakefront Oak Leaf trail and the Brady Street ramp to Prospect Ave.)



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## Protect America's Environment for Our Families, For Our Future

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# Great Lakes Commons seeks good government

*Adapted by permission from the Great Lakes Commons Website*

The Great Lakes Commons is a network of people and organizations that is undertaking a bold new effort to create a governance framework for the Great Lakes that's legally, politically and economically possible.

Like the Milwaukee Water Commons, the GLC emerged from a recognition that fundamental change is essential in order to create a sustainable ecological future for the region. Decades of activism and effort that have included some remarkable victories have not resulted in thriving and protected waters, and it's clear that the relationship with government has to be transformed.

Of course, the Great Lakes are already a commons – something that's shared by many and belongs to none – but they are an unconscious commons vulnerable to misuse. A true commons lives in the understandings, relationships, actions, and laws recognized by the public. A commons needs commoners who are empowered to act as stewards and protectors.

To understand the GLC's mission, it's important to recognize two crucial terms:

The first is "indigenous" The organization is dedicated to bringing Native and non-Native peoples together to emphasize how both indigenous wisdom and the legal rights of indigenous communities



are essential to new governance. The recognition of indigenous sovereignty and the cultural, spiritual, and legal rights of indigenous peoples guaranteed through treaty and international declarations is central to GLC's efforts.

The second is "commons based." Two bodies of established jurisprudence – public trust and treaty rights – are key. Legal strategies such as the Rights of Nature, Wild Law, the Rights of Future Generations, and vernacular law are congruent aspects of an overarching legal framework. "Commons Law," not to be confused with common law, can be used as a path to a compelling new paradigm of environmental protection.

The most established legal basis for establishing a Great Lakes Commons is the Public Trust Doctrine, which was conceived in Europe more than thousand years ago. It upholds the principle that certain resources, including navigable waters such as the Great Lakes, must be preserved for the public good as a duty of the state.

[For more information about the GLC consult https://www.great-lakescommons.org/why/](https://www.great-lakescommons.org/why/)