

OZARK ONE EARTH ONE CHANCE SIERRAN

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JANUARY / FEBRUARY 1999



*Campground, Buffalo National River, Arkansas
photo by Doris Sherrick*

Resounding Victory - Doe Run
Mining Withdraws Applications page 3

Be sure to vote!
Ballot enclosed page 24

Dec 1
Jan/Feb Ozark
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time!

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Hard-working, All-volunteer Editorial and Production Staff: Bob Sherrick, Editor; Keet Kopecky, and Claus Wawrzinek

Sprawl! (Uhh!!) What Is It Good For? (Absolutely Nothin'?)

by Ron McLinden

Sprawl. Is it the greatest thing since the automobile? Or is it the greatest unrecognized threat to the environment? Are you part of it? If so, what can you do about it?

Sprawl is what has happened to our cities and towns over the past fifty years or so. It is a product of such diverse factors as post World War II prosperity, FHA and VA mortgages, the Supreme Court school desegregation decision of 1954, and the Interstate Highway Act of 1956.

It came about in part as a reaction to the days of smokestack industry, before there were controls on emissions and noise, when a central city neighborhood was something to be gotten away from as soon as one could afford to. It was the product of overly restrictive zoning that considered everything other than a single family house to be an undesirable neighbor to a single family neighborhood.

It was the product of mass production applied to housing: the most efficient way to build housing, whether single family or apartments, was to build a lot of them in the same place, thereby making it more efficient to take delivery on materials and to move carpenters and plumbers from one unit to the next.

It was the product of developers

wanting to do things big. None of this one little storefront building at a time business. The money was in building big shopping centers.

In short, sprawl just seemed to be the thing to do at the time.

Result: subdivisions separate from workplaces separate from stores separate from schools and churches and public buildings.

Result: separation, resulting in travel distances that could be overcome only by the automobile.

Result: destinations so dispersed that public transit no longer could be operated at a profit. Even when transit was subsidized, the suburban landscape made using transit inconvenient at best.

Result: since everybody wanted to live on a quiet street with no through traffic, streets became specialized with some of them carrying such heavy traffic that the few would-be pedestrians were intimidated right into a car.

Sprawl has happened just about everywhere, and Missouri is no exception. The recent Sierra Club report, "The Dark Side of the American Dream," named our two largest cities as the 2nd (St. Louis) and 5th (Kansas City) most sprawl-threatened cities in the US. Local apologists can quibble over the

continued on page 4... **Sprawl**

Smart Growth at Governor's Conference?

Plans are now being made for the Second Annual Governor's Total Transportation Conference, to be held in Jefferson City on January 20-21, 1999. While the theme of the conference is likely to be building support for a multimodal state transportation program (including some form of tax increase to finance it), it is also likely that one session of the conference will be about Smart

Growth. We encourage our members to attend the conference as it will be a great opportunity to hear elected officials, business and transportation interests, and perhaps even public interest groups give their separate perspectives on Missouri's transportation needs. For further information we suggest calling MoDOT at 1(888)ASKMODOT.

Sprawl continued from page 2
rankings, but there's no getting around the fact that Missouri cities are sprawling.

Its not just our two biggest cities, either. Springfield is sprawling. Columbia is sprawling. The Branson region, in its own way, is sprawling all over parts of Taney and Stone counties. In fact, virtually every city and town that is changing in any way — whether it is growing or not — is probably sprawling. Because that's the way most real estate development is happening.

The consequences?
Consumption of agricultural land and open space; encroachment on riparian zones and wildlife habitat; the paving of every place; intensified flooding that occurs because asphalt sheds water faster than soil; increased air and water pollution from automobiles; loss of community as neighbor passes neighbor disguised behind tinted windshields; loss of opportunities for self-sufficiency for the elderly; loss of opportunities for independent mobility

for kids not yet of driving age. You know the syndrome. You finish the list.

So what do we do about it?

Well, there's hope. A lot of people have become aware of the problem. A lot of people are talking about solutions. Including the Vice President, who has spoken publicly about the problem in recent months. Including Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan, who has directed his own staff and no fewer than five separate state departments to look into the problem. Including the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission, which directed MoDOT to form an internal task force to see what could be done. Including developers and public officials and environmentalists and historic preservationists who gathered a year ago in Baltimore for the first national Partners for Smart Growth conference, and who assembled again in December in Austin, Texas, for a second such meeting.

continued on page 5... **Sprawl**

Smart Growth and the Fifteen Year Plan

Last November the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission finally abandoned the 1992 "Fifteen Year Plan" as their official guiding document. That plan has turned out to be more ambitious than could be completed with the fuel tax increase passed to finance it. In its place the Commission has adopted a five-year plan that is feasible given anticipated revenues. Transportation interests want a tax increase, but the General Assembly still appears to be reluctant because they feel they were misled in 1992. (Never mind that they probably didn't mind being misled at the time into believing the 1992 plan would bring much-wanted highway projects to their own districts.)

"Accountability" is now the watchword, and MoDOT has recently submitted its first annual General Assembly mandated accountability report to a special

legislative oversight committee.

It seems to us that accountability is more than just being able to demonstrate that money voted for highways is being spent effectively to build highways. Accountability should also extend to the question of whether existing roads are being used to their fullest before money for more roads is sought. Citizens should expect MoDOT to be accountable for proper use of transportation dollars. At the same time, citizens should expect local governments to demonstrate local accountability for the transportation projects they want by guiding local growth and development so as to need fewer roads and bridges than might be required if that growth and development were allowed to just happen.

Does anybody see a role here for Smart Growth principles and policies?

Trapped in Sprawl

OK, you say: sprawl is bad. But I'm trapped in the midst of it. Got kids to get through high school and college, and there's not a bus stop or walkable destination in sight. What's a good Sierra Club member to do? Resign my membership?

No, of course not. You don't have to do anything that drastic. But there are some things you can do:

- Carpool to work or to social activities.
- Take transit, at least occasionally.
- Walk in your own neighborhood instead of driving to a park or fitness center.
- Ride your bike in your own neighborhood instead of driving miles to a trail.
- Vote with your dollars by doing more of your shopping at stores that can be reached by transit — whether you use transit to get there or not.
- Vote with your dollars by doing more of your shopping at stores that are pedestrian friendly — where one can get to the front door without having to risk life and limb crossing a vast parking lot.
- Vote with your dollars by doing more of your shopping at stores closer to the center of the city.
- Vote with your dollars by not shopping at stores located farther away from the city than your own home.
- Get involved with others to make your community friendlier to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- If you have the opportunity to decide where jobs are created, get them created close-in, accessible by public transit.
- Next time you change place of residence, look in an established neighborhood where you can walk places.
- Object mightily to public subsidies and tax incentives for “economic development” projects located where they don't make sense.
- Write to Vice President Al Gore and thank him for making an issue of sprawl.
- Write to Governor Carnahan and tell him that extremism in opposition to sprawl is no vice, and moderation in the pursuit of Smart Growth is no virtue — or something like that.

Sprawl continued from page 4

Smart Growth? What's that all about?

Smart Growth defies simple definition. It's a movement. It's a desired outcome. It's an attitude toward growth. It's a rediscovery and recreation of what was best about the small towns and neighborhoods of pre-automobile days. It's an idea that appeals to social liberals because it promotes closer community ties and better quality of life. It's an idea that appeals to fiscal conservatives because it results in more effective use of government resources. It's an idea that appeals to business people because it makes for a more efficient economy.

It's an idea that appeals to environmentalists because it conserves energy and raw materials and natural resources and open spaces.

In short, Smart Growth could be almost the best thing since sliced bread. In short, Smart Growth is an idea whose time has come.

Unless, of course, you're one of the folks who have a vested interest in continuing to build highways, continuing to speculate in perfectly good farm land that's just aching to become tract housing or shopping mall, continuing to exploit the land until there's not a bit of nature left untouched. ☸

St. Louis Smart Growth Alliance Update

by Claralyn Price-Bollinger

The St. Louis Smart Growth Alliance continues to move forward! We recently applied for a \$49,000 EPA grant to fund a "Citizen Forum" program. The forums would be held throughout the St. Louis metropolitan region to encourage discussion of smart growth concepts. This idea follows on the heels of our highly successful town hall meetings in late 1997 which attracted over 1,000 citizens. Sustainable St. Louis, an alliance member group chaired by Sierran Dan Lehocky, would implement the Citizen Forums. Word on the grant is expected in April or May.

We also held our first issue forum in October. TEA-21 (the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century) was the topic. TEA-21 is the successor to ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act). These federal programs establish national guidelines and programs for the use of surface transportation monies, most of which come from gasoline taxes. Representatives of the Missouri Department of Transportation, Illinois Department of

Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, East-West Gateway Coordinating Council, Bi-State Development Agency and Citizens for Modern Transit presented information about TEA-21 and answered questions from the approximately 30 audience members.

Future issue forums are being considered on infill redevelopment, the new Tennessee growth management law, rural perspectives on sprawl, the East St. Louis smart growth initiative, and the Missouri Department of Conservation "Common Ground" forums.

Monthly meetings of the St. Louis Smart Growth Alliance are held from 5:30-6:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Missouri Historical Society's Library and Research Building, on South Skinker Blvd, across from Forest Park. Contact Pattie Pinter-Hartmann at (314) 454-3146 or prp@mohistory.org to receive notice of upcoming meetings and to offer your ideas for forum topics. ☸

Urban Sprawl Hurts Public Transit

by Ginger Harris

Urban sprawl usually involves both the spreading out of land uses at lower densities, and the redistribution of residences and activity centers from the core to the periphery of a metropolitan area, leaving a donut-shaped land-use pattern.

Public transit feels the pinch of lower density because there are fewer passengers per route mile, and consequently fewer fares are paid.

Since sprawl spreads residences and activity centers farther apart, it also forces people to make longer trips. When transit serves these longer trips, it must provide more service — in the form of “seat miles” — per passenger. Zone fares to adjust for length of trip are difficult to administer and therefore are not widely used. Therefore, most transit agencies charge the same fare per passenger trip, no matter how long the trip is. For both of the above reasons, transit revenues are falling, whether measured per mile or per hour of transit service. In response, the transit agency can increase fares or reduce the frequency of trips, but either action is likely to discourage ridership even further.

From the rider’s perspective, it’s

often harder to commute by transit to a suburban job site because suburban buildings are typically set back at a distance from the street. Commuters who take transit to such a suburban site may have a long hike to and from the bus stop, often with no sidewalk. On the way home, these same transit commuters may have to wait for the bus in a forlorn location with no pedestrian amenities and little protection from speeding traffic.

Campus-style suburban job sites also put the transit agency on the horns of a dilemma. Should they detour the bus to get closer to the building for the benefit of its employees? This is costly to the transit agency. The detour can also discourage other riders whose own trip to work is made longer. If the transit agency decides instead to cater to “through riders” by staying on the main street, the agency runs the risk of losing riders from the campus-style center. No matter which way it goes, the transit agency is liable to lose potential customers. This reduces the cost-effectiveness of transit. The distances created by urban sprawl impact transit riders more than auto commuters. The longer the commute,

continued on page 8... Transit

Can Growth be Smart?

By Ron McLinden

I occasionally feel the need to explain myself to environmental purists for advocating smart growth. Human impacts on the earth’s environment are already too great, they argue, so how can I advocate growth of any kind?

If I had my druthers, I’d probably avoid talking about growth. I would instead talk about smart development —where development means a qualitative improvement in

things rather than a quantitative increase. Unfortunately, however, growth is still the dominant mode of thinking in our culture.

To me, talking about “smart” growth implies that not all growth is smart. And I consider that realization to be a first important step along the way to the discovery that growth itself — especially growth for its own sake — might not be in the best interest of anybody. Sometimes you have to compromise to be listened to.

Sprawl continued from page 4
the greater difference there is in travel time between going by car or by transit. This is because the farther a car commuter travels, the more likely s/he is to take a highway. Since car commuters have some control over when they leave for work or for home, they can generally make efficient use of highways.

By contrast, the farther a transit commuter travels to work, the more likely s/he is to have to transfer from one bus route to another, and perhaps even to a 3rd or 4th bus. Transferring can mean long waits between buses, which can make the transit trip much

longer than a comparable car trip. If a parent has to drop off and pick up a child within the restricted hours allowed by many daycare facilities, it may be impossible for that parent to make the commute by transit. To the extent that low-wage earners rely on transit, while middle- and upper-income workers use cars, sprawl imposes a disproportionate burden on low-income commuters.

To the extent that senior citizens must give up driving and rely on transit, sprawl imposes a disproportionate burden on them as well. Where sprawl makes transit unavailable or inconvenient, it robs senior citizens of their independence.

What the Sierra Club is Doing

In St. Louis, our members are active in the St. Louis Smart Growth Alliance, a broad-based citizen group formed in late 1997, to work against sprawl and central city disinvestment.

In Kansas City, our members are active in the Metropolitan Coalition for Sensible Transportation, advocating public transit and more transportation-efficient development.

In our cities, our members get involved in major transportation investment studies that determine whether highways or transit or other actions should be implemented to solve congestion.

In Jefferson City, our members speak before the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission about transportation policy as well as about specific projects, and they meet individually with Commission members to explain our positions.

In Jefferson City, our members

meet with key staff people in the Governor's office and state departments to advocate a strong role for state government in setting a more sustainable development course.

In our local communities, our members talk with city councils and county commissions and planning commissions and appointed public officials to help them see that there is a better way for a locality to develop. They participate in "visioning" and long-range planning processes such as those recently completed in Kansas City and Springfield and Blue Springs and Wildwood.

Poverty, Segregation and Urban Sprawl

By Rick Zbinden

The Sierra Club is naturally interested in urban sprawl's effect on habitats, water quality and air quality. But sprawl is a concern to people in older areas of our cities for very different reasons.

Part of the phenomenon of sprawl is that many businesses, institutions and individuals are moving away from the urban core and inner-ring suburbs of our cities, out to the wide-open spaces of the suburbs. When they do, they take with them their investments, commerce, and volunteerism in their schools and neighborhoods. Federal, state and local governments encourage this outward migration in almost every United States city by investing heavily in "high growth" areas rather than in older, established areas. After over forty years of disinvestment, the percentage of low-income people who live in urban core and inner-ring suburbs is disproportionately high. To a large degree, many of the people who are left in these areas are the ones who could not afford to leave. These residents have a higher than average need for reinvestment in their communities, but they also have a much lower than average tax base to

work with. And so the cycle of disinvestment continues like a snowball.

But what about segregation? Many of those left behind in urban ghettos belong to African American, Latino and other minority groups. In the Kansas City region, for instance, low-income whites live throughout the metropolitan area, in mostly middle-class neighborhoods. In contrast, low-income blacks primarily live in segregated, impoverished areas in the central city. Their neighborhoods are marked by crumbling infrastructure, few jobs and neglected housing stock. Segregation researchers have shown that most cities (including Kansas City and St. Louis) remain highly segregated despite thirty years of civil rights and fair housing legislation.

These trends should be alarming to everyone. "The hole in the donut" — which once referred to the urban cores of most United States cities — now includes once-thriving suburbs. As the outer fringe of development (containing primarily the wealthiest people) continues to push farther away from a city's center, even the once-outer suburbs are threatened. As sprawl expert David Rusk puts it: "Today's winners are tomorrow's losers."

Commission Hears about Smart Growth

By Doris Sherrick

At the December 2 meeting of the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission, Sierran Melissa Blakley of the THB Group presented Sierra Club calendars to Commissioners and made a statement on behalf of the Club about what we'd like to see in a future state transportation program.

Following her statement, MoDOT Director Joe Mickes reported that "there will be a lot more coming about smart growth." He then updated the Commission on the Smart Growth

Task Force that was formed by MoDOT at our request earlier this year.

This task force is made up of MoDOT employees from all divisions and all parts of the state. Their report to the Commission is due in February. Director Mickes said he believes that smart growth concepts will fit in with MoDOT policies. He also reported that several other state agencies, including the departments of Economic Development, Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Conservation, are also taking a look at smart growth.

Page Avenue: The War Has Just Begun

by Claralyn Price-Bollinger

Amere 74,337 votes separated us from victory. Proposition 1 in St. Louis County passed on November 3, giving MoDOT the go ahead for construction of a \$550 million, ten-lane Page Avenue Freeway through Creve Coeur Lake Memorial Park. Taxpayers Against Page Freeway (our "Vote NO on Prop 1" committee) was outspent more than eight to one by "Citizens for a Livable St. Louis County," a campaign committee funded by highway builders, St. Charles County realtors, and big businesses. We gathered over \$100,000 from citizens sending in their small contributions, compared to the more than \$800,000 poured out by the concrete cartel and home builders.

And yet, we consider this a victory. Environmentalists, church members, and your average citizens banded together to raise the level of discussion in the St. Louis metropolitan region about urban sprawl and Smart Growth. Page Avenue would indeed destroy the tranquillity of the most visited park in

St. Louis County. And the cars which would use an extended Page Avenue would add more pollution to the region's air, already deemed seriously polluted. And this road would bring the total number of lanes crossing the Missouri River to 30, yet traffic congestion and snarls will remain as bad or worsen.

However, 126,748 St. Louis County citizens cast their votes to stop this project and their votes are not wasted! People are realizing that we cannot build our way out of congestion; that each new thoroughfare to the fringes opens up more land to development and encourages disinvestment in existing neighborhoods and communities; that the impact of a ten-lane road through a phenomenal park cannot be "mitigated," no matter how many corn fields MoDOT buys to make the park bigger.

This battle may be over for now, but the war has just begun!

To join Taxpayers Against Page Freeway, please contact Claralyn at (314) 909-0890 or claralyn.price-bollinger@sierraclub.org

Public Comment Period on Draft Strategy for CAFOs

The National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture has announced that the USDA and the EPA are taking public comments on a "Draft Unified National Strategy for Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)." This Draft Strategy is the overall blueprint for dealing with surface water pollution from all CAFOs, including large-scale, confined animal factory farms with more than 1,000 animal units. To find out more about the Draft Strategy and to submit comments on it, you can do the following.

1. Contact the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture for the Fact Sheets packet on Factory Farms and the Draft Strategy.

Address: P. O. Box 396

Pine Bush, NY 12566

Phone: 914/744-8448

Fax: 914/744-8477

Campaign@magiccarpet.com

2. Submit individual comments on the Draft Strategy. The Draft Strategy is available on the web at <www.epa.gov/cleanwater/afo/> and in the Federal Register, Vol. 63, pp. 50192-50209 (Sept. 21, 1998). Mail comments by January 19, 1999 to:

Denise C. Coleman

Program Analyst

Natural Resources Conservation Service

ATTN: CAFO

Box 2890

Washington, DC 20013-2890

Endangered Bat Halts Timber Sales

by Caroline Pufalt

The Mark Twain National Forest recently took the unusual step of delaying several timber sales in order to wait for the results of consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the best way to protect the endangered Indiana Bat. The MTNF did not take this action on its own. Over the past few years appeals and law suits regarding management of the MTNF have pointed out the inadequate consideration given to the Indiana Bat. The success of many of these actions compelled the two agencies to open formal consultation.

The Endangered Species Act (section 7) requires consultation for federal actions. Consultation results in a recovery and protection plan. That plan needs to be followed when agencies take an action, such as a timber sale, that may impact the species. Consultation may be resumed again when conditions warrant. In this case legal action was the condition. The Sierra Club and a regional environmental group called Heartwood have filed appeals of several timber sales with concern over the Indiana Bat being part of the basis for appeal. Heartwood has also filed suit when some of those appeals were not

reversed. Sierran Jim Bensman has been instrumental in the appeals and law suits.

The Indiana Bat is native to the midwest with its highest concentrations in Indiana, Kentucky, and Missouri. It was listed as endangered in 1967 but unfortunately is not on the road to recovery. In fact, its numbers have plummeted in recent years. The Indiana Bat hibernates in caves (called hibernacula) in the winter. It roosts in trees and females are drawn toward trees with suitable bark under which to have their young. In the summer many, but not all, bats fly north of the Missouri river to forage. Recent studies have raised new issues regarding the needs of the Indiana Bat. New research shows that not all bats in Missouri summer north of the river. Also, research indicates that bats may forage farther from the hibernacula than once thought. New findings also raise questions about the importance of suitable older trees for roosting.

Many of these issues are relevant to forest management. Forests in Kentucky and Illinois have also been required to consult with USFWS regarding protection of the bat. It is hoped that a regional plan will develop that will truly meet the bat's needs. We will keep readers informed of the progress of this effort.

Clip art of bat here

“Representative” Alternatives Fail to Represent Wildlife, Recreation

by Chad Smith

Since 1994, the Army Corps of Engineers has been working laboriously to find a new way to manage its six big dams on the Missouri River. In August 1998, the agency released 64 proposed ways to do so, focusing on eight alternative management options meant to represent the range of possibilities.

The Corps still did not get it right.

The eight options serving as the focus of the Corps’ Preliminary Revised Draft

Environmental Impact Statement (PRDEIS), still available for public review, do not consider changes in dam operations that significantly interfere with commercial navigation and ignore opportunities to restore habitat and acquire land from willing sellers.

As long as the Corps continues to consider a nine-month navigation season on the Missouri as a “sacred cow,” no gains will be made for endangered species like the pallid sturgeon, the interior least tern, and the piping plover. Further, dam operations that favor this full navigation season ensure that the river is too fast and deep for those living below Sioux City to enjoy. Today, you canoe at your own risk on the lower Missouri River.

Although recreation on the entire river produces fifteen times as many economic benefits as navigation, the Corps continues to be reluctant to change dam operations and upset

barge shippers. The Corps’ own analysis shows that ending navigation during the summer aids every user of the river but one — barge shippers. Even so, the Corps failed to highlight a split navigation season as one of the eight “representative” alternatives.

Currently, the Corps operates its six big dams (Ft. Peck, Garrison, Oahe, Big Bend, Ft. Randall, and Gavins Point) as a single system under the Master Water Control Manual, a system driven by the desire to provide dependable flows for barge traffic.

Drought in the 80’s and flooding in the early 90’s convinced the Corps to revisit the Master Manual and come up with a new way of managing the river that supposedly reflects changing needs in the basin.

The effort failed in 1994, and the Corps and the states, through the Missouri River Basin Association, have been trying to figure out what to do ever since.

Among the issues being considered by the Corps in the new PRDEIS are whether to increase the size of the permanent pool (the lowest amount of water held in the reservoirs), and whether to reduce dam releases for

barge traffic earlier during droughts. The Corps also considered whether to change dam operations to aid river wildlife, and whether the Missouri’s dams should be operated to support navigation on the Mississippi River.

The Corps should be releasing more water in the spring to trigger wildlife reproduction and less water in

As long as the Corps continues to consider a nine-month navigation season on the Missouri as a “sacred cow,” no gains will be made for endangered species like the pallid sturgeon, the interior least tern, and the piping plover

the summer to expose sandbars for nesting birds. This pattern of high spring flows and low summer flows would somewhat mimic the river's natural hydrograph. Recreation on the lower river would get a boost, as shallower river depths, sandbars, and backwaters would provide ample places to enjoy the Missouri. More water held in the reservoirs at this time would also enhance upstream recreation.

Of the eight "representative" alternatives, three consider at least the spring rise. Although they don't provide river levels low enough in the summer to provide key benefits for wildlife and recreation, they do show improvements in habitat for river wildlife.

Also, these alternatives would be more beneficial for farmers working the land in the Missouri's floodplain as opposed to the current plan. The Corps' own data shows less damage occurring to floodplain farmers under the fish and wildlife alternatives than under current operations.

In January, the Corps will continue its string of public workshops on the PRDEIS by sharing information and seeking input in Missouri. The Corps will be holding workshops in:

St. Joseph, MO
January 12, 1999
Frontier Casino
777 Winners Circle
(800)888-2946

Jefferson City, MO
January 13, 1999
Missouri DNR East Complex
1738 Elm Street
(573)368-2101

Please attend one or both of these workshops and express your opinions on behalf of the Missouri River's wildlife and recreational benefits. Further, write or call Steve Mahfood, your representative on the MRBA. Tell him to speak up on behalf of wildlife, recreation, and communities.

Here's how to reach Steve:

Steve Mahfood, Director
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
(p) (573)751-4422
(f) (573)751-7627

For further information on the PRDEIS and our Missouri River Campaign, here's how to get in touch with me:

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csmith@amrivers.org

Legacy

What will yours be? You joined the Sierra Club because you are concerned about the well-being of the Earth. Continue your involvement by remembering the Sierra Club in your will. For more information and confidential assistance contact John Calaway, Sierra Club Planned Giving Program, 85 Second St., 2nd floor, San Francisco, CA 94109, (415) 923-5538, or locally, contact Roger Hershey (816) 795-7533



Food System Conference and Farmers Exhibition

March 6, 1999 in Kansas City!

Reclaiming our Food System from the Corporate Giants

Adding An Ethical Dimension To Eating

The Southern Plains Regional Conservation Committee of the Sierra Club is sponsoring a conference about the impacts of the industrial food system on urban citizens and rural communities and what we can do about it. The workshop will run 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, March 6, 1999 in Kansas City and focus on

- antibiotic resistance, food safety, veggie libel laws
- farm animal welfare
- direct and indirect impacts of industrial agriculture on the health and environment of urban communities
- preserving rural communities and stewardship of the land
- how to expand distribution of organic produce and humanely produced meats
- equipping activists with reliable information so they can help focus consumer purchasing power to change the existing system.

The conference is designed for activists from Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. However, it is also open to Sierrans from other states, though space may be limited. We hope this conference will serve as a prototype for other Sierra Club RCC's.

Confirmed speakers so far are

- Mary Hendrickson, Ph.D., rural sociologist

- Gail Eisnitz, Chief Investigator of the Humane Farming Association and author of *Slaughterhouse*
- Diane Halverson, producer of the *Pig Picture* and *And On This Farm* videos
- Kamyar Enshayan, University of Northern Iowa, coordinator of the UNI Local Food Project, on how purchase of locally produced food adds value to the community
- Terry Shistar, Ph.D. Science Consultant to Beyond Pesticides/NCAMP
- Regional Directors of the US Humane Society on getting free range products into supermarkets
- a panel of local farmers.

The conference is co-sponsored by the Kansas City Food Circle Project which promotes direct marketing of organic produce and natural meats by local farmers.

Coinciding with the workshop, and open to the general public, will be an exhibition by local farmers, vendors of home appliances and supplies for processing and preserving food, and providers of information on sustainable agriculture and organic gardening. The place of both events is the Holiday Inn of Overland Park, Kansas, west of Kansas City, Missouri. Registration cost will be \$20.00 and will include lunch.

For registration materials call Kansas Chapter Chair Craig Volland at (913)334-0556 or e-mail him at hartwood@gvi.net.

Navigation on the Mississippi: Past, Present, and Future?

by Caroline Pufalt

The Army Corps of Engineers is a “can do” organization. It has attempted to dam and control powerful river complexes. It is often successful; at least for a while. The Corps has two major questions to ask itself when contemplating a water project: Is the project physically feasible and workable? Can the project be “sold”

economically, politically, and environmentally? The Corps is asking itself the second question now regarding its current project to significantly increase navigation on the upper Mississippi. The upper Mississippi ends near Cairo, IL. Sierrans are concerned about

this planned increase for two major reasons; it will have additional adverse environmental impacts on the river and the species that depend on it, and it represents a considerable expenditure of tax dollars which could be better used elsewhere. Furthermore, those tax dollars represent a subsidy to the barge and mega agricultural industries.

The Corps has been in the process of preparing a major study on increased Mississippi navigation. That study is expected to call for increased navigation and the physical changes needed to accommodate it. The Corps had planned public meetings in 1998 and a final report at the end of 1999. But the process has hit a snag; the Corps has been especially hard pressed to justify the project from an economic perspective. Since the Corps has never

been an agency to consider what environmentalists would regard as the full costs of its projects, one can imagine that the economics of this project must be very dismal if even the Corps can’t find a way to present it in a positive light. Despite this delay there is continued pressure on the Corps and points of political influence to go forward with the study. At this writing we are not sure when the

formal phase of public input will begin. Look to future issues of the Ozark Sierran and your group newsletter for public input opportunities.

In preparation for what will inevitably be a push for more navigation on the river it is useful to review

the history of navigation on our country’s great river. Navigation on the Mississippi conjures up visions of present day lines of barges being pushed down the river, or for those with an eye to history, the steamboats of Twain’s writings. But navigation began much earlier if one considers the corridor the river provided connecting the numerous Native American settlements along its shores. Many of those settlements needed to be mobile or seasonal because the river, in its natural state, is a large floodplain river. It stays within its banks most of the year but includes a complex of channels, islands, backwater sloughs, ponds and wetlands; all of which becomes a dynamic, changing system during high water. Eventually the river may shift its course— always looking for the

Clip art of steam boat!!!

steepest route south.

Europeans looked for a way to tame the river to meet the needs of their navigation vessels. As early as 1830 the Corps was given authority to maintain a navigation channel by removing snags and other obstructions. Later the Corps began dredging and channeling. The Corps had entered the era of engineering for navigation. At first channel depths were less than six feet. By the 1930's the Corps was trying to maintain a nine foot channel. By the 1950's it entered the age of locks and dams. The dams create large reservoirs behind them. These are often referred to as "pools," but to the layperson their size often inspires the word "lake."

Navigation technology, of course, changed as well. By the 1960's tows were pushing barges and those barges were lined and pushed in longer and longer fleets. In 1965 the Water Resources Act created a series of basin commissions. Their job was to help coordinate basin planning and make suggestions for river management. Pressure developed for a 12 foot depth and longer locks. In response to this pressure, the Corps planned to greatly enlarge Lock and Dam 26 at Alton, IL. That proposal led to a long struggle in which the Sierra Club played a significant role. The Corps initially argued for two new locks. It stated that the lock and dam needed to be replaced because the existing structure was unsafe. This was suspect for two reasons; the existing structure seemed sound, and its proposed replacement was so much larger that increased navigation capacity appeared to be the underlying motivation. The Corps later shifted its argument and said that the larger lock and dam were needed because the existing structure was a bottleneck in the system. But every system has a bottleneck; i.e., the point of least efficiency. Furthermore, the Corps would not admit to the plans for ancillary changes needed to increase navigation system wide.

In 1974 the Sierra Club, the

Izaak Walton League, and several railroads sued the Corps to stop Lock and Dam 26. The grounds were the inadequacy of the Environmental Impact Statement and the fact that the Corps did not seek permission from Congress for such a major project. The judge agreed and the project was halted. But in 1978 the Corps prepared a system wide EIS and Congress authorized Lock and Dam 26. One enlarged lock and dam was constructed. A small fuel tax on navigation was enacted and a study was initiated for a second lock.

In 1988 after completion and review of an Environmental Impact Statement the Corps was ready to build a second lock and dam at 26. The Sierra Club and others considered another suit but decided to accept good faith negotiation on mitigation of environmental damage. The Corps agreed to adopt several measures suggested by the Fish and Wildlife Service to minimize damage and it agreed to a Plan of Study (POS) for which, in cooperation with other agencies, it would develop a plan to minimize damage from the second lock. Although that plan was compiled in 1991 the Corps has not completed its obligation to implement it. Key players in the negotiations, such as Colonel J. Corbin, are no longer with the Corp. Furthermore, as recently as 1992 the Corps continued to pursue increased navigation capacity along the upper Mississippi.

That is the process we are in now. Many Sierrans were involved in the long struggle over Lock and Dam 26. We must carry on that effort with the navigation expansion efforts today. In fact, part of our job is to force the Corps to deal seriously with the adverse effects of current navigation as well as that projected by expansion. In future articles we will look more closely at the environmental and economic issues surrounding navigation on the upper Mississippi.

Many thanks to Sierran Jonathan Ela for information used in this article

Snake Hike

by Brian Alworth

While most hikers probably consider snakes as a sort of “occupational hazard” to be avoided where possible— a recent outing by the Trail of Tears Sierrans of Southeast Missouri actually set out in search of the vertically challenged creatures.

Each spring and fall multitudes of snakes and other reptiles and amphibians in the Pine Hills region of the Shawnee National Forest in

Illinois migrate between their cold season hideout in the area's rocky bluffs to their warm season digs in the nearby wetlands. The migration crosses a popular gravel road in the area which is closed to motorized vehicles and

becomes a popular (if somewhat gingerly hiked) nature trail.

In early October the Trail of Tears Group crossed the Mississippi River into Illinois and took the snake hike accompanied by Scott Ballard,

a naturalist with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The warm sunny afternoon turned out to be ideal for “snaking” and with Scott's help (literally diving into the woods to tackle a number of the creatures) the dozen or so hikers got quite a treat. Among the snakes bagged that day (actually we practiced “catch and release”)

were Western Cottonmouths, Yellowbelly Water Snakes, and a state threatened Mississippi Green Water Snake. Scott also brought with him a Gila Monster that had been confiscated from a poacher. In fact Scott mentioned that

the Pine Hills area that we had hiked was also popular with poachers that illegally take snakes, salamanders, and other creatures to sell in larger cities like Chicago. All in all it was a very interesting afternoon!

Insert
snake
here

OZARK CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

*Be sure to check
your GROUP
newsletter
for more or current
outings!*

Eastern Missouri

Jan. 1 (Fri) Meramec State Park annual day hike. Please join me. Paul Stupperich, (314)429-4352.

Jan. 2 (Sat) New members Winter get acquainted hike at Missouri Botanical Garden, 4344 Shaw. Button up your overcoat for this afternoon hike for new and old members. See the garden in winter as we talk and walk on the paved paths to see winter displays and exhibits. Garden membership card or entrance fee required for admission. Gather for optional hot chocolate and/or snack following walk. Limit 20. Marsha Armentrout, (314)892-4279.

Jan. 9 (Sat) Highway Cleanup. After the Quadrantid meteor shower we'll pick up spent meteors as well as any other trash we find. Diane DuBois, (314)721-0594.

Jan. 9-10 (Sat-Sun) Glade restoration. Learn about

history while helping to restore an original landscape of unique ecological value at Washington State Park. Come one day or both. Penny Holtzmann, (314)487-2738.

Jan. 9-10 (Sat-Sun) Fourth annual winter backpack trip.

Where we go will depend on weather. This trip is for experienced cold weather campers only. Bob Gestel, (314)296-8975.

Jan. 16-17 (Sat-Sun) Trail maintenance on the Blair Creek section of the Ozark Trail. We have made good progress on the trail work so far and hope to return to working on the Himont connector loop by early spring. Bob Gestel, (314)296-8975, or Paul Stupperich, (314)429-4352.

Jan. 17 (Sun) Explore the Amidon Conservation Area in the St. Francis Mtns. with pink granite glades and shut-ins. Steve Finch, (314)644-2553.

Jan. 23 (Sat) Afternoon stroll through Tower Grove Park with historical commentary. Early dinner at Pho-Grand. Sue King, (314)776-9276.

Jan. 23 (Sat) Tour of Missouri Mine State Historic Site with Art Hebrank. Mineralogy and history of mining in Missouri. One hour from St. Louis. Three dollars per person. Some outside activity. Space limited. George Behrens, (314)821-0247 (after 6 p.m.).

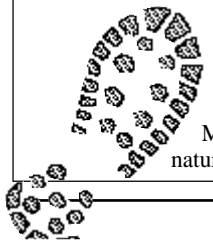
Jan. 24 (Sun) Morning hike near Pere Marquette State Park to look for bald eagles. Brunch afterwards at the lodge. Diane Favier, (314)894-5549.

Jan. 30 (Sat) Water quality monitoring at Fox Creek; chemical testing and macro invertebrate sampling. Trainees needed in this project facilitated by Mo. Dept. of Natural Resources and Mo. Dept. of Conservation. Leslie Lihou, (314)726-2140, and Jim Rhodes, (314)821-7758.

Jan. 31 (Sun) This hike will take us into the heart of Rock Pile Mtn. Wilderness. We will visit the shut-ins as part of our 8 mile hike. Paul Stupperich, (314)429-4352.

Feb. 6 (Sat) Canoe the Meramec from Onondaga to Blue Springs. Optional pot luck dinner and stay overnight in heated cabin for those interested. Canoeing optional on Sunday from Sappington Bridge to Meramec State Park. Colin Maag, (314)772-7946.

Feb. 13 (Sat) Highway Cleanup. Time to tidy up after those wild Lincoln's Birthday revelers. Diane DuBois, (314)721-0594.



Missouri's natural

Outings Continued

Feb. 13 (Sat) Grant's Trail afternoon hike. Bundle up and chase the winter blues away as we hike three or four miles on this paved trail. Fresh air guaranteed by Mother Nature! Marsha Armentrout, (314)892-4279.

Feb. 13-14 (Sat-Sun) Overnight backpack trip to an area rarely visited by the Sierra Club. For experienced backpackers. Rich Krebs, (314)939-4436, or Bob Gestel, (314)296-8975.

Feb. 13-14 (Sat-Sun) Glade restoration at Meramec State Park. We'll be recycling nutrients of the Eastern red cedar to benefit the native grasses and wildflowers. Bring your sweetie and celebrate Valentine's Day with us. Come one day or both. Penny Holtzmann, (314)487-2738.

Feb. 20-21 (Sat-Sun) Trail maintenance on the Blair Creek section of The Ozark Trail. We will camp somewhere along beautiful Blair Creek and have common commissary on Saturday night. Bob Gestel, (314)296-8975, or Paul Stupperich, (314)429-4352.

Feb. 20-21 (Sat-Sun) Backpack Big Piney Trail; 17 miles of remote, scenic and rugged hiking. Not for beginners. Limit of five. Bill Neubert, (314)256-3273.

Feb. 21 (Sun) Nearby Labarque Hills Nature Conservancy Preserve has interesting sandstone geology and flora. This is an area without trails and we will navigate by map

and compass. Wayne Miller, (314)569-0094.

Feb. 27-28 (Sat-Sun) Backpack in the St. Francis Mtns. Rugged, some cross country, camp on edge of glade. 12-15 miles. George Behrens, (314)821-0247 (after 6 p.m.).

Feb. 28 (Sun) Come out of the cold and enjoy spring in full bloom at the Missouri Botanical Garden with an insiders' tour to experience the rich fragrance and blooms of the temperate house, the tropical warmth and lushness of the Climatron, and camellias at peak bloom in the Linnean House. Brunch possible afterward. Susan Farrington, (314)644-3048.

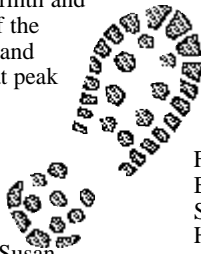
Thomas Hart Benton Group

Jan. 8 (Fri) Gastronomic outing. Saigon 39 on 39th Street near State Line for Vietnamese food. Gale Burrus, (816)763-5120.

Jan. 9-10 (Sat-Sun) Perry Lake Winter Campout. Our Annual Winter Camping experience at Perry Lake. Falling temperatures will not deter us but icy roads will. Scott Hooper, (913)722-3882.

Jan. 17 (Sun) Steamboat Arabia. Anne McDonald, (913)384-6645.

Jan. 24 (Sun) Weston Bend State Park afternoon hike. Lee Ann Googe, (816)453-8558.



Feb. 6-7 (Sat-Sun) Backpack outing at Osceola Scout reservation trail. Scott Hooper, (913)722-3882.

Feb. 13 (Sat) Daytrip to Lied Rain forest in Omaha. Visit the warm and humid rain forest in the middle of the winter at the Henry Doorly Zoo. Claus, (816)561-7863.

Feb. 13 (Sat) Perry Lake trail maintenance. Steve Hassler, (913) 599-6028.

Feb. 19 (Fri) Gastronomic outing. Sarah's at 59th Street and Holmes for an eclectic offering of food. Gale Burrus, (816)763-5120.

Feb. 27 (Sat) Dayhike Blue River Glades trail (zoo south to Hickman Mills) Steve Hassler, (913)599-6028.

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