

OZARK SIERRAN

One Earth

One Chance

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Corps' Projects Questioned

by Alan Journet
Conservation Chair, Trail of Tears Group

It was recently reported in the national news that some District Offices of the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) are not above trying to force their analysts to distort data to promote projects that "friends" of the COE would like to see undertaken. In this case, the friends were barge companies. See Ozark Sierran V 32, N 3 and 4.

The Memphis District of the COE is currently perpetrating on the Missouri environment and the US taxpayers two equally bogus projects: one involving the closing of a gap in the Mississippi levee at New Madrid; the other involving channelizing the Saint Francis River between Missouri and Arkansas. Both projects are being pushed by Missouri's Representative Emerson (R-8th District) and seem at best primarily designed to benefit a small number of landowners.

Saint John's Bayou/New Madrid Floodway Project

This project would close the last remaining engineered gap in the existing river levee. By so doing, it would reduce the duration and frequency of Mississippi River backwater flooding for about 36,000 acres of seasonal wetlands. It has been frequently argued, as it was in the Environmental Impact Study (EIS), that closing this levee would benefit the communities of East Prairie and Pinhook (Mississippi County) by reducing the seasonal flooding that they suffer— thus allowing economic development in the area.

Generally such projects require a significant "local" contribution from area residents and businesses before they can be undertaken. In this project, however, this requirement was circumvented when the area was declared an Economic Enterprise Zone. Following this declaration, special dispensation was obtained to use these Federal (taxpayer) dollars to tip the required "local" contribution over the minimum percentage.

This project has been universally criticized by all state and federal environmental and conservation agencies and organizations; the EPA rated it as low as their scale allows. A slightly modified version of an analysis of the project by Dan Straubel (Audubon Society), Phil Dodson and Ann Drake (Ozark Society), and this author follows:

The New Madrid Floodway occupies several thousand acres of southeast Missouri from near Cairo, Illinois to just upstream from New Madrid, Missouri. The area is enclosed by a Mississippi River levee on the east and by another levee on the west. The gap in the frontline levee at the New Madrid end of the floodway has several intended effects:

- n It allows the enclosed area to flood and drain more or less naturally as rainwater flows southeast from the Missouri lowlands;
- n During regular Mississippi River flooding, it relieves communities downstream by allowing water to flow in through the gap into the floodway;

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Highway "Needs" Demand Fresh Approaches

by Ron McLinden
Ozark Chapter Transportation Chair

The Missouri Department of Transportation reported to its governing commission in July that Missouri's highway preservation needs are \$19.1 to \$24.7 billion, and that highway expansion needs are another \$16.7 to 20.4 billion. Add urban and rural transit, bike and pedestrian, inter-city passenger, airport, waterway, and rail freight needs and the total package is well over \$50 billion.

That should get the attention of every Missouri citizen. Missouri doesn't have that kind of money lying around, and we're not likely to raise that much through traditional "user fees" alone. Thus, when the General Assembly considers funding next year, as is widely expected, they'll also have to consider raising the sales tax or some other "general revenue" source. That will put transportation in direct competition with education, social services, health care, and everything else state government does.

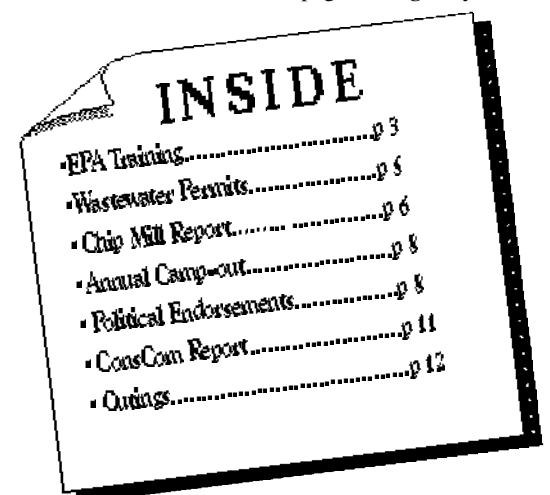
Earlier this year legislators authorized \$2.25 billion in bonds to accelerate highway projects, but provided no funds to repay the borrowed money. That, plus the fact that a six-cent gas tax enacted in 1992 will expire in 2007, adds a degree of urgency.

MoDOT's new long-range transportation plan, which was to be ready for public review

about mid-August, should help legislators decide how much money to raise. It goes without saying that hard choices will have to be made. One of those choices has to be consideration of a lot of options previously considered "off-limits." Here are some of them:

- n Shrink the system. Missouri has over 32,000 miles of state highways, sixth largest of all state systems. Thousands of those miles carry fewer than 100 vehicles a day – perhaps fewer than the street in front of your own house. Turn some little-used roads back to the counties.
- n Tax highway-dependent businesses. A sales tax

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surcharge on gas stations, restaurants, motels and billboards along interstate highways would produce new revenue from highway users — many of whom would be out-of-state — and recapture part of the value the state creates whenever it builds a highway.

n Consider tolls. Tolls are the fairest way to finance highways. "Freeways" carry the lion's share of inter-city traffic, but their users don't pay the full cost of building and maintaining them.

n Raise user fees. Missouri gas taxes and vehicle registration fees are among the lowest in the nation. Given the backlog of needs these taxes and fees should be well above the national average.

n Make trucks pay their way. An 80,000 pound truck might pay 6-8 times as much per mile in fuel taxes as an automobile, but it causes 100 times as much damage. A truck exceeding the speed limit does even more damage. Some states use a "weight-distance" tax to assure that heavy trucks pay their full share. The tax would be passed along to consumers of

products being transported — as it should be.

n Use "congestion pricing." A form of toll paid only during peak travel periods, congestion pricing would encourage some motorists to choose a different route or time of day for their trips, thereby easing congestion. Congestion indicates an imbalance between supply of road space and demand for that space.

Congestion pricing harnesses market forces to bring supply and demand into balance.

n HOV highways. High-occupancy vehicle lanes in urban areas encourage carpools and transit by allowing such vehicles to use a reserved lane, but building such lanes and related ramps is costly. Charging a toll on single-occupant



vehicles, while making a cash payment to drivers of multi-occupant vehicles, could reduce congestion at much lower cost.

n Improve access management. MoDOT widens urban segments of state routes, then local authorities OK new developments that clog the road with more traffic. MoDOT should exercise better control over driveways and other

access points along its roads.

n Shift local travel to local roads. Freeway access encourages motorists to make longer trips than they would otherwise. Building high-priced freeway capacity so people can save a minute or two on short local trips makes no sense. Improve local roads and reduce the number of freeway entrances and exits to reduce local trips on interstate highways.

n Local funding for local capacity. Where a state route has more lanes through a city or town than it does out in the country, the local jurisdiction should pay part of the cost of those lanes. This would encourage locals to guide their own development so as not to overload state routes.

n Promote better local planning. MoDOT should provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions to help them do a better job of land use planning and thereby reduce the need for local travel.

n Shift the emphasis from "mobility" to "access." When we think about transportation as moving people and goods we tend to want more roads. But when we consider the real purpose of transportation — providing access for people to goods and services and other people — then we shape our cities and towns to put things closer to where they are needed. And we get better places to live in the bargain.

Not all of these approaches will work everywhere. And that's the point. Rather than rely on yesterday's silver-bullet solution — add lanes or build a new highway — we citizens should demand non-traditional and "combination" approaches that fit specific needs, that employ market mechanisms, and that have the potential to reduce other problems — like air pollution, over-dependence on foreign oil, and vehicle deaths and injuries — in the process of meeting our transportation (access) needs. —

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OZARK SIERRAN

The published deadline is the real, honest-to-goodness, drop-dead deadline — not a couple of days or a week

later! Submissions received after the deadline are subject to the possibility they won't appear in the issue: you will feel bad and we will feel bad. Call us nasty, but we are determined this newsletter will come out on time!

The *OZARK SIERRAN* is produced on a Macintosh computer, so we strongly prefer to receive material electronically (E-mail), or on a Mac or PC disk (3.5"), WITH A HARD COPY OF THE TEXT. Typed articles are also OK (must be received a few days before the deadline). All submissions must include name, address, and phone number of the author. If you want your submission returned (including your disk), please include a SASE.

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

Dates You Need to Know

9/16	Chapter ConsCom meeting: Heosho, Missouri contact Caroline Pufalt (314) 878-3165
9/17	Chapter ExCom meeting: Heosho, Missouri contact Keet Kopecky (816) 966-9544
10/2	November/December Ozark Sierran Deadline contact Bob Sherrick (816) 779-6708
10/13-15	Ozark Chapter Camp-Out Lake of the Ozarks State Park contact Keet Kopecky (816) 966-9544

EPA Training on Industrial Title V Permits

by Wallace McMullen
Ozark Chapter ExCom

The Clean Air Act's Title V was passed by Congress in 1990 with the intent of bringing all the various types of air emission regulations together in one permit for industrial operations, with provisions for citizen participation and oversight of the process. Like some other provisions of environmental protection laws, the actual implementation of Title V is occurring years after the passage of the legislation.

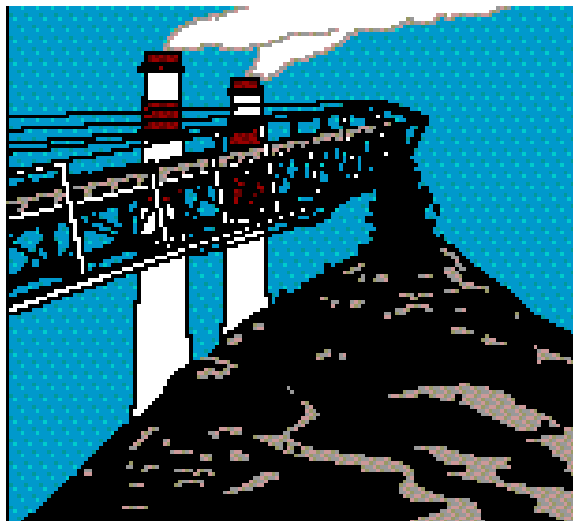
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which administers the Clean Air Act, sponsored a Title V training workshop for citizen participation on June 16 and 17 in St. Louis. The Sierra Club Ozark chapter was very well represented with 10 members attending. (Ozark Chapter members Wallace McMullen and Roy Hengerson initiated the process that brought this workshop to St. Louis). Other attendees came from Illinois, Colorado, Utah, and California.

The workshop explained how citizens can review and comment on Title V operating permits prior to their finalization. At least theoretically, citizen activists would be able to improve air quality by participating in this process.

Individual operating permits are issued by state and local agencies with EPA oversight. The permits include emission limits, monitoring requirements, and reporting requirements with which the permitted facilities are to comply. Citizens can review and comment on draft permits during the public comment period. They can also monitor whether an industrial emissions source is complying with a permit, challenge permits in court, and bring enforcement actions against facilities that don't comply with their

permits. The process is highly structured with rules that must be followed to make such challenges. Some of the parameters are still being litigated.

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is now issuing Title V permits pursuant to EPA guidelines. They run from 25 to 65 pages in length. Fortunately for those of us who have worked on reviewing them, some of each document is boilerplate standard text.



To date, we've tried to review permits we feel are most critical to the environment. These include the permits covering the emissions from large sources of air pollution, such as power plants, (which typically emit hundreds of tons of NO_x, SO_x, carbon monoxide, and fine particulate pollution into the atmosphere each year), and the permits issued to the Doe Run lead mining operations.

The training session got off to a confused beginning, because Candice Caraway from the national EPA office was scheduled to do the

introduction and overview, and her flight was delayed by weather. So we did not get the overview and context for the structure of the Title V program until the second day. However, her presentation was excellent once we got to hear it.

Kari Powell, an activist lawyer on the staff of the New York Public Interest Group, gave us some insightful and very useful tips in her presentation during the workshop. Other presenters included Randy Raymond, Chief of the Permitting Section in the DNR Air Pollution Control Program, and the staff in the EPA Region 7 office who review Missouri's Title V permits. The EPA staff also gave the attendees two handbooks, a reference binder, and copies of a CD with many of the applicable regulations.

Those of us who attended left with mixed feelings. We were exposed to a great deal of information in the workshop, which was good. We also got an understanding of how much goes into doing a thorough review of a Title V permit, which was a bit intimidating. Several of us commented afterward that we would have liked more opportunity to network with the other activists who were at this workshop, and we didn't have much opportunity to do so during the short breaks.

Our Chapter has submitted comments on some of the recently issued permits that we are most concerned about, such as those for Doe Run lead mining facilities, and a few power plants, but we haven't had the wherewithal to really dig into double-checking DNR's work on applicable requirements, and its interpretation of some of the voluminous regulations. Now that the Ozark Chapter has more widespread knowledge about the Clean Air Act Title V, and more members have begun reviewing permits, we have the potential to take on a more vigorous role in the Title V permitting process within Missouri. —

Biotech — A Double Edged Sword?

by Tom Moran
Osage Group Chatr

Bioengineered or genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) seem to present a double-edged sword to environmentalists. On one hand, they (are claimed to) reduce pesticide usage, reduce land use (through more product per organism), provide "better quality" foods, etc. On the other hand, there are seemingly valid concerns over pesticide use, pesticide production, "horizontal" gene transfer, corporate policy and decision making, and liability and overall safety issues.

The debate on the validity of all these concerns should remain firmly fixed on scientific grounds in order to facilitate the decision making process, for only science (and ethics) has the terminology and resources to deal effectively and intelligently with this complex issue. For either side to mount an offensive using rumors or half-truths will be counterproductive. I have seen outright fallacies on both sides of this contentious issue.

Living in Columbia, home of University of Missouri (and being trained in plant molecular

biology myself) gives me another vantage-point, in that this is a very research-oriented community. While scientists are supposed to remain open-minded, even on subjects near and dear to their hearts (and pocketbooks), this, in reality, does not always occur. Too close to the issue, even respectable scientists can lose sight of the broader issues being discussed, and can become mired in "truths" handed down from potentially profit making industries who occasionally fund their research programs. Even worse, they sometimes feel they are the experts, and cannot be wrong in their thinking, a very dangerous position indeed!

The environmental movement may eventually take a black eye in its generic opposition to GMOs, these modern-day wonders, but to err on the side of caution should be understandable. No other technology since the advent of nuclear weapons has the potential for such destructive force if something goes wrong.

We, the Sierra Club, (and other concerned groups), being the self-appointed watchdogs of government, industry, and social justice, need to make concerns about this technology heard. There are just too many concerns over the method and desirability of the release of these organisms into the environment to ignore the potential problems. Corporate profit, we feel, should not take precedence over sound and unbiased scientific studies, not only on desirable characteristics, but on problematic issues as well. The latter have been given very cursory attention

in the scientific community, or have been mendaciously struck down as "unscientific" by the GMO industry. Please remember: it is VERY unscientific to have biased former employees appointed to federal regulatory bodies whose charge is ruling on safety issues of products arising from their former employment. This (too-common) corporate behavior tends to make opponents much more concerned about what is happening!

Recently, concerned citizens in Europe and elsewhere have pressured their governments into banning GMOs or sponsoring research on GMOs until much more comprehensive research is done. Sadly, the US government seems to be acting as a high-pressure salesperson for the GMO industry, trying to muscle other governments into blindly accepting this profitable (for whom?) technology. We need to support calls for more thorough studies of this interesting, promising technology here at home before trying to push it off onto other, less experienced developing countries. We need to keep our minds open to potential rewards and pitfalls, while observing prudent and precautionary measures in releasing such technology into the environment.

Time and again, corporate America has tried to tell consumers what is good for us(them?). Let us not believe them again, without truly scientific and comprehensive studies and safety testing of this technology. We have too much to lose. —

Wanderlust, A History of Walking

by Rebecca Solnit,
reviewed by Cheryl Hammond
Ozark Chapter Webmaster

Many Sierra Club members will appreciate this remarkable and original account of the activity of walking that helps us understand the relationship of walking to our culture. The book itself is like a meander that walks us from topic to topic, yet clearly shows us the direction we are going.

Historically, walking for esthetic and recreational reasons is a new development. Walking has often had political or religious dimensions. Long before the poet William Wordsworth helped popularize walking for walking's sake in the early nineteenth century, pilgrims walked to distant places to expiate their sins and to tangibly move toward intangible goals through movement of the body.

When the Sierra Club was founded on June 4, 1892, it joined a number of walking clubs which had been proliferating across Europe and North America. However, the Sierra Club was different because it was founded not only to bring people together to walk in the landscape, but also to defend that landscape. Sierra Club members can also be proud of the fact that the Sierra Club always made women welcome at a time when walking clubs excluded women altogether and women in major cities could hardly walk anywhere unchaperoned.

Women and Walking

The subject of women walking is particularly explored in Solnit's history and the author includes a chapter called "Walking After Midnight: Women, Sex, and Public Space." The twentieth century writer and poet Sylvia Plath wrote at the age of nineteen: "Being born a woman is an awful tragedy... Yes, my consuming desire to mingle with road crews, sailors and soldiers, barroom regulars – to be part of a scene, anonymous, listening, recording – all is spoiled by

the fact that I am a girl....I want to be able to ... walk freely at night." High heels, fragile shoes, very full or narrow skirts, were all part of the life that effectively handicapped Sylvia and other



women. However, more than social mores kept women off of streets and roads. To skip back in time a little to 1870 England, any woman found walking about in the wrong time or place could be arrested under suspicion of prostitution. She could be sentenced to months in jail if she failed to undergo a humiliating examination to prove her virginity.

Public Access

As Sierra Club members, we find our

outings confined to publicly owned lands. No club outings would be planned to walk across landowners' private woods or pasture. The situation is very different in England where very little land is publicly owned. Traditionally, public rights of way have existed across privately held lands. For centuries, only the nobility owned land, but the landless classes walked across the land. As England became more industrialized and more people chose to spend their free time walking in the countryside, Parliament passed laws allowing landowners to close off paths to the public. As more landowners began to fence off land, public revolt grew with societies formed to fight these laws and acts of civil disobedience committed to fight against these new boundaries to what were once freely accessible paths. We can draw inspiration from these defenders of the human right to public space.

Suburban sprawl

Solnit also includes a treatment of the assault on public space that has resulted from suburbia and shopping malls. Suburban shopping malls are inherently different from downtown shopping districts. Malls are private property and stepping into the mall is not a constitutionally guaranteed right. With less available public space, it becomes increasingly difficult for citizens to exercise their constitutional right to public assembly. Solnit calls for civil liberties activists to remember this right, as well as to our right to free speech and our right to bear arms.

Solnit continues an indictment of suburbs. Suburbs make walking an ineffective means of transportation. Even when it is possible to walk to a destination, suburbia and automobile transportation have introduced a different consciousness so that suburbanites drive remarkably short distances rather than walk.

Can we recover our spaces for walking? The Sierra Club must continue to support the best uses of the land and space available to us. After all, we deserve a habitable place to live and walk. —

Forest Service Roadless Area Proposal

by Caroline Pufalt
Ozark Chapter Conservation Chair, ExCom

My favorite Edward Abby quote is: What good is freedom without a blank spot on the map? Abby appreciated roadless areas for many reasons, but in this comment he was remarking on their importance to our character or perhaps even our spiritual development. In today's ever more crowded and roaded world we find roadless areas growing in importance for many reasons. In addition to providing an intriguing blank spot on the map, roadless areas provide enormous benefit to wildlife and overall ecological processes.

Recognizing this, at least to some extent, the US Forest Service has proposed a roadless area policy. The agency recently released its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on its Roadless Area Conservation Proposed Rule. That Rule, when completed will direct all National Forests, except the Tongas in Alaska, on the definition of roadless areas and on what limits

apply in roadless areas.

It's a good start but the DEIS falls short in several areas. By the time this article is published, the comment period on that document will likely be closed. If the Forest Service's preferred alternative is chosen we will have work to do during the next plan revision for the Mark Twain National Forest in order to protect Missouri's roadless areas.

The agency's preferred alternative would prohibit new road building in roadless areas. But it would permit the existing classified roads to remain and would permit logging, ORV trails and other activities that would all sorely detract from the amenities that roadless areas provide.

Potential roadless areas were identified through a roadless inventory that was completed in the late 1970's under a program called RARE II. Through this process some areas were identified as roadless that may have had very minimal road coverage. Also, Forest Service lands contain many unclassified roads that are not on

its formal road system. Some of these "roads" may be very old logging roads that were never properly closed; others may be newer, resulting from activities such as ORV use.

The MTNF has five inventoried roadless areas from the RARE II review: Anderson Mt., Spring Creek, and Swan Creek areas, plus two areas adjacent to the Irish Wilderness. There are other roadless areas we are especially concerned with but which were not officially classified through RARE II. Those areas were protected in the MTNF plan through the efforts of many Sierrans and other concerned citizens and were called Sensitive Areas. Given the limitations and the possibilities opened up under the current roadless area initiative, we will need to be very active in the next round of Forest Planning to take full advantage of those options in order to continue and enhance protection of our roadless areas. We expect the MTNF to start Forest Planning later next year. Stay tuned to learn how you can help. —

Ozark Chapter Files Petition With EPA

by Ken Midkiff
Ozark Chapter Director

Court Rules That Citizens Cannot Appeal Bad Wastewater Permits

In a bizarre set of circumstances, the Missouri Appellate Court (Western District) has ruled that not only can impacted citizens not file administrative appeals on wastewater discharge permits, but that in fact the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Director lacks the authority to issue such permits.

This all began over a year ago, when the Ozark Chapter along with an impacted rural resident filed an administrative appeal of the conditions of a State Operating Permit (see sidebar for explanation of these permits) issued to Premium Standard Farms (PSF), the giant hog-production company. The essence of the claims in the appeal was that the permit conditions failed to prevent the hog operations from fouling the creeks and rivers of the area.

The Chapter had previously been advised that we must exhaust our administrative remedies in order to have standing in a court of law. Consequently, the Chapter had filed several successful (and unsuccessful) challenges to permit conditions through the administrative appeal process. While such appeals are filed with the appropriate state commission — in the case at issue, this was the Missouri Clean Water Commission — an administrative hearing officer is appointed to conduct the proceedings.

The core of these matters is that in our review of the files of the Permits Section of the Water Pollution Control Program of the MDNR, we had ascertained that many of the State Operating Permits failed to provide even minimal protections for our state's waterways. We found that the permits allowed high levels of various contaminants, and even high levels of pathogens — disease causing organisms such as e-coli, fecal

coliform, and salmonella. Downstream residents to some of the permitted facilities joined the Chapter in several appeals — claiming that the permits allowed unacceptable levels of degradation.

But, all of this was thrown aside, when the administrative appeal was filed on the permit issued to PSF. Robert Brundage, the attorney for PSF, filed a motion in the Cole County Circuit Court, challenging the ability of “third parties” (i.e. anyone other than the permittee) to file an administrative appeal. The Court ruled in favor of PSF and threw out the Chapter's appeal.



The State of Missouri (both MDNR and the Attorney General) and co-appellant Neil Craven asked the Missouri Appellate Court to take up this matter. The Ozark Chapter was not a party to this as we determined that our interests would be adequately represented by the State and our co-appellant.

But, in a strict interpretation of Missouri statutes, the Appellate Court upheld the decision of the lower court AND went further: stating that the Clean Water Commission had no authority to allow third parties or “any impacted person” to file administrative appeals (which the Commission had allowed through the adoption of state regulations). Then the Court threw in a real zinger: only the Clean Water Commission could issue permits “rather than granting power to the Director of

MDNR.”

The Chapter, citing provisions in the federal Clean Water Act, which require the granting of administrative appeal rights to the public, filed a petition with the US Environmental Protection Agency asking that agency to establish an administrative appeals procedure since these rights were being denied by the State of Missouri. The Chapter, in a second petition, further asked that all permits issued by the State of Missouri be declared Null and Void, as these had been issued by an entity without authority to do so.

The US EPA responded to these two petitions in a letter dated July 28, 2000, that the petitions had been received and the EPA would initiate procedures to determine the validity of our petitions and to “identify, and, if necessary, correct, any barriers to full participation by the public in the NPDES permitting process.”

Attorneys are standing by. —

Ecofacts:



5 gallons of water, on average, go down the drain if you leave the tap running while you brush your teeth.

30 gallons of water, on average, go down the drain if you leave the tap running while you wash dishes.

50 gallons of water per day can be wasted by a small faucet leak.

325 gallons of water are consumed per person per day in Las Vegas, possibly more than in any other city in the world.

150 gallons of water, on average are used to wash a car with a hose.

State Operating Permits, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permits (NPDES) — how it's supposed to work —

Through a Memorandum of Agreement the US Environmental Protection Agency has delegated authority for implementing, administering, and enforcing the federal Clean Water Act to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources — Division of Environmental Quality (MDNR—DEQ). Commonly referred to as “delegation of primacy,” this means that the MDNR—DEQ stands in place of the US EPA in matters related to the Clean Water Act. The same situation exists in all but five other states.

The US EPA provides oversight of the state program — and provides money for the state to do the federal government's job. Regular reports are provided by the MDNR to the US EPA to ensure that the Clean Water Act is being appropriately administered.

One of the central components — the very heart — of the federal Clean Water Act is Section

402 — the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System or NPDES. MDNR—DEQ refers to these as State Operating Permits. Section 402 makes it illegal to discharge pollutants to waters of the state (which includes almost every creek, river, and lake) without an NPDES permit. This permit must contain conditions which are protective of water quality.

But, contrary to its title, the permits do not prohibit pollutants in wastewater discharges, rather the permits allow the discharge of contaminants within certain prescribed limits. These “effluent limitations” are contained in the permit conditions and are based on the beneficial or designated uses of the receiving waterbody.

With me so far? The designated uses can range from “full body contact, cold water fisheries (trout streams)” such as the Eleven Point River to “industrial” which is just another name for an

open sewer. So, the amount or limits on contaminants can vary widely depending upon the designated uses. (For instance, for livestock watering streams — where it is assumed that there will be no contact by human bodies — there are no limits prescribed on fecal coliform or other pathogens.)

The Chapter Office receives the public notices of all NPDES permits proposed to be issued, re-issued or modified. We review all of these to determine if the permit conditions are protective of water quality — and we submit comments to MDNR—DEQ on the ones of concern. If our comments are not observed and changes are not made to the permits, we have in egregious situations, filed administrative appeals. Now, this last step has been taken away.

Short Trips

by Ron McLinden
Ozark Chapter Transportation Chair

Governor Appoints New Commissioner

Governor Carnahan has appointed Marjorie Schramm of Kirkwood to serve a six-year term on the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission. She replaces Commissioner Bob Jones of Chesterfield. Schramm is former mayor of Kirkwood, and has been active in the Missouri Municipal League, National League of Cities, and Citizens for Modern Transit. Her appointment marks the first time in more than twelve years that a St. Louis home-builder has not held a seat on the Commission. She is also the first woman on the Commission since 1995. We expressed to the Governor our preferences for the kind of person we wanted him to appoint, both by letter last December, and in a meeting with him in mid-April. By appointing Mrs. Schramm he met nearly all of our criteria. We expect to have met with her in late June to get acquainted and to brief her on transportation issues from an environmental perspective.

We Continue to Ask Questions About I-70

MoDOT is moving rapidly toward a decision regarding the future of I-70 between

Independence and Lake St. Louis. In fact, a preliminary decision was to have been made in early June and then "plugged in" to MoDOT's new Long-Range Transportation Plan in time for presentation to the Commission on July 7. The major options are (1) reconstruction of I-70 in its current location, or (2) construction of an entirely new four-lane freeway within five miles north or south of the current route. Both options would reserve space for a future high-speed rail line in the median. The current location option would require widening the right-of-way by up to 250 feet to accommodate additional lanes and allow for reconstruction to occur without undue interruption to existing traffic. The parallel freeway option would likely have far fewer interchanges, and might be built to accommodate heavier trucks and higher speeds. In addition, the parallel freeway might be operated as a toll road.

The Sierra Club, in cooperation with the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, sent a news release to newspapers in the I-70, US 36, and US 50 highway corridors in advance of public meetings held in mid-May. The release raised a number of questions that we felt were not being adequately addressed, and was distributed in the interest of "better-informed public dialogue." In addition, activists attended several of the fourteen public meetings and distributed flyers at some of them.

At this writing MoDOT has still not answered many of our questions. We asked what assumptions were used in making their 30-year

projections of future traffic, and we also raised questions about the adequacy of the new statewide traffic model that is being used to evaluate the alternatives. In addition, we questioned what thought they had given to the sequencing of work on I-70 with respect to work on US 36 and US 50, and the implications that might have for communities in those corridors.

Bottom line, it appears that our preference should be for widening in the existing location as necessary, coupled with an aggressive program to shift local and short-distance traffic onto new or existing parallel roads and local streets. The parallel freeway appears not to be a good idea. It would chew up a completely new swath of land across the state. It would encourage additional sprawl as towns along the old route stretch out toward the new one. It would provide eight lanes of freeway as much as two decades before MoDOT expects that capacity to be needed, thereby providing no incentive for moving people or goods by more efficient non-highway modes. Instead of planning for eight lanes, MoDOT should commit to do everything humanly possible to avoid ever having to provide more than six.

Short Trips

Whenever we have a choice about how far to travel in meeting our everyday needs, we should choose the shorter trip. And if that shorter trip is within walking or cycling range, we should consider making the trip by one of those less-impactful modes. —

Chip Mill Report: The Ball Is In Our Court

by Caroline Pufalt
Ozark Chapter Conservation Chair, ExCom

I usually do not like sports analogies, but this one did seem to fit, the ball is indeed in our court with regard to chip mills in Missouri. In this case the "court" includes the public, state legislature, and state agencies. The "ball" is the issue of how our state will respond to the advance of high capacity (industrial size) chip mills in Missouri. How will we protect our forests, watersheds, wildlife and local economies?

How did the ball get in our court? After nearly two years, two draft reports, and one short circuited "final" report, the Governor's advisory committee on chip mills released its final report at the end of July 2000. That report was not much different than the draft report described in a previous issue of the Ozark Sierran (July/August, 2000).

The report calls for voluntary actions, more education, more study, and recommends only one regulation. That regulation would require best management practices when timber is cut on forested lands of 40 or more contiguous acres and over half the overstory is removed. The report does call for a two year chip mill study. That study would be funded by the state and would involve the University of Missouri.

At the final meeting of the chip mill committee MDC Director Jerry Conley recommended that landowners be required to submit a preharvest notification. This, Conley said, would assist his agency in at least keeping statistics on the amount of logging in Missouri and would provide a contact point with landowners. But that proposal was defeated. Conley and his predecessor

on the committee, Marvin Brown, had, to put it mildly, not been much of a progressive force on the committee; thus his last minute effort at this requirement was somewhat unexpected. But it might be something on which to build.



The report itself includes much useful material and analysis. And it represents lots of hard work by the committee and especially agency staff, primarily through DNR. We can be grateful for their efforts and will be able to use the report as a reference.

The lack of concrete recommendations coming out of the report was a disappointment. The committee included some hard core property

rights advocates who seemed to want to avoid even the smallest step forward. MDC representation was generally not helpful and some state legislators seemed cowed by fear of constituent backlash. Some did not attend often. The presence of a few good environmental advocates was not enough to overcome what turned out to be a majority of those favoring no action.

The committee also strayed far from its original mission, which was to look at the chip mill issue and thus the chip mill industry. Instead, it focused too much on forestry practices in Missouri. While it should have addressed those issues to an extent, it lost sight of options for regulating the high capacity chip mill industry. Thus the final report includes a lot of material related to general forestry practices in our region. It does point to the need for further action on many fronts.

Some of the items the committee considered, such as mandatory best management practices, mandatory logger certification, and preharvest notification were criticized as placing too big a burden on individuals. However, what they really represent is an effort to upgrade forestry in Missouri, upgrade the skills of loggers, provide for better communications between loggers and landowners, and provide for better information about Missouri's forests. With the help of agency personnel, state legislators, and interested individuals already involved in forestry and logging, these ideas could be presented to Missouri citizens in a thoughtful, rational way that would enable a similar response. This is clearly an effort that will take communication, involvement, and feedback. And it will also take leadership; something that is often hard to find. —

Treehuggers vs. Treemuggers

by Norm Crocker
Osage Group Conservation Chair, ExComm

There are certain pronouncements that, when uttered, instill simultaneous feelings of fear, anxiety, apprehension, and delirious laughter. One of these pronouncements is, "Hello, I'm from the government and I'm here to help you." Reducing this from a macro to a micro level, we have the US Forest Service declaring that "trees need to be cut, both for government profit and for wildlife management." Of course, we all realize that the first pronouncement, although based in reality, is a witticism; however, the second is one we hear all too often as a reason offered by the Forest Service for their ravaging of public lands. Not only do they persist in using these ridiculous and unproven generic arguments but they do not follow their own criteria for logging.

On a pleasant warm and sunny Thursday, June 29, 2000, several members of the Osage Group and Missouri Heartwood, accompanied by members of the media, journeyed to the Cedar Creek Ranger District of the Mark Twain National Forest. Our purpose was to tour the impending 156 acre Folsom timber sale and, through the media, make the public aware of our concerns. The Folsom sale, which is expected to generate at least \$35,000, is the second of three timber sales that

will include approximately 526 acres when completed. The first, the Brook sale, brought in \$55,000. With a little extrapolation based on past and current figures, the total 526 acre sale should generate around \$136,000. My, my, isn't that an impressive figure! Compare this relatively meager amount to the intrinsic value of our forests that provide us with clean air, clean water, ancient forests, wilderness, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and the much needed solitude that feeds our spiritual renewal.

From our parking area it was a short ten minute hike over slightly undulating pastureland to reach the area. Having to climb over a couple of gates made the hike a little challenging for the television camerapersons. In fact, one of the young ladies carrying a heavy and cumbersome video camera was actually wearing heels, which no doubt made the short hike an extreme sport for her. The superlative definition of not wanting to be in someone else's shoes.

A short presentation was given to the media which focused not only on the complete disregard the Forest Service displayed for the public's disapproval of the logging following an open comment period, but also on the Forest Service's lack of adherence to their own guidelines.

Prior to the marking of the trees a certified silviculturist prescribed marking guidelines for the Folsom sale that were verbalized to the marking crew; however, they seem to have been conveniently ignored in some instances. We saw marked trees right next to a creek although

guidelines state that trees within 25 feet from the centerline of major drainage areas are not to be cut. We saw shagbark hickory trees over nine inches in diameter marked although guidelines state that these trees should not be cut because the endangered Indiana bat sleeps under the loose bark of these trees. And the list goes on.

There seems to be an escape clause in these guidelines that is used whenever it is convenient, which seems to be most of the time. According to the Forest Service, the guidelines are to be followed "to the maximum extent possible and logistically practical." How is that for ambiguity? When interviewed the day after our visit to the site, environmentally friendly reporters from the Columbia newspapers interviewed Carol Trokey, a forester for the Cedar Creek Ranger District. When questioned about the lack of adherence to their own guidelines, Trokey stated, "The guidelines are applied whenever possible and practical." More ambiguity! Furthermore, she admitted that most of the letters received as a result of soliciting public comment were against logging the Cedar Creek District; however, she noted, "We're not the National Park Service... We considered the public comment, but we have a mandate to provide products."

This episode is just one more paragraph in the book of reasons why logging must be stopped in America's National Forests. It is incumbent upon us to do everything in our power to help pass the National Forest Protection and Restoration Act. —

“So, what do you do at those Chapter meetings?”

by Gale Burrus
Ozark Chapter ExCom, Secretary

Well, many things. We have two different meetings during the same weekend. At the Conservation Committee meetings we discuss and make decisions on a whole range of conservation issues. At the Executive Committee meetings we discuss and make decisions on the administrative matters of the Chapter.

For example, at the Executive Committee meeting we held in July, we received our regular committee reports. We heard from the treasurer on our current financial status. This was a detailed report by Donna Clark Fuller including such things as the amount of money we've received from our March fund-raising appeal and how much we've spent on the newsletter, staff and various conservation efforts.

We also received reports from the Membership, Conservation, Political, Newsletter, Web Page, Annual Reunion, and Staff Management committees. The Membership Committee reports on the membership numbers for the Chapter and Groups, and works on Chapter membership issues. Currently Ginger Harris is working with a subcommittee to survey members in the White River Group area regarding their interests and activities, and she is planning a follow up get-together with interested members.

Carolyn Pufalt reported on a recommendation from the Conservation Committee for the Chapter to take a position in the club-wide debate on grazing on public lands. As recommended by the Conservation Committee, the Chapter Executive Committee

voted to support the Grazing Reform policy option and to communicate this position to Debby Sease, who is collecting the opinions.

A recommendation for a particular state office endorsement was made by Tom Moran, Political Chair, for the Political Committee, and passed by the Executive Committee. We also discussed where we are in the process for other possible endorsements for the General Election in November.

Articles and who would write them were discussed for the Ozark Sierran. The information was then passed on to Bob Sherrick, our Newsletter Editor. Another way we communicate is through our web site. The Web Page Committee, chaired by Wallace McMullen, presented information on additional content and the updating of content on the web page.

Keet Kopecky, who is organizing the Chapter Camp-Out and Reunion this year, advised us of who has volunteered to coordinate the various activities and where volunteer coordinators are still needed. We still need people to volunteer to coordinate the team who will arrive early to put up signs and get the cabins ready, a volunteer to coordinate the camp clean up and a volunteer to coordinate the silent auction. Roy Hengerson is chairing the committee in charge of the Chapter Awards we give out on Saturday night at the Camp-Out.

During the Staff Management Committee portion we discussed the environmental voice that our Chapter Program Director, Ken Midkiff, has in his column in the Columbia Tribune, and about possibilities of electronically distributing or linking to the column so more people can read it.

We then had administrative reports from the

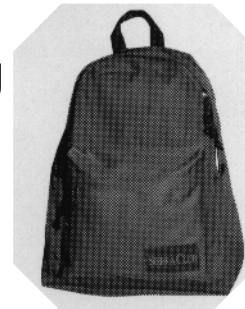
Groups. Herschel Asner reported on a walkathon fund-raiser that the Eastern Missouri Group held that was successful and their formal backing of the proposed revised Master Plan for Jefferson County, Missouri. Tom Moran reported on the formation of a Growth and Development Task Force in the Osage Group. The Thomas Hart Benton Group reported on working at a concession stand at the Blues and Jazz Festival in Kansas City for fund-raising. Trail of Tears also reported they had a recent fund-raising success with their garage sale, and all Executive Members present thanked them for hosting our July meeting.

Other reports followed; Ken Midkiff, our Chapter Program Director, indicated the office move went smoothly, and he talked about a grant proposal we've been asked to submit to a foundation. Gale Burrus, Council of Club Leaders Budget Officer, spoke about some national issues, including the One Club meeting involving group, chapter and national entity representatives occurring in August. Roy Hengerson, lately of the Board of Directors, spoke about some other national issues, including the new Board officers including Robbie Cox as president. He also mentioned that the grazing policy will probably be finalized at the September Board meeting, the policy on land exchange at the November Board meeting, and that a Biotechnology policy was passed by the Board at its May meeting.

We then reviewed and updated the Chapter calendar and clarified task assignments that came out of this meeting.

So, all-in-all it was a typical productive Executive Committee meeting. —

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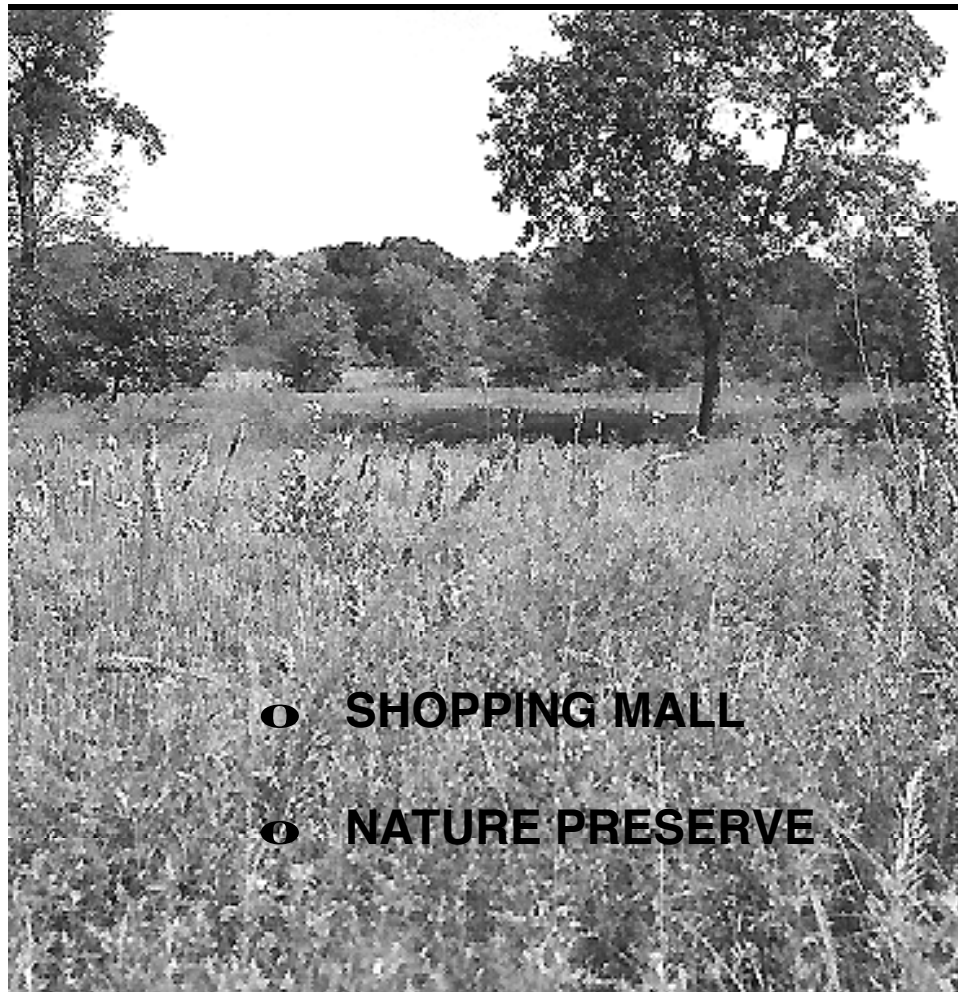


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○ **NATURE PRESERVE**

The Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club has endorsed the following candidates for election. Please keep them in mind when voting in the general election in November. Make your "voice" is heard in this very important election!

President:

✓ Al Gore and Joseph Liebermann

US Senate (MO):

✓ Mel Carnahan

US 5th Congressional District:

✓ Karen McCarthy

Treasurer (MO):

✓ Nancy Farmer

Attorney General (MO):

✓ "Jay" Nixon

State Senate District 5:

✓ Ken Jacobs

State Senate District 13:

✓ Wayne Goode

23rd Congressional District:

✓ Tim Harlan

25th Congressional District:

✓ Vicky Riback-Wilson

Join us October 13-15 for our Annual Camp-out and Reunion!

Fri. Oct 13 — Sun. Oct 15

Registration Form for '00 Camp-Out

Send in your registration form today!
deadline Sept 30th

name _____
(please list names of all persons you are registering)

address _____

city/state/zip _____

evening phone (_____) _____

#s		\$s	
	child: 0-3 yrs.	free	
	child: 3-6 yrs.	\$8	\$
	child: 6-12 yrs.	\$15	\$
	adult: (13 yrs. & over)	\$30	\$
	adult, partial weekend *	\$20	\$
	limited income	\$15	\$
	Saturday dinner <u>ONLY</u>	\$10	\$
total ♦		fee enclosed \$	♦total

maximum fee for a family \$80

Fees include cabin camping, and 5 meals (Sat. breakfast through Sun. lunch).

* "partial weekend" defined as less than 3 meals.

♦ Make checks payable to "Ozark Chapter, Sierra Club"

♦ Mail form and checks to:

Keet Kopecky, 9211 Olmstead, Kansas City, MO 64138

♦ Any questions, phone : Keet Kopecky (816)966-9544 or e-mail at kkopecky@msn.com

♦ We must receive your reservation by September 30th

♦ Camping fees will be refunded for cancellations received prior to Oct. 6th

♦ We will mail you an information packet containing map in advance of the Camp-Out date.



n During intense Mississippi flooding, it is proposed that the northern end of the frontline levee be breached, allowing Mississippi River water to inundate the region, thus reducing high water threats to communities further downstream. Closing the gap at the southern end of the floodway will render this plan impracticable.

The proposed project, designed to relieve flooding in East Prairie, has three main components: (1) closing the gap at New Madrid; (2) installing two pumping stations to provide the drainage that would be needed to relieve the floods resulting from the natural flow of water out of the southeastern Missouri lowlands; and (3) channelization within the newly enclosed area, which lies between the mainline levee and the setback levee, to enhance drainage of the floodway.

Because of deforestation and construction of the extensive drainage system in the lowlands, much of the area floods frequently. The region previously supported 2.5 million acres of bottomland hardwood and swamp forest habitat. As a result of the success of the previous drainage programs, there now remain but 50,000 acres of forest, two percent of what was previously present. Much of what was once forest is now seasonally flooded farmland, important for migrating waterfowl and amphibian species. This is the habitat that the project would further drain and destroy.

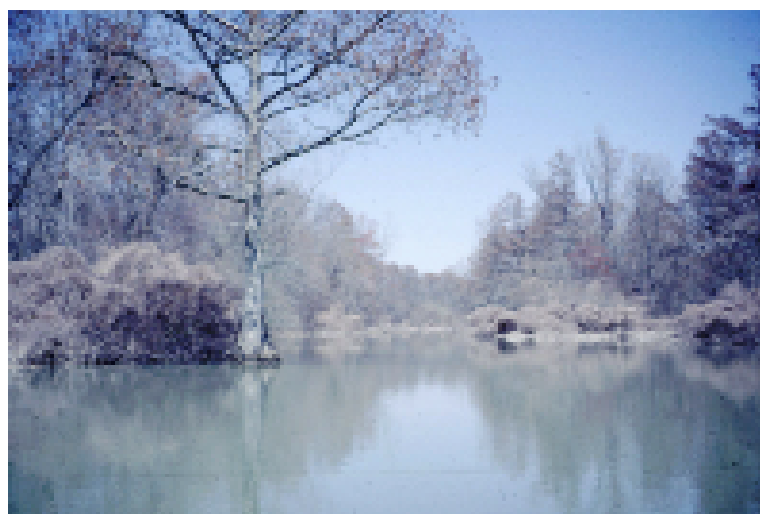
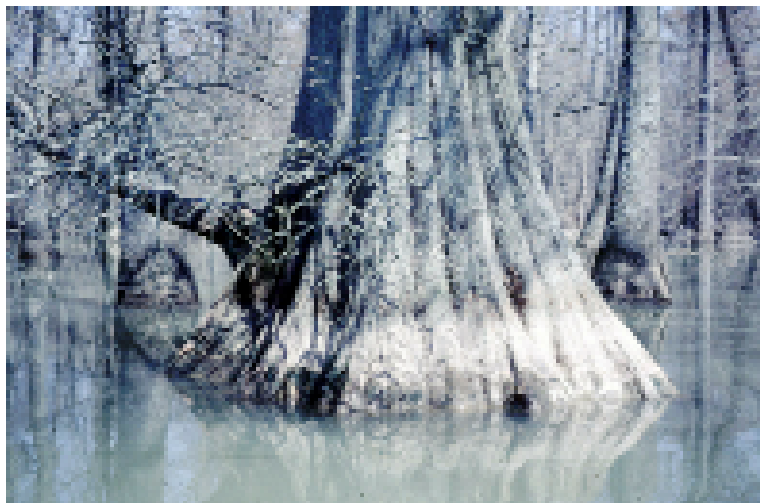
If we are genuinely concerned about wise management of natural resources and the conservation of wildlife habitat, we must ask two questions: "When have we destroyed enough?" and "At what point do we stop?" Frequently touted arguments about private property rights are not relevant to this particular issue since it's a question of the use of millions of taxpayer dollars to benefit a handful of landowners at the expense of our environment.

The following set of reasons suggest strongly that this entire project should be thwarted:

n As indicated above, rather than reduce flooding on a regional scale, the project is actually likely to increase it.

n It is unlikely to accomplish its stated purpose of decreasing flooding in East Prairie and neighboring communities. According to evidence provided by the Environmental Defense Fund, flooding in East Prairie is caused to a large extent by seasonal storm run-off. The residents would be better served by a project that addresses problems with their storm drainage system. The community would benefit from a simple (and much less expensive) levee constructed to surround and protect it. Such a project would be far less extensive, leaving much of the New Madrid Floodway unaffected.

n Closing the gap in the mainline Mississippi levee and installing pumps to keep the newly enclosed area dry will have severe negative impacts on many species. These include many fish and other aquatic species that use the currently seasonally flooded area as spawning and nursery habitat or dwell permanently in the rivers and wetlands of the region. They also include many waterfowl species that use the area for rest and feeding during their annual migrations. According to the US Fish and



St. Francis River

Wildlife Service (USF&WS), to make up for this loss of wetlands, 36,000 acres of mitigation wetlands would be required, an area difficult or impossible to find and expensive to purchase. Furthermore, given the problematic nature of mitigation projects, there is no guarantee that even this would be adequate to retain the critical wetland services currently provided. Curiously, in contravention of standard policy, in its Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Study (DSEIS) the COE failed to identify where its proposed mitigation sites will be. This prevents either the COE or any reviewer from determining to what extent mitigation is likely to be successful. Since wetland mitigation historically has failed more often than it has succeeded, the absence of any proposed sites or techniques is a serious flaw that must be remedied before the DSEIS can even be judged. Additionally, it should be noted that the COE suggests that the same mitigation acres will serve purposes that require mutually exclusive water depth conditions: i.e. a fish spawning area and fish nursery cannot coexist with the shallow depths required for red oak propagation. Because wetlands mitigation has not been generally successful, it is unlikely that mitigation for this project will work, and even if it did, oak trees take 50 years to produce the benefits required. The COE is proposing 50 breeding cycles during which the wildlife species involved will have no available habitat. Following this era, the COE presumably expects these species to magically reappear from some unknown refuge. Furthermore, the COE is already thousands of

acres in arrears on the mitigation projects to which it is previously committed. We thus have little confidence in the commitment of the COE to undertake the necessary mitigation.

n The cost of this project in relation to its benefits renders it a net national economic loss. The avowed purpose—economic development in East Prairie—will probably not be realized for the hydrological reasons identified above since successful economic development is only likely where one hundred year floods are prevented—and this project doesn't even pretend to address such a long-term flood cycle. Thus, the main benefit will be to a relatively small number of landowners farming the presently seasonally flooded area.

These landowners will be able to raise more profitable crops on land that would become protected. This is not economical primarily for two reasons: (1) increasing yields in an era of overproduction will depress further the national income farmers gain from their crops, and should be considered a national cost of the project NOT a benefit; (2) spending nearly 100 million dollars to benefit a few large landowners while not solving the problem for which the project is proposed is not reasonable.

n In the Gulf of Mexico at the mouth of the Mississippi there now exists a huge "gulf dead zone," a region of hypoxia where marine life is depleted. This is thought to be a result of agricultural nutrients flowing down the river. Since wetlands serve as nutrient filters it is unwise to reduce those few that remain as this will likely exacerbate the problem in the gulf.

Because the project does not solve the storm drainage problem in East Prairie, the prime cause for the floods experienced by that community, it fails to address its primary objective, and must be counted a failure even in its own terms. Furthermore, since current national flood plain policy quite reasonably discourages investment in areas with the flood risk that East Prairie would experience even after completion of the project, an economic boom in Mississippi County is improbable.

Interestingly, the only criticism that can be leveled at the alternative plan of constructing a much less costly levee system solely to protect the residential and economic communities around East Prairie is that such a plan would not drain agricultural land. But draining agricultural land is not even legally permissible as a purpose for such a project as the COE has proposed.

The opposition to this project voiced by Missouri's Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Missouri's Department of Conservation, and USF&WS should serve as a strong warning about the havoc that it could cause to the conservation, wildlife, and water resources in the region.

We urge as vigorous opposition to this project as is possible. By stopping it, we can save the government and taxpayers not only 65 million dollars, but we can also conserve wetlands and wildlife while simultaneously maintaining sensible flood control along the Mississippi River.

Variations on the above theme were submitted to all elected state and federal officials who might be able to influence the project, as well as to the Memphis District of the COE. Responses were entirely unsatisfactory, indicating a complete failure to see any environmental problems.

Since then the project has received significant national media and political attention, reaching the level of the President's Council on Environmental Quality, where it rests (as of this writing). The evidence suggests that all those involved are blindly committed to continuing the project. Although a new EIS has been due for weeks, all parties involved seem to be waiting for what they hope will be a more sympathetic White House come November.

Saint Francis River Channelization Project

This project is designed to deepen and widen the main channel of the St. Francis River for about six miles in the vicinity of one of the last remaining cypress and tupelo swamps in Missouri, a zone that includes the Ben Cash Conservation Area (BCCA). The initial purpose stated by the COE for undertaking this project was to clear debris from bridge foundations and to straighten, deepen, and widen the river channel to "protect the levee" although the report of the COE states that this levee is not in immediate danger. Subsequently, the state DNR granted permission to clear debris, but denied permission to channelize.

The following comments are taken from an analysis I developed of the project:

According to the Environmental Assessment (EA) the Memphis District COE has been requested by the Arkansas House of Representatives to remove the drift immediately below the Highway 90 bridge (Missouri Highway 84).

It is the conclusion of the COE that this drift has blocked the main channel; has diverted flow into borrow pit ditches adjacent to the levee; and has caused ponding that is threatening the integrity of the levee and is threatening some 510 acres of timber upstream. There was, however, no supporting evidence in the EA to substantiate the claims.

It appears to be the intent of the COE to undertake a project that is of far greater dimension than the request from the Arkansas House suggests, and far more extensive than MDNR certified in September of 1998. Indeed, the current plan is for wholesale excavation and channelizing of the river from a little upstream of the bridge to a point just prior to the BCCA.

What is most disturbing about this proposal is its complete failure to consider the potential consequences of the project for one of the few remaining regularly flooded bottomland hardwood/swamp forest areas in the state. When this project is combined with the enormous devastation that the COE is concurrently proposing in connection with the New Madrid Floodway project, the impression generated is of an agency that has lost sight of the importance of wise management and conservation of the few remaining acres of wetland left in southeast Missouri and adjacent states.

As MDNR has indicated, previous channelizing undertaken by the COE is a probable cause for extensive problems in this area—



St. Francis River

photos courtesy Alan Jourmet

particularly the accumulation of drift. It seems entirely inappropriate to solve problems created by upstream channel projects by employing the same "solution" downstream. Unfortunately, this is also exactly the kind of thinking that leads to proposals for ever taller, wider, and more extensive levees along the Mississippi, when there is abundant evidence that the levees are major contributors themselves to the increased flood frequency they sought to reduce. The Memphis COE seems to be locked into a "control of nature" mentality that case studies throughout the world reveal to be arrogant, outdated, and unrealistic.

Since the primary problem identified by the COE dealt with debris accumulation adjacent to the bridge, it would make much more sense to address that symptom, explore what actions have been undertaken in the past that might have caused it; and then direct attention at projects that remedy those conditions and minimize future problems. Continuing the channelizing process ever further downstream is likely merely to shift the problem from the bridge to the tupelo/cypress

swamp and into the BCCA.

As is conspicuously evident to even the most casual observer, channelizing the river, especially a braided river such as the Saint Francis as it flows towards BCCA, will serve to increase stream flow, and result in further scouring of substrate in the "improved" channel. The bank destabilization that the project is certain to cause can only exacerbate the erosion problem. This erosion will then most probably be deposited and build up in the swamp area and where the river enters the BCCA.

In addressing the issue of Rare and Endangered species, the COE seems to be quite content that since the USF&WS certified that no such species exist in the area, there is no threat to species flora and fauna. However, one lesson that we should have learned from the last few years of conservation research is that we should not focus our attention only on those species that we have brought to the brink of extinction.

Rather, we should concentrate our efforts on minimizing further potential devastation to habitats that we have already virtually eliminated. Only such an approach can prevent ever more species from sinking to Rare or Endangered status. Since southeast Missouri once supported 2.5 million acres of bottomland hardwood and swamp forest, it is evident that areas such as the BCCA must be accorded maximum protection. It is disappointing to note that the Corps' EA seems to pay little regard to the problems that the proposed project might impose on the BCCA.

In the EA, little thought seems to have been given to alternatives that might be less hazardous to the BCCA. The lack of thought accorded either to developing alternative proposals, or the impact of the chosen alternative on the BCCA renders the Finding Of No Significant Impact of questionable merit. If the agency refuses to look where the greatest problems are likely to be generated, and fails to consider less drastic alternatives, the Finding of No Significant Impact, while meaningless from a rational perspective, is inevitable.

More recently, the COE modified its plan slightly by including a meander in the design, and relocating the channel completely to the Arkansas side of the state line, since that state's responsible agency had already approved the project. This, they seemed then to argue, eliminated any need for Missouri's concerns to be evaluated or even considered, even though the river remains the state border, and impacts of the project will clearly be felt in this state.

Conclusion:

There has been no evidence in subsequent communications from the Memphis COE that there is any intention to modify either of the projects in light of the comments of conservation and environmental agencies and organizations. Indeed, the most recent communication from Colonel Krueger of that district suggests that the New Madrid project is completely sound from a conservation perspective.

Not all Districts within the COE seem to have lost sight of their responsibility to protect the waterways and wetlands of the nation. With regret, however, we must conclude that some districts seem to be focusing their attention only on the special interests of politicians and a small number of corporate entities and landowners. —

Outings Continued

rivers. Joe & Lois Walsh (636)343-6875.

Oct. 28-29 (Sat-Sun) Trail maintenance and Halloween Party in the Pioneer Forest. Bring your costume and join in the fun. Party Saturday night with common commissary. Menu suggestions welcome. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352 or Bob Gestel (636)296-8975.

Oct. 29 (Sun) One day canoe trip on the Huzzah or Courtois, depending on water level. Families welcome. Toni Armstrong & Richard Spener (314)434-2072.

Thomas Hart Benton Group

Sept 8 (Fri) Gastronomic Outing. The Classic Cup-Plaza, 301 W. 47th. Join us for our monthly dining out at a KC restaurant. Call by Sept 3 to participate. Gale Burrus (816)763-5120.

Sept 8-10 (Fri-Sun) Cave Tours. Visit some of Missouri's popular caves on guided tours. Car camping on Fri and Sat night. Craig Lubow (913)299-6620.

Sept 14-17 (Thur-Sun) Walnut Valley Festival,

Winfield, KS. Experience this nationally recognized festival of bluegrass and traditional folk music. Dan and Donna Clark Fuller (816)779-7284.

Sept 15-17 (Fri-Sun) Omaha Zoo and Wildlife Park. The Zoo and Park are some of the Midwest's best. The Park brings back the prairies, meadows, and wetlands. Craig Lubow (913)299-6620.

Sept 23 (Sat) Watkins Woolen Mill Day Hike. This is a 4-mile trail that circles a lake. White tail deer and water birds have been spotted on previous hikes. Susan Fowler (816)531-8724.

Sept 24 (Sun) Outings Planning Meeting. Help plan the outings for 2001. Dan Fuller (816)779-7284 or Andrew Kolosseus (913)371-6629.

Sept 30 (Sat) or Oct 1 (Sun) River Awareness Float Trip (Sat & Sun are repeats). The Kansas Canoe Assoc's annual trip. Jim Horlacher (913)492-7818.

Sept 30-Oct 1 (Sat-Sun) Beginning Backpacking on Pigeon Roost Trail. The trail is 8.5 miles and is located in the Beaver Lake State

Park near Rogers, AR. Andrew Kolosseus (913)371-6629.

Oct 6 (Fri) Gastronomic Outing. Canyon Cafe, 4626 Broadway. Join us for our monthly dining out at a KC restaurant. Call by October 1 to participate. Gale Burrus (816)763-5120.

Oct 7 (Sat) Clinton Lake North Shore Trail Day Hike. We'll hike 10 miles of the 15-mile trail. The wooded trail provides that "getting away into the woods" feeling. Susan Fowler (816)531-8724.

Oct 13-15 (Fri-Sun) Blair Creek Section of Ozark Trail Backpack, north of Eminence, MO. The 26.5-mile trail ends at the bluffs above the Current River. Fairly strenuous. Bob Wilshire (913)384-6645.

Oct 21 (Sat) Dayhike at Wallace State Park, Cameron, MO. This is one reason why Missouri's state park system is considered a model for the nation. LeeAnn Googe (816)453-8558.

Oct 27-29 (Fri-Sun) Irish Wilderness Backpacking. See fall in one of Missouri's most beautiful wilderness areas. Dan Fuller (816)779-7284.

Ozark Chapter Conservation Committee Meeting Notes

by Gina DeBarthe
Ozark Chapter Conservation Committee

The July 16th Ozark Chapter Conservation Committee Meeting was hosted by members and friends in southeastern Missouri. We especially appreciated the arrangements they had made with the jet stream — the weather felt more like southeastern Montana. Between bites of fresh bagels and organic produce, we managed to conduct a bunch of business.

Public Lands Issues

The Missouri Department of Conservation is proposing to sell part of the Weldon Spring Conservation area to Monsanto. The city of Weldon Spring and a number of local citizens oppose the sale. It is unclear who is initiating such sales of public lands. Ken will look into the matter, and will ask the Conservation Commission what their policy is on the sale of public lands.

Transportation Issues

Ron McLinden, Ginger Harris, and Caroline Pufalt plan to hold a meeting with Missouri Department of Transportation Director Henry Hungerbeeler in September. They plan to discuss the matter of enhancement of the I-70 corridor between Kansas City and St. Louis. Either the highway will be widened, or a new parallel highway will be built nearby. The Sierra Club delegation will discuss the feasibility of an intercity rail system to relieve some of the non-freight traffic. The Long Range Transportation Plan is ready for public comment. You can find information concerning the plan at the Missouri Department of Transportation's webpage at www.modot.state.mo.us

Energy Issues

We discussed the fact that the price of gasoline doesn't really reflect its true cost to the environment and to human health. Ginger Harris agreed to head up a task force that will examine ways to educate the public on the impact our fuel dependency is having on our health and environment.

Local Group Reports

Trail of Tears Group (Southeastern Missouri)

Local Sierra Club activists are monitoring two Corps of Engineer projects in the area, and are submitting comments in opposition. See article on page 1.

Osage Group (Central Missouri)

The Osage Group has decided to begin the fight against sprawl, a big issue in Columbia. Members have already formally stated some of their objections to the Metro 2020 Plan (Columbia's master plan for growth over next 20 years). There is some good and some bad within the plan, so the Group will actively work to remedy what they think needs fixing. They anticipate that

this work will remain their most important local issue for the next 20 years or so.

Thomas Hart Benton Group (Western Missouri)

Curbside recycling was put to a vote in Kansas City for the third time in 10 years on August 8th. This issue campaign had been the main focus of Thomas Hart Benton Group members for the past few months. Regrettably, the issue once again failed, but by a smaller margin than either of the two earlier attempts.

Eastern Missouri Group (Northeastern Missouri)

Group members are working with ProVote to register voters at transit areas, such as bus stops and train stations. Lemonade fundraising has been very successful so far this year due to lots of the sun's good, hot weather and lots of the volunteers' good, hard work.

This report was written with the assistance of Keet Kopecky, Ron McLinden, Alan Journet, Caroline Pufalt, and Tom Moran. —

Call for Chapter Executive Committee Nominations

Wanted: People committed to fighting for Missouri's environment by leading the Sierra Club's activities in the state.

Must plan on devoting several hours per week to the cause. Involves frequent communication by e-mail or phone to stay on top of current issues. Demands preparation for and participation in Sunday meetings held once every other month in January, March, May, July, September and November. Can include taking an office or committee chair position.

You decide Chapter direction and priorities by approving volunteer and staff activities, Chapter policies, membership activities and monetary fundraising and expenditures.

Contact Brian Alworth at bstorm@clas.net or (573)334-7978 any day prior to 8 p.m. to nominate yourself or others.

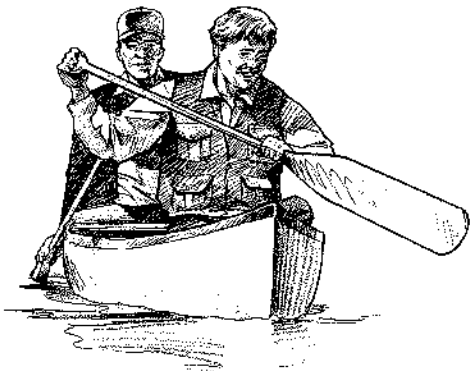
The Ozark Chapter Executive Committee and Missouri's environment thank you. 🌿

OZARK CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

Eastern Missouri Group

Sept. 1-4 (Fri-Mon) St. Louis County Fair and Air Show. The lemonade crew returns for the last fund-raiser of the summer. We would love to have each of you join us for a few hours making and selling lemonade. New members are most welcome as this is a great way to meet fellow Sierrans and contribute in a practical way to meeting the club's environmental goals. Jim Young (314)664-9392.

Sept. 2-4 (Sat-Mon) Canoe trip on the Mississippi from Chester to Cape Girardeau. Join the annual excursion to the Mighty Miss. You won't understand the fascination felt by people like Mark Twain and John Hartford if you don't go. If musical mood strikes we may have a sing along. Big beaches, sandbar camping, cool breezes. George Behrens (314)821-0247 (after 6 p.m. only).



Sept. 9 (Sat) Highway cleanup. Join us for a fun morning searching for trash by the road. You know what a mess those Monarch butterflies leave behind when they migrate. Diane DuBois (314)721-0594.

Sept. 9 (Sat) Help the Sierra Club test water quality conditions on the still pristine Fox Creek. Half-day activity. Jim Rhodes (314)821-7758, or earthman@stlnet.com or Leslie Lihou (314)726-2140.

Sept. 10 (Sun) If you want to see a river quiver—and you've got a buck to spend—visit our State Park named Cuivre. Bring water, lunch, hike end-to-end. Wayne Miller (314)569-0094.

Sept. 15 (Fri) Attention: distance hikers. See the late summer glade blooms at Meramec State Park. Hike the ten mile Wilderness trail. Can be

shortened if too warm. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7:00 p.m., week nights only).

Sept. 22 (Fri) Weldon Spring first day of autumn hike. 6-8 miles. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7:00 p.m., week nights only).

Sept. 23-24 (Sat-Sun) Trail maintenance on the Blair creek section of the Ozark Trail. We will attack the summer's growth of weeds and brush encroaching on the trail. All tools will be furnished. Common commissary Saturday night. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352 or Bob Gestel (636)296-8975.

Sept. 23-24 (Sat-Sun) Enjoy floating on the Missouri River as we do a 36-mile stretch from Gasconade down to the City of Washington. We'll float past the spectacular Berger bluffs and we'll camp overnight by the river. You should bring your own canoe and you must have a PFD (life vest). Jim Rhodes (314)821-7758 by Sept. 16.

Sept. 27 (Wed) Beginner backpackers planning meeting at the club office at 7:30 p.m. You need not own any equipment. We will show and discuss equipment and tell you where you can borrow, rent, or buy equipment. Bob Gestel (636)296-8975.

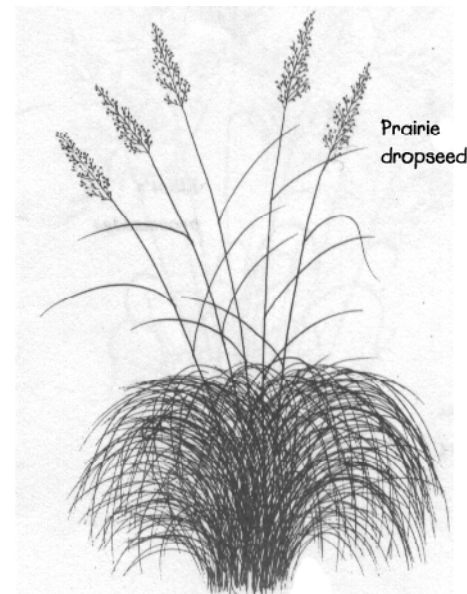
Sept. 30-Oct. 1 (Sat-Sun) Overnight canoe trip on the Black River. Families welcome. Now is the time to enjoy this scenic stream without the crowds. Toni Armstrong & Richard Spener (314)434-2072.

Sept. 30-Oct. 1 (Sat-Sun) Join the Kaskaskia Group for a fall weekend in the beautiful Shawnee National Forest of Southern Illinois. We will be hiking on Saturday and canoeing the "bayous" of the Cache River on Sunday. Camp in your tent or sleep in "tree houses." Bring the entire family. This outing always fills up so register early. The deadline for registration is Sept. 11. Terry Allen (618)398-1087 or Ted Horn (618)397-9430, or send a SASE for registration form and details.

Oct. 1 (Sun) Enjoy the Fall colors of Meramec State Park. This hike will take us to springs, caves, glades, and give us great views of the Meramec river valley. This hike is 6 miles of cross country. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352.

Be sure to check your GROUP newsletter for more or current out-ings!

Oct. 7 (Sat) Seed collecting at Washington State Park. Come hike with us, enjoying beautiful vistas, and help collect native grass seeds to disburse on newly restored glades. We may possibly collect on Sunday also (especially if it rains on Saturday). Susan Farrington (314)577-9402 (work voice mail) or 1(636)583-0948 (home, long distance).



Prairie dropseed

Oct. 7 (Sat) Six mile day hike at Hawn State Park. Moderate pace with optional extension. Chuck Guenther & Margaret Gilleo (314)991-1305.

Oct. 8 (Sun) Introduction to Missouri pink granite at Elephant Rocks State Park. Easy walking on a short trail with great scenery; a boulder and crevice exploring opportunity. We will also visit the charming village of Caledonia. Jill Miller & Wayne Miller (314)569-0094.

Oct. 14-15 (Sat-Sun) Chapter Reunion at Lake of the Ozarks State Park. Keet Kopecky (816)966-9544 or e-mail at kkopecy@msn.com.

Oct. 14-15 (Sat-Sun) Beginners backpack trip. We will take a short hike in to our campsite where we will demonstrate various types of tents, stoves, and other equipment. Later, around the campfire we will talk safety, wilderness travel, and tell wild stories about our past trips. Common commissary on Saturday night. Bob Gestel (636)296-8975.

Oct. 20 (Fri) If the leaves turn on time Cuivre River State Park is a blaze of color. 6-8 mile hike. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7:00 p.m., week nights only).

Oct. 21-22 (Sat-Sun) After walking along the bluffs and river bottoms of the Current river we will ascend into a beautiful watershed. We will camp and explore the creek and its surrounding countryside before returning to our cars. Backpack trip is limited to 10 persons. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352.

Oct. 28 (Sat) Hike or bike at Columbia Bottoms. Approximately eight miles. See the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi

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