

# OZARK SIERRA

One Earth

One Chance

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## Taking Charge of Our Transportation Future

by Ron McLinden  
*Ozark Chapter Transportation Chair*

**M**oDOT's projected \$30 billion funding shortfall for transportation over the next 20 years is still a preliminary estimate. Chances are the number will go up before they finalize their new long-range plan sometime in the spring.

Whatever the final estimate, we citizens of Missouri must not take it simply as a fund-raising target to be met. It is simply a reasonable estimate of what state outlays for transportation will have to be — **if** we keep doing things the way we've done them in the past. We should take that estimate as a \$30 billion incentive to do transportation differently.

If we take the \$30 billion literally, we'll need a general sales tax increase of 3 cents per dollar or a gas tax increase of 40-50 cents per gallon. I don't think Missourians are ready to swallow either one of those options.

We should expect that taxes for transportation WILL be raised. But while those details are

being worked out, we must also insist that state and local policies that contribute to traffic growth be examined. As we raise revenue, we must also get serious about slowing or reversing the growth of our need for transportation.

Smart growth — growth management policies implemented by counties and municipalities — is one way. Some real estate developers will wince at that, characterizing it as heavy-handed government intrusion in the workings of the free market. It is nothing of the sort. It is simply a conscious effort on the part of government to make sure the public gets full value out of the streets and sewers and other public and private infrastructure that are already in place. And besides, what with things like tax breaks for mortgage interest, and new state-financed roads and tax subsidies for exurban projects like the MasterCard processing center in prosperous St. Charles County, the market is anything but free.

Up until now we could depend on MoDOT to try to build enough road capacity for all the traffic that anybody — private developer or local municipality — wanted to load onto the state road

system. MoDOT can't afford that any more. We citizens can't afford that kind of extravagance any more. We should face up to that reality, and treat it as an opportunity to do more with what we already have.

You who read this newsletter are already among the best-informed citizens of the state on transportation matters. You understand the economic, social, and environmental costs of past reliance on road-building while transit and cycling and even walking go into free fall. You are "in the driver's seat" to help initiate and continue a soul-searching public dialogue on the place of transportation in our society. How much transportation is enough? A lot less than most people think. What transportation choices do we need? A lot more than we currently have.

So what can you do? Here's a preliminary list:

- Attend public meetings on transportation issues and speak up for more transit, more sidewalks, more bike routes, and fewer road

continued on page 5... **Transportation Future**

## Environmentalists Plan for 2001 Missouri Legislature

by Roy C. Hengerson  
*Ozark Chapter Legislative Chair*

**O**n November 11, 2000 about 40 Missouri citizens from around the state gathered in Columbia to review the recent election results, review proposals for environmental legislation, and plan strategies for passing good bills and stopping bad ones. The Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Missouri Coalition for the Environment sponsored the workshop.

The November 7th election left the Democrats in control of the State House of Representatives by the same margin they held the last two years, 86 to 77. The situation in the State Senate is uncertain. The Democrats had held a slim 18 to 16 margin. However, State Rep. Bill Foster beat incumbent Senator Jerry Howard (D) in the 25th Senate District. And three Senators with two years remaining in their four-year terms were elected to higher office. They have resigned their Senate seats leaving three vacancies that will be filled by special elections to be held in late January. Senator Joe Maxwell (D) was elected Missouri Lieutenant Governor. Senator Bill (Lacy) Clay (D) was elected to Congress, filling his retiring father's 1st District Congressional seat. Senator Sam Graves (R) was elected to Congress in the 6th District.

Thus, the Republicans hold a temporary 16 to 15 margin of control. They have selected as

their leader Senator Peter Kinder from Cape Girardeau. Kinder is one of the most anti-environmental state legislators in the Senate. How the Senate will organize itself in the interim is unclear. There has been some talk of a power-sharing arrangement until the special elections determine the balance of power for the next two years. This confusion could delay the beginning of meaningful work on legislation in 2001. If the Senate winds up with a 17 - 17 split, the Democrats will retain effective control since Lieutenant Governor Maxwell is also President of the Senate and can vote to break ties. Legal challenges to whatever happens are also a possibility.

continued on page 2..... **Missouri Legislature**

| INSIDE                         |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| • Electric Utilities.....      | p 3  |
| • Transportation Meetings..... | p 5  |
| • CEE.....                     | p 6  |
| • Smart Growth?.....           | p 7  |
| • Chip Mills.....              | p 9  |
| • Ozark Trail.....             | p 11 |
| • Quilts.....                  | p 12 |

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Although the situation in the House is clearer than the Senate, circumstances there will challenge environmental leaders and activists. The Democrats met a few days after the elections and selected Rep. Jim Kreider (D-142) from Nixa as Speaker of the House. He is not as supportive of environmental issues as was his predecessor, Steve Gaw. Several key committee chairmanships will also be changing from the last session.

Against this backdrop, the Missouri environmental community discussed what issues were high priority for legislative action, learned more about the workings of the state legislature, and brainstormed ideas for effective citizen action. Of particular note, a panel of three mid-Missouri legislators discussed their views of how environmental and related issues will play out in 2001 and beyond. Senator Ken Jacob noted the confused situation in the Senate and urged environmental groups to get more involved in future elections.

Representative Vicki Riback Wilson noted that most rural areas of Missouri are voting more conservative and electing more Republicans, who in general are not as supportive of environmental

issues as Democrats. She suggested we do more public education and outreach in rural areas on environmental matters. Representative Tim Harlan noted that big business has many friends in the legislature, and they often oppose good environmental bills. Term limits will have a major impact in 2002, as an estimated 75 to 80 legislators will not be able to run for the positions they now hold. This may already affect how legislation moves through the process in 2001 and 2002.

It is clear we will have to develop effective public education campaigns on any issues that we wish to see favorable legislative action. After a review of current environmental issues, four were selected as ready to be considered by the state legislature:

- n Better controls on concentrated animal feeding operations or animal factories;
- n Adequate controls on large chip mills;
- n Reform of the tax increment financing law;
- n Possibly several energy issues, such as renewable energy tax credits and net metering.

A significant plus for our efforts in achieving progress on the environment at the state level

is that the Sierra Club-endorsed candidate for Missouri Governor, Bob Holden, won a very tight race. The Governor is often in a critical position to influence the state legislature since he has the power to veto bills. Former Governor Mel Carnahan used this power effectively to protect the environment and we expect Bob Holden to similarly use his office for the benefit of Missouri's citizens and environment.

2001 will be a challenging year on the national and state level for Missourians wanting to advance environmental issues. Your involvement is critical to our success. We will continue to publish the Green Report to keep you updated on state legislative issues. If you have not received this publication in the past, but would like to receive it, contact me at the address below or contact the chapter office in Columbia, Missouri.

Throughout the year we will be covering state issues in the Ozark Sierran, but often there is a need for a quicker turn around of information and response that the Green Report provides. Therefore, it is important to rely on sources like the Green Report and your local Sierra Club group.

I urge you to become involved in state legislative matters. The better our network of active citizens throughout the state, the better our chances to pass good environmental bills and stop bad bills. For more information contact: Roy C. Hengerson, 2201 Weathered Rock Rd., Jefferson City, MO. 65101, (573)635-8066, roy.hengerson@sierraclub.org —

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The editors reserve the right to edit articles! Material may be edited for length, content, or clarity. It is our job to help you communicate. If you have strong creative ownership of your writing, and wish to review your edited article before publication, consider your deadline 10 days prior to the published deadline. With notice, we will be happy to work with you.

Reproduction quality photographs (prints) or artwork are dearly welcome. Please send us photos...

## 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**



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## Dates You Need to Know

1/27

**Chapter Cons Com meeting:**  
Columbia, Missouri  
contact **Caroline Pufalt (314) 878-3165**

1/28

**Chapter ExCom meeting:**  
Columbia, Missouri  
contact **Keet Kopecky (816) 966-9544**

2/15-18

**National Board of Directors meeting**

# Electric Utilities Leave a Large Footprint on the Environment

by Wallace McMullen  
Ozark Chapter ExCom

**W**hy should environmentalists care about the electric utility industry? Because electric utilities create:

- u About 70% of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) in the US atmosphere.

Over 20 million tons per year is emitted by electric utilities (per EPA). Acid rain is caused by SO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. It kills trees and fish as well as producing other harmful impacts.

- u About 30 % of NO<sub>x</sub> in the atmosphere.

Smog from nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) in the air causes respiratory disease in people, and other types of acid depositions with harmful effects.

- u About 30% of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere

Carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas causing global warming. Over 70 million tons are emitted by the electric utilities in just Missouri. Global warming may have many harmful effects on all the wildlife habitats, beautiful streams, and old-growth forests as we know them today. Global warming also creates more frequent episodes of violent weather and flooding from rising sea levels, phenomena which are difficult for people to survive.

- u Fine particle pollution

A recent report released by the Clean Air Task Force found that fine particle pollution from electric utilities cuts short the lives of over 30,000 people each year nationally.

These major environmental and health impacts give us plenty of reason to pay close attention to the future course of the electric utility industry. They're not just about light bulbs and cold beer in the refrigerator, regardless of what their ads portray.

One thing that could be helpful is the fact that this is a heavily regulated industry, although the regulators have focused on narrow economic issues in the past. We have been good at using environmental laws and regulations for protecting clean water and saving sensitive lands, but most Sierra Club members in the Midwest have not focused on the impact of the electricity industry in recent years.

## Major Changes Recently

In the past three years the state of the electric industry has changed, mostly without much notice in the daily headlines.

Electric demand has grown faster than expected due to factors such as the increasing use of computers. The result this summer was that the generating capacity became strained nationally. Now the US energy system is on the edge of blackouts anytime we have a demand peak from hot weather.

To make matters worse, the electric grid in most regions is at or near the limit of its capacity, and no new major transmission lines have been built recently due to uncertainty about the possible course of restructuring (frequently termed "deregulation"). The Chicago area has been cited as an example of a region struggling with this problem of insufficient grid capacity.

*What "Deregulation\*" Means, boiled down:  
(\*More accurately termed Restructuring)*

1. Utilities are required to divest their generating assets
2. Retail customers can choose from competing suppliers

Some new generating capacity is planned. Virtually all the new generating plants presently ordered are natural gas fired. For example, 36 new gas fired units are proposed in Texas.

But the existing gas pipelines are near the limit of their capacity. New gas pipelines are on the drawing boards from Alaska and Canada.



Phillips Alaska plans a \$10 billion pipeline expansion just from Alaska to the middle of Canada.

The new pipelines in the planning stages are not yet sited. Siting new gas pipelines may mean a swath of environmental destruction through northern forests. Since Canada and Alaska have natural gas reserves in the ground, we may be looking at corridors bulldozed through the forests in upper Minnesota, Wisconsin, or Michigan for new pipelines down to the Midwest.

The present system is structured around big centralized generating facilities, with an elaborate grid to carry power to homes and factories. Putting dispersed generators near the end-users might help the transmission problems at times of peak load.

But distributed generation might take the form of many diesel powered units, which would contribute lots of air pollution on hot days from the diesel engines. That would be a very undesirable situation which might tip Kansas City into being a non-attainment area and further exacerbate the air quality problem in St. Louis. The environmental community may get planning shifted to distributed natural gas peaking units in our region if we're involved in the process.

Without distributed generation we can expect large transmission lines to be constructed, with the potential for environmental destruction along the paths that would be carved out for their routes.

Photovoltaic systems on individual homes are an ideal way to mitigate this problem — hot sunny weather maximizes the output from photovoltaic systems.

Widespread distributed photovoltaic generation for hot summer weather could greatly reduce the load on the electric transmission grids. However, that strategy is considered off the table by the mainstream regulators and utilities because it presently costs about 5 times as much per levelized\* kilowatt-hour as natural gas. (Approx. \$.25 vs. \$.05).

The external costs of environmental pollution have not been considered. Leading thinkers such as the Union of Concerned Scientists have argued for years that the costs to society of acid rain, smog, and mercury depositions from coal fired electricity should be considered in computing the true economic costs of generating facilities. (We now know that the costs of global warming should be added to the computation as well.) If that is done, the case for renewable energy sources such as wind and solar becomes much stronger.

continued on page 4...Electric Utilities

| <b>Emission Type</b>   | <b>1988</b>   | <b>1993</b>   | <b>1998</b>   | <b>Annual Growth Rate 1988-1998 (Percent)</b> |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| <b>Sulfur Dioxide</b>  | <b>824</b>    | <b>464</b>    | <b>265</b>    | <b>-11.8</b>                                  |
| <b>Nitrogen Oxides</b> | <b>261</b>    | <b>202</b>    | <b>269</b>    | <b>0.3</b>                                    |
| <b>Carbon Dioxide</b>  | <b>51,869</b> | <b>45,321</b> | <b>71,031</b> | <b>3.6</b>                                    |

Electric Utilities...continued from page 3

Also, the greater value of maximum generation at times of maximum demand has traditionally been overlooked. It also is an argument in favor of photovoltaic generation investments.

The growing use of wind power is a bright spot. Levelized costs for a utility-scale installation are down to about 5 cents/Kwh, so it is now roughly competitive with fossil fuel generation. Approximately 450 megawatts of wind installations are being developed in Minnesota; Iowa has over 200 megawatts of wind power on line; and Wisconsin has several utility scale installations. Modern wind systems are much more reliable

Not enough of it is presently planned to have much impact — the wind generation equipment manufacturers do not have large scale production capability yet, nor have the utilities begun ordering enough systems as yet to get past 5% or so of the power generation coming from wind.

We need to promote wind power whenever possible. Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas have a lot of wind resources.

### Restructuring May Be Stalled

San Diego's price shocks this summer were a major blow to the restructuring "deregulation" proponents. The utility serving the area ran out of generating capacity during hot spells and had to buy more on the spot market. The high demand sent prices skyrocketing upward during the peaks. California's restructuring/deregulation law allowed a direct pass-through of the higher costs to the retail customers. Homeowners in San Diego received bills with triple the charges they had previously paid. Many complained bitterly.

Legislators in states that have not "deregulated" such as Missouri, do not want their constituents to have such an experience, and will presumably be very cautious about considering such proposals now.

### What we should do:

#### 1. Promote efficiency.

Anything we can do to reduce the use of electricity from coal burning generation is a big plus for the environment. Most observers believe that our use of electricity could be reduced by close to 50% if our society really made a concerted effort to use the best technology and good insulation standards to all buildings (well insulated buildings can consume much less electricity for air conditioning, for instance). On the consumer level, everybody can use and promote compact fluorescent bulbs in their homes. A 15 watt compact fluorescent bulb can be expected to save at least \$30 over the equivalent 60 watt incandescent bulbs, will last for 10,000 hours (greatly reducing the hassle of replacing burned out bulbs), and can be purchased for about \$8 from WAL\*MART. If you put in enough efficient

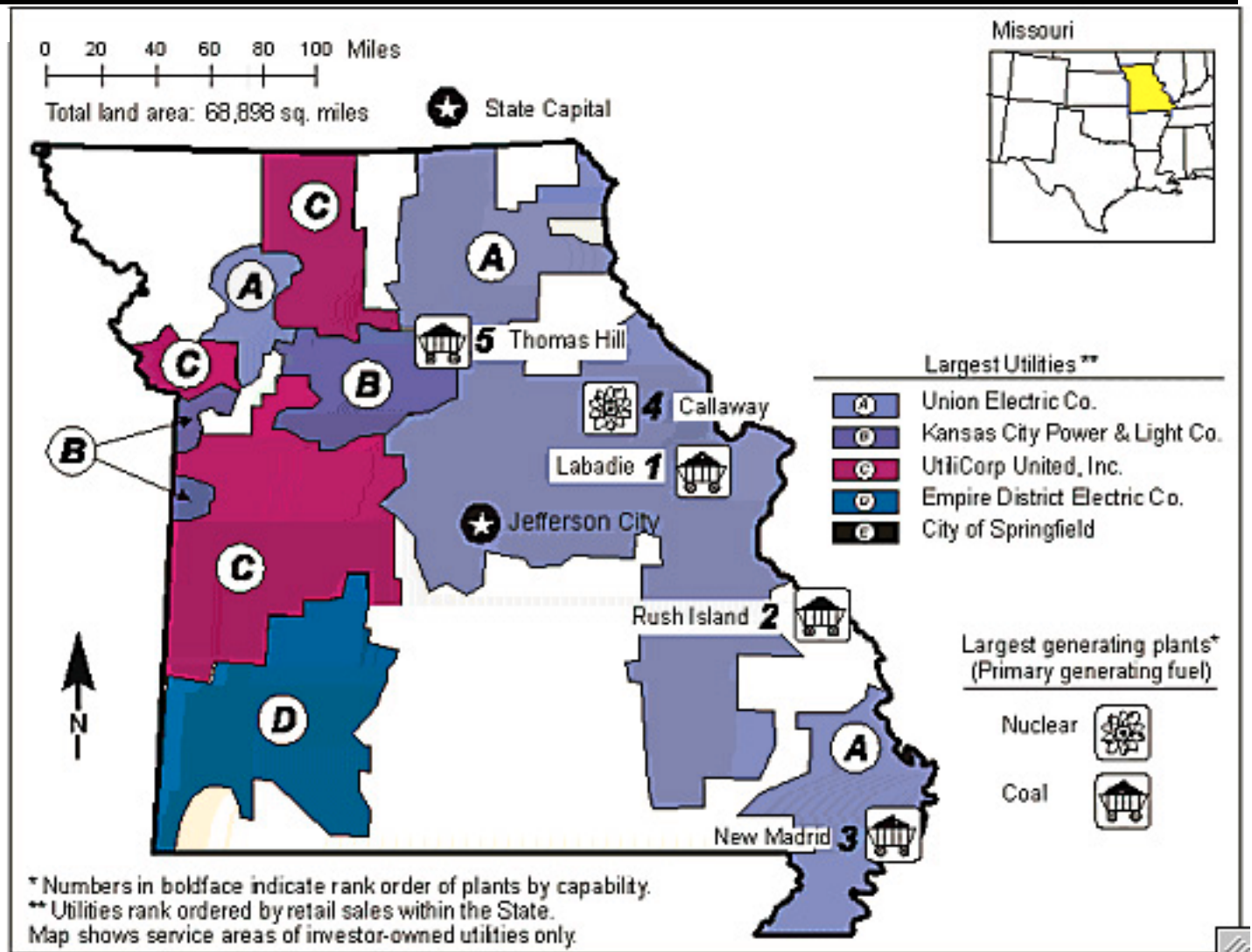
bulbs to cut your average monthly bill at home from \$80 a month to \$72 a month, you will reduce CO2 emitted on your behalf by 2,323 lbs. a year. Other opportunities like changing to a more efficient refrigerator, washing machine, or air conditioner all offer major efficiency improvement possibilities. Spread the word!

#### 2. Promote renewable energy.

Every little bit of wind and photovoltaic generation that supplants coal-fired electricity helps. Policies at the state government level can have a major impact on how fast renewable energy is adopted. Representative Joan Bray had a renewable tax credit in one of the major state budget bills last session. It was cut out as the process

moved to conclusion, but if legislators have heard from many constituents that we need renewable energy, such policies may be adopted. Bend the ear of your elected representatives.

\*Levelized cost means that sum of the original capital costs, operating costs, maintenance costs, interest, and cost of fuel are all computed and the stream of income that would pay off those costs over the planning time frame is calculated. I see numbers of about 5 to 7 cents per Kwh levelized cost for new coal generating facilities with scrubbers, about the same for state of the art efficient natural gas units, and now wind, also in the same cost range depending on how strong the wind is at a given location. —



| Plant                 | Energy Source | Operating Company            | Net Capability (MW) | Age (Years) |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <b>1. Labadie</b>     | Coal          | Union Electric Co            | 2,300               | 28          |
| <b>2. Rush Island</b> | Coal          | Union Electric Co            | 1,166               | 22          |
| <b>3. New Madrid</b>  | Coal          | Associated Electric Coop Inc | 1,160               | 26          |
| <b>4. Callaway</b>    | Nuclear       | Union Electric Co            | 1,143               | 14          |
| <b>5. Thomas Hill</b> | Coal          | Associated Electric Coop Inc | 1,120               | 32          |

| Top Five Utilities Ranked by Retail Sales Revenue Within the State, 1998 (Million Dollars) |              |
|--|--------------|
| Utility  | \$           |
| <b>A. Union Electric Company</b>   | <b>1,899</b> |
| <b>B. Kansas City Power &amp; Light Co</b>   | <b>524</b>   |
| <b>C. UtiCorp United, Inc</b>  | <b>290</b>   |
| <b>D. Empire District Electric Co</b>  | <b>192</b>   |
| <b>E. City of Springfield</b>  | <b>117</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>3,022</b> |

(from [http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/st\\_profiles/missouri/mo.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/st_profiles/missouri/mo.html))

# Busy Week for Transportation, Smart Growth Advocates

by Ginger Harris

Ozark Chapter Membership Chair

Ozark Chapter Transportation Chair Ron McLinden made his annual holiday pitch to the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission in Kansas City on December 1. As part of his presentation he gave a Sierra Club calendar to each Commissioner as a year-round reminder that we're vitally interested in their actions. We have given calendars to Commissioners each year for nearly 10 years.

Ron used his ten minutes on the meeting agenda to remind the Commissioners of three points, as they contemplate the state's transportation needs:

1) Missouri faces a transportation crisis.

2) We can't afford as much transportation as we currently think we need.

3) We need to pursue a multi-faceted course of action to preserve the infrastructure we have while also reducing future infrastructure needs.

The crisis is that MoDOT (Missouri Department of Transportation) has identified 20 years' worth of needs costing \$52 billion, but anticipates having only \$22 billion in revenues to pay for these needs.

To make up the \$30 billion shortfall, Missourians would have to raise their gas tax by 40-50 cents per gallon or their general sales tax by three cents. We don't think voters will approve this.

To avoid this whopping cost, we need to remember that transportation "mobility" is normally not an end in itself, and is only one of two ways to achieve our real goal of "access." The other way to achieve access is through "proximity" (moving our destinations closer together). "Smart growth" promotes proximity. Proximity makes walking and bicycling feasible and makes transit more cost effective. Smart Growth would not only save on transportation costs, it would enhance community cohesion, safety, and mental and physical health, especially for senior citizens and children.

Since our perceived "needs" are often a function of our economic situation, Missouri needs to use market mechanisms to make the beneficiaries of our transportation spending pay their fair share of the costs. This could include tolls for the use of our limited supply of freeway lanes during peak hours. This mechanism can avoid being a "regressive tax" if toll revenues are spent to improve trans-

portation services that poor citizens depend on.

(The full text of Ron's presentation is available on the Ozark Chapter's website at <http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/mo/>.)

On December 4-5, four Ozark Chapter activists attended a two-day Sierra Club workshop in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on "How to Influence Your State DOT." Norm Crocker (Osage Group Conservation Chair), Tom Moran (Ozark Chapter Excom member and Osage Group Chair), and Ginger Harris (Eastern Missouri Group Transportation and Smart Growth Committee Chair) attended the workshop with more than 25 other activists from New Mexico and about 10 other states as far away as New Hampshire and Connecticut. Ron McLinden (Ozark Chapter Transportation Chair) attended the workshop as one of five "expert" presenters.

Presenter Hank Ditmar (former director of the Surface Transportation Policy Project) provided historical context by reminding us that as the Interstate Highway System neared completion in the late 1980's, the national highway lobby engineered the creation of a National Highway System to bring many state highways up to Interstate standards. Subsequent federal legislation, ISTEA and TEA-21, attempted to balance huge highway expenditures with some new funding for transit and non-motorized modes (bicycle and pedestrian facilities). However, state DOT's resisted implementing the "alternative mode" programs. Ditmar encouraged us to mount campaigns to win these issues "in the court of public opinion." He suggested three models for reform:

nFollow the federal model of "devolution" by pushing decision-making authority over transportation spending down to the local level;

nReform your DOT from within by educating its staff;

nIf the other two methods don't work, pass state legislation mandating your DOT, for example, to first fix what it already has, before building new capacity.

Michael Replogle (Transportation Director for the Environmental Defense Fund) shared his experiences as a non-lawyer involved in court cases against DOT's based on NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act), the Clean Air Act and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Replogle also described an extensive array of alternative mea-

asures to improve development patterns and provide greater choice among transportation modes.

Finally, he explained the importance of understanding how mathematical models are used to analyze transportation proposals. This led to the observation that there are not enough sympathetic modeling experts in the US to meet the needs of transportation activists who could otherwise make a valid claim in court against highway proposals and DOT's.

Pat Gallagher (National Sierra Club attorney) walked us through several court cases, explaining why one case prevailed, while another case was lost. In the final analysis he concluded that the "school of critical legal studies" is the best explanation. Founded on the principle that "all law is politics," this "school" teaches that the ideology and personality of the judge assigned to your case has more to do with your winning or losing than the arguments you can summon on your behalf. Thus, where you file your suit can be critical.

Ken Ryan (Transportation Chair for California Sierra Club chapters) advised us to become engaged at the beginning of any project proposal so that we (1) can establish the best possible legal record to be used in a later court challenge, and (2) can modify the project more to our liking so that a court challenge becomes unnecessary. Ryan described how best to establish the legal basis for a suit: ask questions, even "stupid" ones. It's not our job to provide the alternative solution to a transportation problem, so even if we come up with a better solution, the judge is not going to impose our "better solution" onto the implementing agency. The judge's job is only to assure that the law's required procedures have been followed. Thus, the implementing agency's responsibility is to adequately answer our questions and provide an adequate amount of data on which to base their decision. Thus, we need to ask the right questions to elicit the information that will show the public (and our potential allies) why a proposed project should not be built.

Ron McLinden described the many ways in which our chapter has been engaged in educating our own MHTC Commissioners, MoDOT staff, other state and local officials and the public (our potential allies). Although Ron acknowledged limited identifiable successes so far, he contended that we might have already achieved more gains than we are yet aware of. —

Transportation Future.....continued from page 1

widenings.

nSpeak up for smart growth. Ask for the things that smart growth brings — lower taxes for roads and sewers and services, a more efficient economy, a higher quality of community life, and a less stressed-out natural environment.

nSpeak out through letters to the editor, email discussion forums, and radio call-in programs.

nUse public transit if you can, and advocate transit for others if you cannot. If you live in a city whose transit system has monthly passes, ask your employer to pay all or part of the cost of a transit pass for you and your fellow employees.

nCarpool, bike, or walk to work if you can. And whether you can or not, if your employer pro-

vides free parking, ask that they give cash in lieu of free parking to employees who don't use a parking space.

nChoose where you shop based on whether it is pedestrian friendly. Maybe YOU have to drive to get there, but if other people can get there on foot, that business deserves to thrive and not be driven out of business by businesses that require their customers to drive.

nSpeak up for sidewalks. And speak up for crosswalk markings and pedestrian signals.

nCheck out new housing developments — whether you are in the market or not — and ask realtors if there are any destinations you could walk to from their hot properties.

nJust say "no" to congestion. If you get caught in congestion, you are part of the problem. Plan another place or another route or another time

of day to go.

nAs you get the chance, make changes in your own life to reduce the amount of transportation you consume. Change your trip-making patterns, and change your consumption patterns to favor products that are produced closer to home.

nTune up the old bike and use it once in a while — for trips that begin at your own front door instead of at a trailhead that you have to drive to.

Pretty radical? Not at all. Pretty pragmatic, actually. Remember — we've got a \$30 billion incentive. —

# Choose Environmental Excellence

by Brian Alferman

Choose Environmental Excellence Project Manager

Choose Environmental Excellence (CEE) is fast becoming Missouri's environmental education program. This FREE program offers materials, experience and connects a network of people trying to effect the same change in their own communities that is needed in all of Missouri! The process has proven to bring positive results not only to local environments but also in bringing different groups of each community together in a way that often carries over into other facets of community life.

**“Choose Environmental Excellence gets to the heart of addressing the problems and solutions that we face right in our own backyards.”**

Seven CEE communities now exist in Missouri serving over 85% of the state's population. These “chapters” are providing environmental education and action opportunities to their citizens, businesses, schools, and governments tailored to their communities.

One outstanding example of a new CEE community is Choose Environmental Excellence-Gateway Region (CEE-GR), which serves the greater St. Louis area. CEE-GR took off in the spring of 2000, and launched a web site packed with information, a school outreach program, and a quarterly newsletter.



The Board of this independently organized non-profit organization is a dynamic mixture of big business representatives, citizens and local environmental organizations. They hosted the well attended first annual “Environmental Excellence Awards” dinner in Forest Park, where they honored four businesses, one government agency, four organizations, two public school districts, two elementary schools, and one institute of higher learning.

The web site, [www.cee-gr.org](http://www.cee-gr.org), averages 2,000 visits per month, and is frequently a news link from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch's PostNet Community Web service. The Regional Chamber and Growth Association (RCGA) has embraced the philosophy of Choose Environmental Excellence, and has promoted it in several ways, including hosting a “Waste Summit” on September 20 for key people in the waste management and recycling community to discuss waste issues and how CEE-GR might better serve the community in the future.

In western Missouri, Kitty Schubert with the City of St. Joseph believes that, “the Choose Environmental Excellence program has been the catalyst needed to bring business and neighborhood partners together to address community concerns.” She and representatives of businesses, schools, a grass-roots environmental organization, and citizens, have been meeting regularly for over a year to discuss the best ways to teach the entire community how simple and important it is to change everyday behavior.

This change reflects how the community has taken responsibility for their environment. As Andrea Johnson, Kansas City area CEE Coordinator, says, “finding the right group of volunteers in the community is the tough part; the rest is a fun process of picking which challenge to address first and designing unique ways to address it.”

Choose Environmental Excellence gets to the heart of addressing the problems and solutions that we face right in our own backyards.

Springfield and Southwest Missouri are also beginning to make changes.

“Citizens in Southwest Missouri place a high value on our environmental quality of life,” says Barbara Lucks, Materials Recovery/Education Coordinator for the City of Springfield. “Currently, we are challenged by both a fragile topography and very rapid growth.”

Southwest Missouri is fortunate enough to have beautiful naturally occurring features like

lakes, streams, rivers, rolling hills, and other natural scenery that attracts millions of visitors to the area each year. This makes protection of the envi-

**“Seven Choose Environmental Excellence communities now exist in Missouri serving over 85% of the state's population.”**

ronment not only a moral responsibility but also an economic necessity. “The quality of our environment is very important, not only to our quality of life, but also to the health of our economic base,” Barbara states. “CEE gives us the opportunity to increase awareness of the importance of protecting our environment, while at the same time, offering positive reinforcement to those who take steps to implement proactive practices and programs.”

One person, one business, one government department, one community at a time, and soon all of Missouri will be choosing environmental excellence. If we all do a little, we all do a lot.

Call 1-(888)895-3605, visit [www.environment-excellence.org](http://www.environment-excellence.org), or drop us a line at Choose Environmental Excellence, P.O. Box 10220, Kansas City, MO 64171. —



## I want to destroy “the environment”—for our families, for our future

by John Kurmann

Now, now, save your rope—I haven't gone over to “the other side” (whatever that might be), so there's no need to string me up from the nearest old-growth tree (besides, the near ones ain't that old and the old ones ain't that near). I can't be held responsible for destroying something that doesn't exist, now can I (note the quotes)? Let's go to the Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language (1989):

environment, n. 1. the aggregate of surrounding things, conditions, or influences, esp. as affecting the existence or development of someone or

something. 2. the act of environing. 3. the state of being environed.

Okay, now, first of all, the term “environment,” as you can see from the definition above, can be applied in many different ways. You can speak of “a child's home environment,” “a workplace environment,” and so on. Since this is the Ozark Sierran, however, “the environment” I referred to in the title is what is more specifically referred to as “the natural environment,” as in “the environment” that the Sierra Club claims to be “protecting...for our families, for our future.” So, where is this “environment”?

Well, if you're like most people, you think of the environment as something “out there,” as

“everything that surrounds people and the things people have made.” Which is understandable, based on the definition above, a short version of which has accurately been written as “that which surrounds.” I got a kweshchun for ya, tho': Where exactly does “the environment” leave off and “the human world” begin?

The air that I breathe into my lungs to get the oxygen I need to live came from “out there,” of course. And when I breathe it back out, where does it go? Back “out there,” where the trees and other plants will take the carbon dioxide I've released and use it for their own life and growth. They will return oxygen to the atmosphere, which will be

continued on page 7...“the environment”



“the environment”.....continued from page 6

breathed in by many other kinds of animal life, who will then breathe back out carbon dioxide, which plants will take in again, all in a continual cycle.

We are all of one breath.

The water that I drink into my belly, the water that makes up the vast majority of my body, came from “out there,” of course, and when I pee and sweat, it returns. This same water has passed through untold other plants and animals since the beginning of life, and will continue to pass through other living creatures long after I live no more.

We all drink from the same cup.

The food that I take in to nourish myself, to provide the energy I need to walk, and drum, and dance, and that becomes my very self, came from “out there,” of course. It came from other living creatures in the community. I don’t have a permanent claim on it, however. I am always losing bits of it—shed skin, lost hair, and so on—which become the food of others in the community. Tiny creatures (and maybe some not-so-tiny) are making their living from my life right now, in my eye-lashes, my intestines, and sometimes in my very cells. When I die, I will surrender the fire of my life back to the fire of all life and become food for whatever finds me. The organic molecules of life, too, are continually cycled from one life to the next—no one is untouched, no one above feeding

and being fed upon (though we may try to deny this). The food chain is not a length with two ends, arranged hierarchically, the way it’s usually visualized—it’s not really like a chain at all. It is truly a web, where every creature’s life is intertwined with all the others, especially those it feeds upon and those that feed upon it.

We all eat from the same feast.

Where do I leave off—where does “the environment” begin? I can see no meaningful, definable point. The term “environment” assumes that I am in some way separate from “that which surrounds” me, but this is a delusion—and that delusion is what I want to destroy.

“The environment” doesn’t really exist as it has been conceived, so it can’t be destroyed in any physical sense, but when we think in those terms—when we imagine ourselves somehow separate—we live as though we’re separate: We live what we think. And this false sense of separation makes it possible for us to destroy what does exist—the magnificent living world we are inextricably part of. In destroying it, we destroy ourselves.

Moreover, not only is “the environment” a dangerous, destructive delusion, it’s a drab and boring one. It’s no wonder we’ve failed to awaken the people of the world to saving the world—we’ve largely surrendered to the dry, heartless language of the regulation-writer, of the bureaucrat. If the world is saved, I think it will be because a great

many of the people who are destroying the world (and please know that not all people are, though it can seem like it when you’re immersed in our culture) fall passionately in love with it.

Does “the environment” fire your passion? You may love that spot by the bend in the river, or the woods just beyond the reach of the suburbs, or even the park down the street where you take the kids, but can you muster much love for “the environment”? I can’t, and I think it’s clear most other people don’t, either.

I say it’s time for new language, language that truly conveys our place as part of the world, and that inspires us to save this awesome blue-and-white beauty from the war our growth-addicted culture has been waging on it for ten thousand years. It’s hard to learn new language when it challenges your conception of the world, but, in practicing to speak differently, I think we’ll learn to think—and therefore live—differently. Which just might make it possible to save the world.

If you love the world, please, join me in destroying “the environment.”

John Kurmann has an earnest desire to save the world, thinks of himself as a community (of life) activist, and has been a Sierra Club member for about four years. To contact him with any questions or comments about this article, please send an e-mail to [dsdnt@kctera.net](mailto:dsdnt@kctera.net). —

## Is There Any Such Thing As “Smart Growth”?

by John Kurmann

The concept of “smart growth” seems to be popping up everywhere these days, in newspaper articles, mayoral elections, planning meetings, and even on the lips of a certain Vice President of the United States of America. Its proponents within the green establishment decry folks who refuse to embrace the advocacy of smart growth as “environmental purists” and criticize us as too inflexible, too uncompromising, too unrealistic. As one who has argued that “smart growth” in this context is an oxymoron, I’d like to tell you why. I’ll begin with a parable:

“Good morning, Dr. Mason.”

“Good morning, Dr. Ling. Thank you for taking time to consult with me on Mr. Islan’s case.”

“Happy to be able to help. So, give me the particulars.”

“Islan is a 42-year-old male with advanced arteriosclerosis. If his condition is left untreated, he could suffer cardiac arrest or a stroke at any time, and his current health is terrible. He suffers excruciating chest pains and has to restrict his activities drastically—he can barely walk up a flight of stairs, and he has to rest after he does. I don’t expect him to live more than another year in this condition. I’ve talked to him about a regimen of lifestyle modifications, recommending a diet with less than 10 percent total fat and minimal saturated fat, exercise, meditation and other stress reduction techniques. Even though this treatment promises to clear the blockages, improve his quality of life and allow him to live to a ripe, old age, he’s balking. He refuses to make major lifestyle changes. He says he can’t, that I’m just asking too much.”

“Have you talked to him about surgery followed by drug therapy and less drastic dietary and behavioral modifications? Less red meat, more chicken, a walking program, that sort of thing?”

“Sure, that’s what he wants to do. In his condition, though, that’ll just slow the progression of

the disease. You know surgery can only clear the worst blockages—we can’t clean out every bit of plaque from his arterial system. Without real dietary change and exercise, his body’s blood-flow will only become more blocked. At best, he’ll live another two, maybe five, years, and his quality of life will continue to deteriorate.”

“I hear you, Steve, but you’ve got to be realistic. If that’s all he’s willing to do then you’ll just have to accept it. Maybe in a few months or a year he’ll be ready to do more. You can only do what he’ll let you do.”

“I guess you’re right, but I don’t feel like it’s enough.”

Three years, four months, six days and thirteen hours later, Mr. Islan’s heart stopped. He suffered terrible chest pains and weakness up to the end, including every day of the extra two years, four months, six days and thirteen hours that “realism” bought him.

The criticism that one is too much of a “purist” is only valid if the same goals can be met while accepting a lesser standard. If that isn’t the case, then one is not a purist but a realist (in the genuine sense). I see no evidence that any standard lesser than an end to growth will do if our goal is saving the world—and what other goal is worth pursuing? What, after all, is the problem here? We’re in this global crisis because of the rapid, massive expansion of our claim on the biosphere. We’ve gotten ourselves into this fine mess because the vast majority of the world’s human population now lives a single basic lifestyle—founded on perpetual growth—and treats the world in a single way—as human property. Despite many differences in detail, at the most basic level of worldview and lifestyle most of the six billion or so humans now alive are part of a single civilizational culture. In raw terms, what does our growth mean to the world? Every bit of growing we do deprives some other member of the community of life of the

resources it needs to survive. By our population growth, we are converting ever-more of the world’s living matter—its biomass—into human living matter—human flesh—and all the resources we use which were living matter: food, trees, medicinal plants, cotton, hemp, and so on. As ever-more of the world’s biomass is converted into us and our stuff, inevitably ever-less of it can be anything else—the world can only support so much total biomass—whether that “anything else” is bald eagles and California condors and gray whales and redwoods, or dung beetles and pallid sturgeon and obscure species of earthworms and plants none of us has ever even bothered to name. Our growth means more than that, though, because we use enormous amounts of nonliving matter to support our lifestyles, too. As we increase our numbers—as we grow—we also grow the amount of inorganic materials we appropriate for human use—fossil fuels, metals, that sort of thing—and consequently increase the damage done in their extraction, processing and use. We and the rest of the community of life are drowning in the waste we’ve created, and we’re shredding the web of life as we strip-mine the planet, devastating ancient, evolved ecosystems every step of the way. The fact of the matter is that we don’t know what the biosphere’s limits are. We could be beyond them already, though I certainly hope not (and I behave as though we’re not so that I can have hope for the world). If we’re not, there’s still no way to know just which bit of additional growth will push us over the precipice. Whatever the limits are, our good sense tells us that growth must stop at some point (and probably very soon) if we are to save the world (including ourselves, as we are inextricably part of it). Perpetual growth on a finite planet is a physical impossibility.

Of course it makes sense to realistically accept that we’re not on the verge of convincing the rest of the people of our culture to abandon

continued on page 8...“smart growth”

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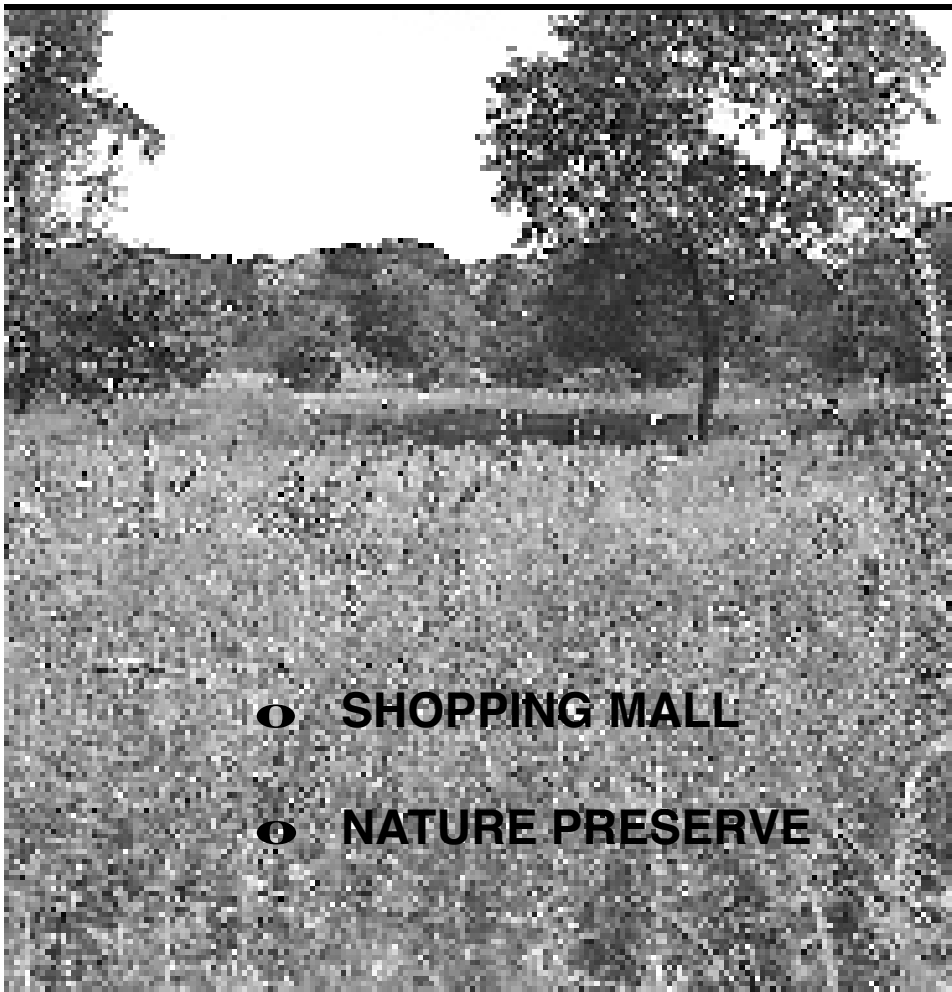


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"smart growth?".....continued from page 7

this growth-bound lifestyle (we don't have to persuade the people of the remaining other cultures—tribal cultures—because they don't live like this). Accepting that which we aren't yet able to achieve, however, is not at all the same as advocating the very thing which is devouring the world (albeit less of it). Our growth is the world-destroyer, and I don't think it makes any sense to spend our time trying to convince those around us to pursue a program which at best will only result in our destroying the world at a more leisurely pace. They may not listen to us when we tell them what it's really going to take to turn things around, but at least they'll know what they need to know to make an honest choice.

"Smart growth" is now the environmental issue of the moment. We know this because even politicians are climbing aboard this bandwagon (reason enough to question its merits, since most only follow their constituents down the path of easy answers—which aren't genuine answers at all). Many green groups, including the Sierra Club, have embraced the idea because they see it as a way of actually getting something done about uncontrolled growth—and they're right, it is "something." Given that any bit of growth may be the last bit the world can stand, though, it would be far more accurate to dub this concept "slightly-less-stupid growth." I am convinced that "smart growth" advocacy is not compromise but capitulation. Do we really want to save this patient or not? —





# Mountains Without Handrails

by Joseph Sax

reviewed by Caroline Pufalt

**M**ountains Without Handrails was originally published in 1980. For people who are interested in appropriate recreation in our National Parks and other public lands, this book is one of those classics that should be read and then re read about every decade. For me though, this was my first reading and how I wish I would have encountered it earlier. It clarified some ideas I had been mulling over and introduced me to new thoughts and historical perspectives.

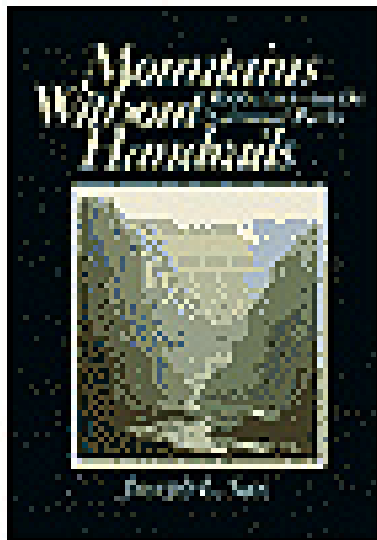
I was encouraged to read Mountains Without Handrails by Dick Hingston. Dick is a Sierran from Arizona who has worked for years to combat noise pollution in our National Parks, primarily from overflights. He has especially focused on the overflight issue in Grand Canyon National Park. Having learned of that ongoing battle, I was able to see the special relevance of the ideas that Mr. Sax presents in his book.

Mr. Sax argues for the promotion of what he calls "contemplative recreation." Contemplative recreation is grounded in the natural features, natural pace and atmosphere each park provides. It is closely related to aesthetic appreciation but should be more than passive observation of scenic beauty.

To reach the degree of understanding of contemplative recreation that the author wants to share with the reader, Mr. Sax reviews the history of the creation and original purpose of our National Park System in order to point out that providing for public access to and recreation in our nation's spectacular landscapes is at the core of the park service mission. Mr. Sax refers back to an 1865 report by Frederick Law Olmstead, who was involved in managing the then state level Yosemite Park

Olmstead wrote that the first job of parks is

to preserve scenery. His hope was for that scenery and the whole park setting to provide an opportunity for individuals to experience a time outside the controls and pressures of our everyday lives; to find a place where one could be free of the judgment of others and set ones own agenda. Mr. Sax agrees with this perspective but emphasizes that today we must encourage those individual agendas not to be at cross purposes with each park's pace and setting. Thus, Mr. Sax argues against motorized recreation, such as ORVs, but not against a moderate amount of scenic drive opportunities which reach a segment of visitors for whom circumstances permit



only this less rigorous recreation.

Mr. Sax argues that park administrators should avoid the temptation to provide too much entertainment or resort-like accommodations for park visitors. His hope is that by facing wildness, visitors must bend to its limitations but set personal goals so as to achieve an individual experience and accomplishment. For some that accomplish-

ment may be a back country hike. For others it may simply be a modest day hike and the realization that they can enjoy encountering nature and observing it. The individual choices and limits set may simply be the length of the hike, the terrain chosen, and variable time spent in observations. But for our fast paced, entertainment packaged, commercialized culture this may be an important first step.

Advocates of this recreational approach are then going against the grain of much that is popular in our culture. At the same time this approach has support within the Park Service and among a sizable segment of the American public who, although they may enjoy "resort like" conveniences, recognize that our National Parks need to preserve a less commercialized atmosphere. It is the job of advocates of contemplative recreation (whom Mr. Sax calls preservationists) to keep that support alive and enlarge it through education, example and hard work. According to Mr. Sax, preservationists are not the elitists they are often accused of being. Rather, they are moralists and social educators.

Moralists may not sound like much of an improvement over elitists as a moniker, but it does say more of what we hope to be about and what the National Parks should be about. After all the parks are for the people, but the point is that people must be willing to accept the lack of "handrails" to guide them through the park and take responsibility for enjoying the park on its own terms. Adapting to the terms that nature sets and finding ones own path to its appreciation is the real joy of recreation.

Mountains Without Handrails is a short book, only 113 pages. But those 113 pages are packed with clear thoughts, useful historical perspectives and inspiration that is relevant today. It has recently been reprinted by the University of Michigan Press. —

## Chip Mills Remain Threat to Ozark Forests

by Roy C. Hengerson

**T**he Governor's Chip Mill Advisory Committee ended its work and completed its report in August, 2000. The recommendations contained in the report are mostly weak – voluntary measures that may gradually improve the state of forest management in Missouri, but that are completely incapable of controlling the massive damage to forest eco-systems in areas with high capacity chip mills.

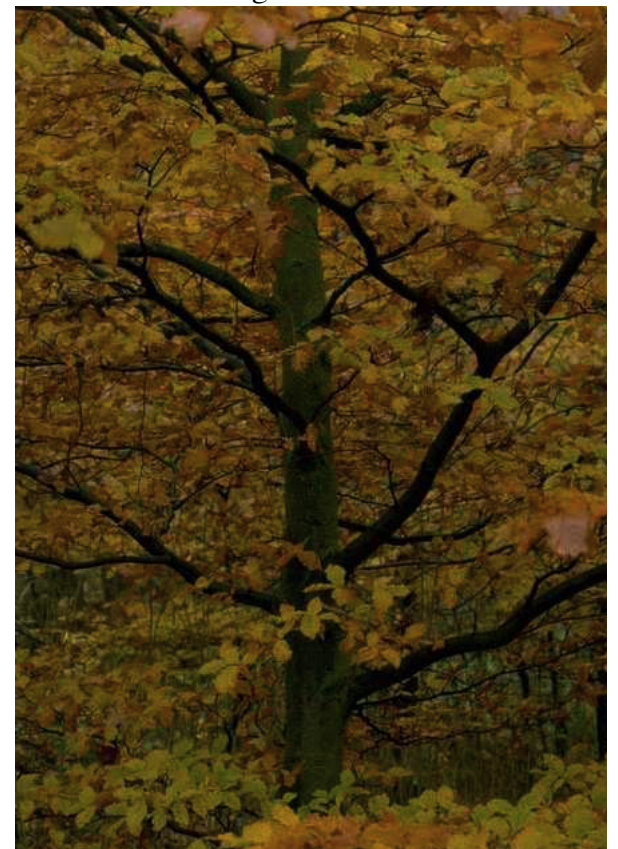
Since the report was released, Missouri's environmental community has quietly been discussing ideas and planning actions that would pick up where the Advisory Committee left off. Particularly, there is broad agreement that some state legislation is needed to protect Missouri's forests from large scale industrial forestry. An initial meeting was held on September 10 to begin the work of crafting legislation, finding sponsors for a chip mill bill or possibly several bills, and developing strategies for achieving passage of such bill(s). Additional meetings are scheduled.

There are two main ideas for state leg-

islation. One is a bill that would focus exclusively on large chip mills. The other is for a more comprehensive forest practices act that would insure that minimum standards are met when trees are logged, whether on public or private lands. Several states already have such forest practices laws, such as Washington and Oregon. A number of southeastern states, also faced with the threats from large chip mills, have enacted various proposals directed specifically at chip mills.

Working groups have been formed to make progress on a citizen's campaign to enact legislation to control industrial forestry operations. These include a media team, an outreach team, a team to work on writing legislation, and teams working on development of campaign materials and action networks. The Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club is working with other organizations and individuals in this effort. If you have an interest in protecting Missouri's forests from the threat of high capacity chip mills, please let me know. We will add you to the network of citizens we are developing.

Contact: Roy Hengerson at 573-635-8066 or by e-mail at [roy.hengerson@sierraclub.org](mailto:roy.hengerson@sierraclub.org) —



# Do jobs have to come at the expense of the environment?

According to Gold & Green 2000, a new report from the Institute for Southern Studies, the answer is no. The report finds that states with the highest environmental grades also boast the best economies — debunking the “jobs vs. the environment” myth.

The Institute presents this entire report on-line, complete with state-by-state reports on every state and a full set of Internet links to over 40 data sources.

## Gold and Green 2000

States with the highest environmental standards also boast the best economic performance, finds Gold & Green 2000, a new report from the Institute for Southern Studies.

The study ranks states on 20 “gold” economic and 20 “green” environmental indicators to provide a telling snapshot that diffuses the “jobs versus the environment” myth:

Seven states rank in the top 15 for both economic and environmental health. Vermont, Rhode Island and Minnesota rank in the top six on both lists. Other “top performers” on both scales are Colorado, Maryland, Maine, and Wisconsin.

Conversely, 10 states — mostly in the South — are among the worst 15 on both lists. For example, Louisiana ranks 48th on economic performance and 50th on the environment. Others in the cellar are: Alabama, Texas, Tennessee, Mississippi, Indiana, Arkansas, West Virginia, Kentucky, and South Carolina.

The report is an updated version of a similar study authored by the Institute in 1994. The original “Gold and Green” had similar findings, and comparisons of the 1994 and 2000 studies offer a useful yardstick for gauging which states are improving — or falling behind — on their environmental and economic records. For example: While there was some jockeying among “bottom performers” — those ranking near the bottom on both environmental and economic scales — since the 1994 edition of the study, only two states managed to escape from the bottom of the barrel in 2000: Ohio and Oklahoma. Since 1994, the list of environmental and economic “top performers” has seen more turn-over, with Rhode Island and Maine adding themselves to the honor role. While New Hampshire and Massachusetts continue to

post strong economic numbers, greater environmental threats removed them from the top of the list. Similarly, the strong environmental records of Hawaii and Oregon could not offset these states’ sub-par economic performance.

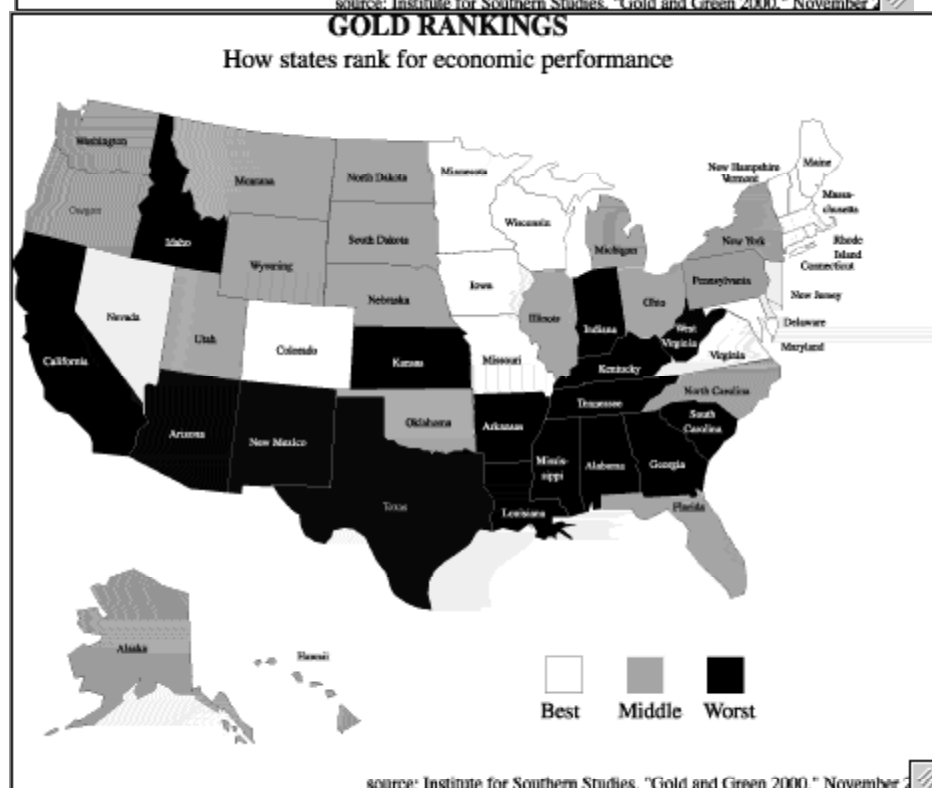
For printed copies of Gold and Green 2000 (\$35), or for information on how to join the Institute for Southern Studies — which includes a year’s subscription to Southern Exposure magazine and discounts on research reports — please write to: ISS, PO Box 531, Durham, NC 27702 or visit their website: [www.southernstudies.org](http://www.southernstudies.org). —

## Top Performers

- Vermont (gold rank 3, green rank 1)
- Minnesota (gold 2, green 6)
- Rhode Island (gold 15, green 4)
- Colorado (gold 5, green 14)
- Maine (gold 13, green 6)
- Maryland (gold 6, green 15)
- Wisconsin (gold 11, green 12)

## Bottom Performers

- South Carolina (gold rank 38, green rank 45)
- Kentucky (gold 44, green 41)
- West Virginia (gold 46, green 39)
- Arkansas (gold 49, green 37)
- Indiana (gold 40, green 48)
- Mississippi (gold 50, green 38)
- Tennessee (gold 45, green 44)
- Texas (gold 43, green 46)
- Alabama (gold 47, green 49)
- Louisiana (gold 48, green 50)



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# Outings Continued

**Feb. 24–25 (Sat–Sun) Trail maintenance on the Blair Creek section of the Ozark Trail.** We will work the section from the South Box north to Sugarcamp Hollow. Common commissary for Saturday night dinner. Menu suggestions welcome. Bob Gestel (636)296–8975, or Paul Stupperich (314)429–4352.

## Thomas Hart Benton Group

**Jan. 6–7 (Sat–Sun) Winter Campout.** Our traditional winter trip, with a day hike along the shores of Perry Lake followed by a night of camping not far from the cars. Scott Hooper (816)561–0575, scott@hooper.net.

**Jan. 14 (Sun) Crown Center Ice Skating, Kansas City, MO.** Enjoy winter fun at Crown Center's Ice Terrace. Skate rental available. Dan & Donna Clark Fuller (816)779–7284, donnadan@gvi.net.

**Jan. 27 (Sat, 8 am) Shutterbug Hike #2.** Bring your camera and join professional nature photographers Kevin Sink and Pat Whalen as we explore a couple of hideaways to be featured in

an upcoming book, *Kansas City Wildlands*. Limit 20. Steve Hassler (913)599–6028, hassler@gvi.net.

**Feb. 3 (Sat) Beginning Backpacking Workshop, Lakeside Nature Center in Swope Park, Kansas City, MO.** Get basic backpacking tips from our experienced outings leaders. Dan Fuller (816)779–7284, donnadan@gvi.net.

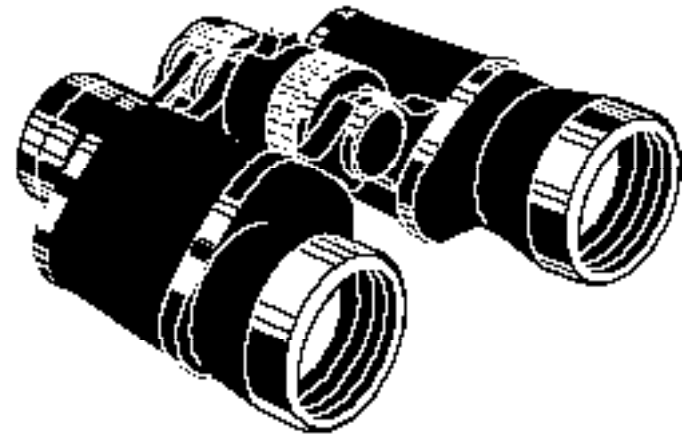
**Feb. 10–11 (Sat–Sun) Osage Wilderness Backpacking, near Osceola, MO.** This seven-mile trail near Osceola, MO, is one of our favorites. Scott Hooper (816)561–0575, scott@hooper.net.

**Feb. 17 (Sat) Rockhaven Trail, South Shore, Clinton Lake, near Lawrence, KS.** Join us as we explore one of three parallel trails along the South Shore of Clinton Lake. Steve Hassler (913)599–6028, hassler@gvi.net.

**Feb. 23 (Fri, 6 pm) Restaurant Outing at Union Cafe, Kansas City, MO.** Come join us in beautiful Union Station to dine at Union Cafe. Please call Gale by February 18 to reserve a place. Gale

Burrus (816)763–5120, gburrus@worldnet.att.net.

**Feb. 25 (Sun) Birdwatching at Schell–Osage Wildlife Area near Rich Hill, MO.** See Missouri's waterfowl and other birds on their spring migration. Dan & Donna Clark Fuller (816)779–7284, donnadan@gvi.net.



## OT is no AT

by Scott Hooper

No one could accuse the organizers of the Ozark Trail of not thinking big.

Their name and logo are reminiscent of the granddaddy of all long trails, the Appalachian Trail, and there's talk of linking Missouri's OT with the Ozark Highlands Trail in Arkansas, creating one long, wooded walk from Fort Smith to St. Louis.

But as a group of us from the Kansas City area learned recently, the OT has a problem with thinking small.

From what we saw on a 20-mile stretch from Bunker to the Current River, small things like marking the route and maintaining the trail aren't the OT's strong point.

We wanted to hike the Blair Creek Trail. It

runs through a lovely portion of the Ozarks in the south-central part of the state, and we were there on a delightful fall weekend. But after a remarkably short distance, trail markers disappeared. And then the brambles that had grown up since the last set of clippers had come down the trail started snagging at us. Made me wish I had my old Army dogtags around my neck, so when I passed out my hiking partners would know my blood type was B+.

Trees that had blown down at least a couple of years before blocked section after section. Combine that with poor maintenance and signage, and it was often hard to tell where the trail went after the obstruction.

We lost the trail altogether at one point — right after a major stream crossing, an especially obvious place for trail markers.

At another point, a major series of switchbacks started right where the trail seemed ready to

cross a creek. No signage there telling you to double back, nor at any of the other turns as the trail headed up the hill. Worse yet, when the trail followed a road, which it often did, there would often be no signage for huge, long sections. Someone apparently assumed that once you're on a road, you should know to stay on the road. But even with map in hand, it was hard to tell whether the trail did indeed stay on the road.

The OT is even more poorly marked when compared to its Arkansas cousin. Not only does the OHT have great signage and maintenance, hikers always have author/photographer Tim Ernst's detailed descriptions to fall back on.

We're rooting for the OT to get its act together. But until they do, give money, donate time — but be careful about venturing out on the trail with a pack on your back. —



# OZARK CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

## Eastern Missouri Group

**Jan. 1 (Mon) For this New Year's hike at Meramec State Park we will add a new glade and about a half mile to our hike.** Six or more great views, springs, glades, caves, and many other sites are waiting for us on this first day of 2001. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352.

**Jan. 5 (Fri) Cuivre River State Park.** Five-six mile hike. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 pm, week nights only).

**Jan. 6-7 (Sat-Sun) Our 6th annual winter backpack trip.** Where we go will depend on weather and driving conditions. But we have had 70 degrees and sunny and 12 degrees and snowing on our previous trips. Participants should be experienced in cold weather camping. Paul Stupperich (324)429-4352, or Bob Gestel (636)296-8975.

**Jan. 6-7 (Sat-Sun) Glade restoration.** Come join us in restoring and learning about native wildflower and animal habitat at Washington State Park. The bonfires will keep you warm! Come either or both days; stay overnight for free. Susan Farrington 1(636)583-0948 or leave a message at (314)577-9402, or Jo Aerne (314)664-8299, or jaerne@cpicorp.com.

**Jan. 12 (Fri) Hike at Pere Marquette and look for eagles.** Five-seven miles. Go out for late lunch afterwards. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 pm, week nights only).

**Jan. 13 (Sat) Highway Cleanup.** Red-tailed hawks perched along the highway deserve a better view. Please join us. Diane DuBois (314)721-0594.

**Jan. 13 (Sat) Day hike from Marble Creek to Crane Lake.** Nine miles. Moderate difficulty. June Stevens (314)822-3430.

**Jan. 14 (Sun, 3 pm) Slide-video-photo party, at Sierra Club's new office.** 7164 Manchester in Maplewood. View vacation pictures and then go out for dinner afterwards. Jim Nyberg (314)725-0767, or Ann Eggebrecht (314)725-1560.

**Jan. 19 (Fri) Hike the 12 mile historic Greenrock trail near St. Louis.** Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 pm, week nights only).

**Jan. 20 (Sat) Eagle viewing on the Chain-of-Rocks Bridge.** Come see the eagles soar along the Mississippi River from Trailnet's renovated bridge. Hot chocolate afterwards. Bring binoculars. Jim Rhodes (314)821-7758.

**Jan. 20-21 (Sat-Sun) Trail maintenance on the Blair Creek section of the Ozark Trail.** If weather permits we will clean up what remains to be done from Sugarcamp Hollow to the North Box. Common commissary Saturday night dinner. Menu suggestions welcome. Bob Gestel (636)296-8975, or Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352.

**Jan. 26 (Fri) Explore Meramec Conservation Area across from Meramec State Park.** About 7 miles. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 pm, week nights only).

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

**Jan. 27 (Sat) Get your money's worth with a two for one 7-8 mile hike!** We'll start at Millstream Gardens which offers scenic overlooks of the shut-ins on the St. Francis River. From there we'll hike to the Silver Mines area. Here, we'll do a loop that crosses the dam, a class 2 scramble. Optional, for the less adventurous, is a crossing of the old highway D bridge. You won't want to miss this hike as it is filled with many breathtaking overlooks. Moderate, with a couple of short but steep hills. Jack Longacre (573)546-5255, or Glenn Wolters (314)845-5859.

**Jan. 28 (Sun) We will hike along the Ozark Trail for about 4 miles to a glade for great views.** We will spend time exploring Bell Mountain before hiking back to our cars. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352.

**Feb. 2 (Fri) Get your exercise at Jefferson Barracks County Park.** Five-six miles on paved trail. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 pm, week nights only).

**Feb. 3-4 (Sat-Sun) Backpack trip to the St. Francis Mountains.** George Behrens (314)821-0247 (after 6 pm only).

**Feb. 3-4 (Sat-Sun) Glade restoration.** Come join us in restoring wildflower and tarantula habitat at Meramec State Park. The bonfires will keep you warm! Come either or both days; stay overnight for free. Susan Farrington

1(636)583-0948 or leave a message at (314)577-9402, or call Jo Aerne (314)664-8299, or jaerne@cpicorp.com.

**Feb. 9 (Fri) Bell Mountain Wilderness Area.** Seven-nine miles. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 pm, week nights only).

**Feb. 10 (Sat) This four mile hike will take us into the heart of Rock Pile Mountain Wilderness.** We will eat lunch at a beautiful shut-in before returning to our cars. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352.

**Feb. 11 (Sun) "Muir and More."** Invigorate your enthusiasm for the outdoors as we share our knowledge about Sierra Club Outings. Beginners as well as outings leaders are encouraged to attend this new workshop. Babler State Park. 9 am to 2 pm. Ann Eggebrecht (314)725-1560, or Patsy Saffold (314)843-4239.

**Feb. 16 (Fri) Hike 7-8 miles on the Ozark Trail from Highway 21 to Taum Sauk Mountain.** Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 pm, week nights only).

**Feb. 17 (Sat) Day hike at Rock Bridge Memorial State Park.** Explore and enjoy some of the unique features of this mid-Missouri park. We'll explore forests, grasslands, sinkholes, and the karst geology of this region. Possible side trip to the "pinnacle." Kathy Wodell (636)240-0675.

**Feb. 17-18 (Sat-Sun) Canoe trip on the Meramec River near Bourbon.** Come for a day float or for the weekend in a heated cabin. Pot luck dinner Saturday night. Leader will make chili. With luck we may see eagles. Canoe one or both days. We will hike if it rains. We may have some AYH members on the trip. Colin Maag (314)721-7397.

**Feb. 19 (Mon, President's Day) Tour-de-Sewer.** Want to know what biosolids pasteurization is all about? Ever see an oxidation ditch? How about UV disinfection? Join us as we see some new and advanced waste water treatment facilities in O'Fallon, Augusta, and Weldon Spring. We'll have lunch in Augusta and afterwards look at sewage! Anyone who is interested in water quality should definitely go. Jim Rhodes (314)821-7758.

**Feb. 23 (Fri) Castlewood State Park near St. Louis.** About 5 miles. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 pm, week nights only).

**Feb. 24-25 (Sat-Sun) Glade restoration.** Come join us in restoring and learning about native wildflower and animal habitat at Washington State Park. If you like bonfires, this work is for you! Come either or both days; stay overnight for free. Susan Farrington 1(636)583-0948 or leave a message at (314)577-9402, or call Jo Aerne (314)664-8299, or jaerne@cpicorp.com.

*continued on page 11*