

OZARK SIERRAN

One Earth

One Chance

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Sierra Club Helps Create Ozark Trail Association

by Don Barnes

For over a quarter of a century nature lovers pursuing a variety of outdoor activities have enjoyed the beauty and splendor of Missouri's Ozark Trail. From backpacking the Blair Creek segment for its fields of wildflowers and bluff-top views of the Current River to hiking the Karkaghne segment on the way to the largest fen complex in North America at Grasshopper Hollow, the Trail has provided countless hours of pleasure for enthusiasts.

Trails such as the Ozark Trail don't just appear with a wave of Mother Nature's hand. It takes the vision, collaboration, and cooperation of countless individuals, organizations, and institutions to create and sustain a welcoming, accommodating, useful trail.

By most accounts, the initial vision for the Ozark Trail was to build a scenic and varied route through

the Ozark Wilderness, stretching from Meramec State Park to either the Eleven Point River or Mingo National Wildlife Refuge.

Eventually the concept of a trans-Ozark trail from the St. Louis metropolitan area southwestward to the Arkansas border that would connect to the Ozark Highlands Trail was adopted. The ultimate goal became to create a 700-mile through-trail similar to more widely known trails such as the Appalachian or the Colorado. It is estimated that 550 miles of through-trail have been completed thus far on the Ozark, with between 300 to 350 miles of it in Missouri.

The Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club was one of the original non-governmental organizations associated with the establishment and initial development of the Trail. Among other actions, volunteers from the Chapter built roughly 60 miles of the original trail and have continued to maintain a 14-mile segment for over 20 years.

The Sierra Club, like many other groups that share an interest in the trail, are generally pleased with it and the fact that it has managed to not only survive but indeed continue to grow. After all, much of the construction and maintenance of what exists today has been accomplished by dedicated volunteers.

Nonetheless, the Club is concerned about pressures to adapt the Ozark Trail for a greater variety of uses and believes its future is uncertain. (See the sidebar for a list of recommendations that Sierra Club's Eastern Missouri Group Conservation Committee will present to the Ozark Trail Council in October.)

The Sierra Club is not alone in recognizing various concerns regarding the Trail's future that have surfaced over the past couple of years. In fact, a number of organizations are gaining momentum in addressing them. A common concern on everybody's mind seems to be when will the trail be completed, which is inevitably followed with how and by whom?

Numerous entities are involved with various aspects of the trail, from the Department of Natural Resources to the Sierra Club. But the recognized gov-



A view of the Current River from atop Bee Bluff, just off the Blair Creek section of the Ozark Trail.

photo by Bob Gestel

erning body for the Ozark Trail is the Ozark Trail Council. The Council is comprised mainly of land stewards who own or manage the actual land the trail traverses. They meet a couple of times a year and generally have final say in what happens with existing trail.

It has been suggested by some that it should be the responsibility of the Ozark Trail Council to take the lead in implementing a plan to complete the trail. Whether that is truly the case or not will remain to be

continued on page 7...Ozark Trail Association

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Missouri General Assembly 2003 is *Final* Year

by Carla Klein, Ozark Chapter Director

When the gavel fell the final day of the historic 2003 Missouri General Session, Sierra Club members drew a collective sigh of relief. We had survived the session where more anti-environmental bills were introduced and moved further along in the legislative process than ever before.

We had stopped the most offensive bills from being passed into law. We had won a hard fought victory on SB 36, the "Environmental Destruction Act." SB 36, you may remember, was the worst environmental bill introduced in years, including "no stricter than federal" language, environmental audit privilege, and unregulated dredge and fill operations in Missouri streams – just to mention a few. Yes, it was a time of celebration!

The celebration unfortunately was short-lived. We learned that in the final hours of the session the corporate agribusinesses and their allies in the House and Senate managed to push through confusing amendments on HB 257. What began as something positive had ended up being a disastrous bill that would roll back most of the environmental and health protections we had fought so hard for in the past decade.

Under the guise of being good for the small family farmer, this huge bill was pushed through without many portions of the bill being heard on the House floor or many legislators knowing what all the changes were. HB 257 in its final version removed all but the largest Corporate Animal Factory Operations, (CAFOs) from regulation.

Factory farms with up to 17,499 Hogs or 699,999 chickens could move into communities without any notification to adjacent landowners or county officials.

- County governments who have fought to protect their communities by limiting the number of these huge facilities for health reasons would lose that local control.
- Laws requiring these huge polluters to line their waste lagoons would no longer apply, leaving our groundwater and streams unprotected.
- HB 257 is in violation of the federal law 40CFR.122.23.
- The definition of "point source" pollutant would be changed to exclude agricultural storm water discharges and return flows where hog and chicken waste are applied for fertilizer. This has been a major contaminant for Missouri streams and groundwater.

HB 257 was an attempt by big agribusiness to exempt highly polluting facilities from any regulations that protect the environment and our communities.

Once we realized the true implications of the bill we went to work with our friends at the Missouri Rural Crisis Center and the Missouri Farmers Union, representing real family farmers. All three organizations began contacting the Governor asking him to veto this bill. Once again our members rose to the challenge—hundreds of calls and letters helped to convince the Governor that this bill was wrong for Missouri.

The Governor vetoed the bill July 9th and once again it was cause for celebration! Every other year

this would have definitely been the end of the story. However with Republicans being in charge of both the House and the Senate we knew the possibility of an override was looming in the future.

The Missouri Constitution requires that a veto session be held which gives the legislators a chance to override the Governor's vetoes. It takes a 2/3 majority in both the House and the Senate to override the Governor's veto. Only three override votes have been successful in the last 100 years in Missouri. The issue needs to be something that has a broad base of support for an override to occur. Of course the hot issues this year were guns and abortion.

House Republicans were really flexing their political muscle to see how many bills they could override their first veto session in control. We learned HB 257 was listed as one of the bills they had targeted for an override.

The first morning of veto session the abortion bill requiring a 24 hour waiting period and the concealed weapons bill flew right through with more than 2/3 majority votes required. They broke for lunch and came back with HB 257 to be the first bill to be considered for an override. What a nail biter! The attempt to override the Governor's veto failed by a vote of 59 no and 96 yes, 109 votes are required for the 2/3 majority. Because the override did not happen in the

House we finally put this horrible piece of legislation to rest.

Thanks to everyone who worked to get the message to their legislator that the Governor did the right thing to protect Missouri family farmers and the environment by over riding this botched up bill. I'd like to give a special thanks to Representatives Wes Shoemyer and Rick Johnson for raising concerns on the house floor. I can tell you there was more celebrating done on our third and final victory!

We won the battle but the war to protect Missouri's environment continues to be waged everyday. It is a victory every time we see a letter to the editor talking about environmental concerns. Every time someone cares enough to write a letter make a phone call to their elected official or talks to a friend about an environmental concern it is a victory. Our greatest weapon is the truth about how important a healthy environment is to our children's future.

When dealing with these issues on a daily basis it can be a bit wearing; knowing that we have over 9,000 members in the state of Missouri that care enough to support our work and take action at whatever level they can really helps keep us going. So, keep up the good fight because losing is not an option. ☺

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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...

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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 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.

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THE ST. JOHNS BASIN–NEW MADRID FLOODWAY PROJECT

The Gap that's far from the Mall: Part III—Project Update and Current Concerns .

by Alan R.P. Journet, Conservation Chair, Trail of Tears Group.

The St. Johns Basin–New Madrid Floodway Project of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USA–COE Memphis District) is designed to protect certain agricultural and residential areas of Southeast Missouri from the frequent severe flooding that they currently experience. Although the project promises significant human benefits and is extremely popular in the area, it threatens considerable environmental cost. This three–part series described the nature of the project (Part I), provided an interim update (Part II) and will now (Part III) explore the current situation. I would like to acknowledge the reports regarding this project authored by Tim Searchinger, Senior Attorney with Environmental Defense upon which much of this summary is based.



Figure 1. From wooded Crowley's Ridge (left) to the Arkansas border some 2.5 million acres of bottomland hardwood forest has been almost completely drained, cleared, and transformed into croplands (right).

Photo: Alan Journet

Current Status:

As you may recall, following the initial denial of water quality certification for the St. Johns Basin–New Madrid Floodway Project by the Missouri State Department of Natural Resources, the Corps elected to appeal to the Missouri Clean Water Commission which has the authority to overturn DNR decisions. An Administrative Law Judge was appointed to hear testimony regarding this appeal (initially scheduled for July) and make recommendations to the state Clean Water Commission. The Commission was expected then to render a final verdict on the project. Environmental Defense and the Missouri Coalition for the Environment filed as Defendant Interveners in support of the state DNR and in opposition to the project. The Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club, meanwhile, stood ready to intervene also on behalf of threatened habitats, species, and the environment.

As reported in the last writing (penned in June–July), apparently in response to political pressure exerted by state and federal representatives, DNR developed a proposal (detailed in Part II) to resolve the conflict between that agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This was initially rejected by the Corps but both parties subsequently entered into negotiations. The result of these negotiations was an agreement and Memorandum of Understanding to which both sides agreed and which would allow the project to go ahead. The Commission Hearing was thus rendered moot and was cancelled.

This agreement primarily affords protection to Big Oak Tree State Park in Mississippi County (see below). However, environmental opponents of the project see the agreement as essentially ignoring many other critical environmental and conservation concerns.

As a result, the Coalition for the Environment and Environmental Defense have filed an appeal with the Clean Water Commission against certification. Not surprisingly, the Corps has been granted intervention rights in the case; presumably they and DNR will argue in favor of the agreement and certification. Some time in September a hearing date on this appeal should be scheduled. Again, we await developments.



Figure 2. Big Oak Tree State Park, in southern Mississippi County, represents an island remnant of bottomland hardwood and swamp forest in a sea of cropland.

Photo: Alan Journet

The Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding:

Big Oak Tree State Park:

Big Oak Tree State Park (BOTSP) lies in the Mississippi lowlands that extend from forested Crowley's Ridge (Figure 1) at Scott City to the Arkansas border. The park is an island remnant of bottomland hardwood forest in a sea of drained agricultural cropland that frequently floods during late winter and spring (Figures 2 & 3).

This park is one of the crown jewels of the Missouri State Parks system. It contains one of the few remnants of old growth bottomland hardwood

and swamp forest in the southeastern United States. It is not only listed as a Missouri Natural Area, but is also a National Natural Landmark because it contains several state and national champion trees (Figure 4).

In its initial Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (1999 SEIS), the Corps so deeply misunderstood the issues affecting the bottomland hardwood and swamp forest of BOTSP that they argued greater flood protection would actually benefit the biological community of the park. Fortunately, in response to comments received, the Corps subsequently recognized the critical importance of flooding to the continued health of the park. By accepting the Memorandum of Understanding, the Corps has finally acknowledged the value of the park. This agreement affords the park additional protection as follows:

- Eighteen hundred acres of land immediately surrounding the park will be acquired from willing sellers and will be restored by planting seedlings of species known to occur in the park using regional seed sources.
- A hydrology project will be undertaken based on a plan developed by DNR that involves constructing a levee system surrounding the park allowing the water level of the park to be managed. The source of floodwater for the park will be the Mississippi River, water entering via a gated culvert.

Despite research evidence suggesting that the problem faced by the natural communities of BOTSP has been that they are suffering from drying soils as a result of the extremely effective drainage system in the region, many local residents continue to argue that BOTSP is suffering because flood frequency and duration have increased recently compared to historical patterns. A possible reason for the misconception of local residents regarding flooding history can be seen in the New Madrid Interior Pool flooding data from 1943–1974 presented by the Corps in their 2002 SEIS. These data show that during this 32 year period floods extended to the 295 ft level until June once, May a further three times, and through April an additional four times. This elevation represents approximately the transition between the wet and (slightly dryer) wet mesic bottomland hardwood forest zones. Meanwhile flooding extended to the lower 290 ft level, representing the approximate transition between swamp forest and wet bottomland hardwood forest, until July once, into June four further times, into May five more times, and into April another nine times. Thus the data indicate that extended flooding into May has occurred to the lower 290 ft level in about a third (ten out of 32) of the years. However, during the 32 years of the data, there were extended periods (e.g. the 1950s and late 1960s) when flooding rarely extended beyond February even to 290 ft. Residents who grew up during periods when flooding was rare might well think that recent flood events are more frequent and severe than historically – but this may be a perception fostered by unusually low water levels occurring during their youth not currently high

continued on page 4... Floodway Project

Floodway Project continued from page 4 levels.

Wetland Delineation, Mitigation, and Monitoring Requirements:

Although the state DNR initially rejected the method of wetland delineation undertaken by the Corps in assessing the number of wetland acres that would be lost, in the agreement, DNR accepted the Corps delineation method provided that the 8,375 acres of mitigation lands are purchased as a matter of priority, mitigation plans are submitted and approved prior to construction, and mitigation is implemented concurrently with project construction. The agreement also requires that any modifications to the St. Johns Bayou channel should minimize impacts both to aquatic and riparian habitats.

Meanwhile, extensive monitoring will be undertaken by the Corps to assure that no additional jurisdictional wetlands are lost following completion of the project and to assure that natural biological communities in St. Johns Basin and the New Madrid Floodway are not negatively impacted by the project. In the event that further environmental losses become evident, additional mitigation must be undertaken.

Land-fill and Pollution Requirements:

According to the agreement, the Corps will abide by current rules and regulations regarding the disposal of land-fill, especially in jurisdictional waters and will adopt a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan consistent with requirements. The Corps will also implement precautions to prevent pollution of waterways from heavy machinery and equipment.

Review of the Preferred Plan:

According to the preferred plan of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in the St Johns Bayou the set-back levee gravity gate would be closed when the Mississippi River elevation exceeds that of the bayou.



Figure 4. Among the large trees at Big Oak Tree State park are huge baldcypress, and several state or national champions (above, state champion swamp chestnut oak).

Photos: Alan Journet

Meanwhile, a 1000 ft³ pumping station would pump headwater flooding that accumulates behind the gate into the Mississippi (Figures 5 and 6). Both the ditches draining into St. Johns Bayou, and the bayou itself would be dredged and widened allowing more rapid escape of accumulated regional headwater floods.

Meanwhile, some of the ditches that drain water in and around East Prairie would also be dredged and deepened. Seemingly, however, this would afford protection to a relatively small number of homes only on the eastern edge of the city, and most of these only from 25 year cycle floods. Currently, general flooding at the south of St Johns Basin occurs because local headwater floods are trapped behind the closed gravity gate and cannot escape into the elevated Mississippi River. Flooding in East Prairie, meanwhile, is purely a local phenomenon: heavy seasonal rains cannot escape the city because of an absent or inadequate storm drain and culvert system. Currently there is no connection between the flooding Mississippi River and the St Johns Basin floodplain an arrangement that would not be changed in any way by the project.

In the New Madrid Floodway, on the other hand, the current 1500 ft gap would be closed by a levee containing a series of gates that can be opened as deemed appropriate (Figure 6). To remove headwater flooding accumulating behind the levee when the gates are closed, a 1500 ft³ pump would also be installed. According to this plan, the gates in the levee would then be opened and closed to allow partial connectivity between a flooding Mississippi and the floodway as follows: between March 1 and May 15 (the primary fish spawning season) the gravity gates should remain open until the water level rises to 284.4 ft, pumping will then commence and continue until water in the sump (i.e. behind the levee) drops to 283.4 ft. Since the water level causing a transition from the swamp forest to mesic bottomland hardwood forest is approximately 290ft, this regime would tend to drain standing water to well below swamp level.

Ongoing Concerns:

Physical Impacts:

Generally some 96% of the lower Mississippi River Valley floodplain has been cut off from the river primarily to serve agricultural purposes. Meanwhile, in Southeast Missouri only 50,000 of the 2.5 million acres of forested floodplain remain and these in only very small patches. In addition to the floodplain itself, throughout the Mississippi River tributaries enter the river and create passages for fish to reach and exit the critical nursery floodplain habitat that maintains their populations. With the construction of the levee system, these rivers now enter the river through concrete gates. While some forested

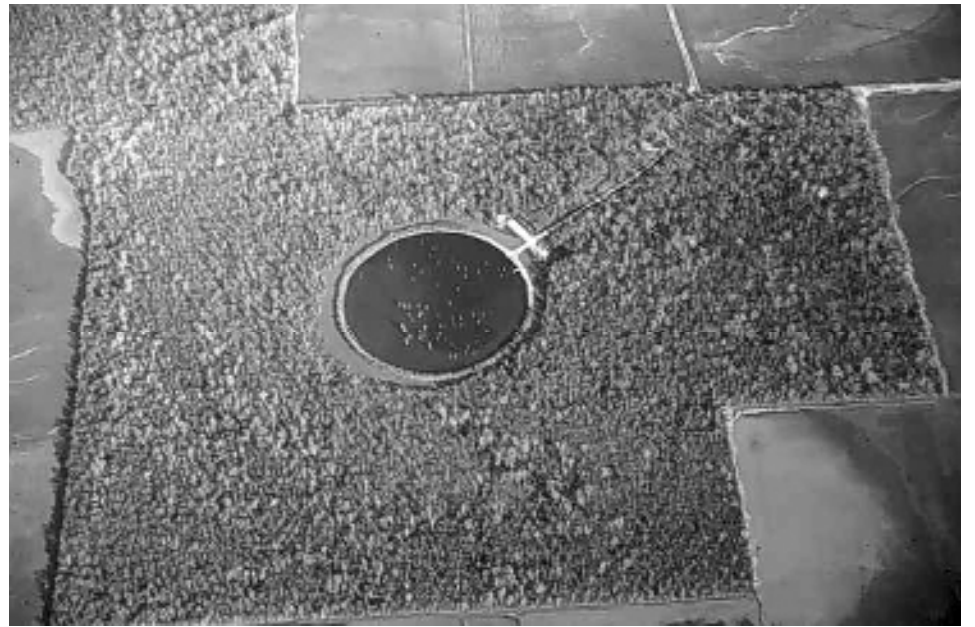


Figure 3. During late winter and early Spring, the park generally enjoys a flood regime, critical to maintaining the forest communities present.

Photo: Alan Journet

floodplain exists along the main river course outside the area protected by the levees (e.g. Donaldson Point Conservation Area and Seven Island Conservation Area), the New Madrid Floodway stands as the only backwater floodplain along the lower Mississippi. Most of this area is flooded approximately once every three years. As a result of its regime of floods the area contains a vast diversity of stream habitats including forested wetlands, swamps, flooded croplands and critically important ephemeral wetland depressions that pond during late winter and spring.

Although the preferred plan is an improvement over the initial or authorized plan because it incorporates gates in the new levee that allow controlled water flow into the floodway, the closing of these gates is clearly designed to lower the water level in the floodway to the detriment of wetland habitat and wildlife. The project will, however, assuredly benefit the few landowners farming the fields immediately adjacent to the levee. Is it a coincidence, one must wonder, that much of this land is owned by the family and trusts of New Madrid resident and Mississippi River Commissioner R.D. James?

Interestingly, according to the 2002 SEIS, the difference in the amount of land flooded between the initial plan as autho-

Dates You Need to Know

10/17-19	Annual Reunion: Osage River State Park, contact Tim Pekarek greenfellaheen@hotmail.com
11/8	Chapter ConsCom meeting: St. Louis, Missouri, contact Wallace McMullen, mcmulw@socketline1.com
11/9	Chapter ExCom meeting: St. Louis, Missouri, contact Keel Kopecky, kkopecky@kc.rr.com , (316) 966-9544

ized and the preferred plan promoted as the 'avoid and minimize' plan is very small. The authorized plan would have reduced flooding on 113 acres of woodland; 7,493 acres of farmed wetland; and 6,192 acres of non-agricultural wetland. Meanwhile, the preferred plan reduces flooding on 84.8 (i.e. 75%); 6,713 (i.e. 89.5%); and 5,542 (i.e. 89.5%) acres respectively in each of these land-use categories. The preferred avoid and minimize plan is not a substantial improvement in terms of wetland loss.

According to the 2001 SEIS the project would reduce the duration and frequency of Mississippi River backwater and St. Johns Basin headwater flooding on up to a total of 120,000 acres for a major (30 year) flood event. This, it is claimed, would potentially affect 6,461 acres of wetlands in St. Johns Basin and 11,659 in the Floodway. Interestingly, this one project allows a similar total amount of wetland acreage impacts to that authorized for all projects by the Corps in each of fiscal years 1996, 1997, and 1998.

Urban Flood Protection:

Although a critical element in the project was flood protection for East Prairie, the completed project, with its minimal efforts to dredge and channel the drainage ditches around the city, will leave the city suffering flooding once every ten years, hardly a frequency low enough to promote economic development. When the city sought to use USDA funds as the local contribution in the cost share program for the project, it was based on the project's purported contribution to urban flood protection and economic development. The problem confronted by East Prairie is flooding caused by an inadequate or absent system of culverts and internal drains; this problem, the project does not address.

Latterly, the project has been touted as affording flood protection for the residents of Pinhook who, it is argued, are isolated by floods inundating access roads. Since Pinhook is relatively distant from the New Madrid gap, it suffers serious flooding infrequently from the river though local ponding is more frequent; thus a simple solution to this problem, at much lower cost, would be to elevate the roads. Project objectives seem to change over time—variously being described as promoting agriculture, promoting economic development, or addressing community infrastructure needs, and change with location. According to reports from Washington, the project is sold in the capital as promoting economic development in the predominantly black community of East Prairie.

Wetland Delineation and Mitigation:

By changing the wetland delineation technique between editions of their SEIS reports from a requirement of 12 to 15 days of inundation, the Corps reduced the acreage of wetland impacted from 36,000 acres to half that. Furthermore, by arguing without documentation that forested wetlands will continue to receive headwater flooding even without a river con-



Figure 6. Detail of the Levee gap at New Madrid and the St. Johns Bayou exit through the set-back levee.

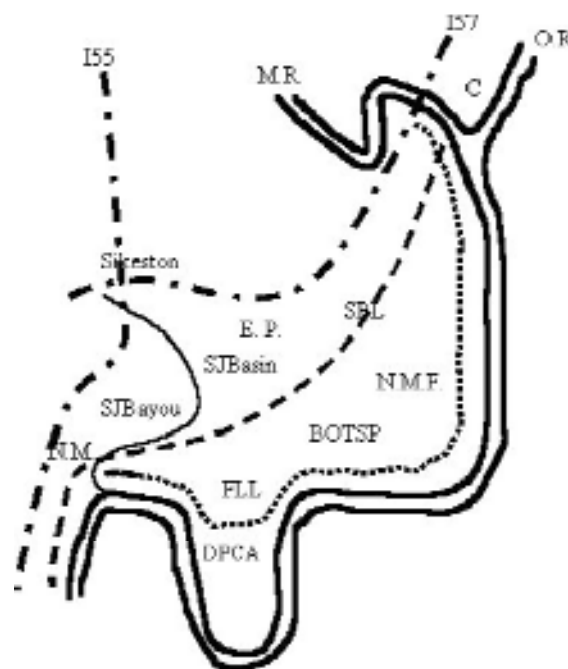


Figure 5: The St. Johns Basin and New Madrid Floodways in Southeast Missouri. BOTSP—Big Oak Tree State park, FLL—Frontline levees, SBL—set-back levee, C—Cairo, DPCA—Donaldson Point Conservation Area, E.P.—East Prairie, I55—Interstate 55, I57—Interstate 57, N.M.—New Madrid, N.M.F.—New Madrid Floodway, SJBayou—St. Johns Bayou, SJBasin—St. Johns Basin).

nection the Corps claims that many wetlands will not be affected by the project.

It is interesting to note that although legally these should have been identified in the Environmental Impact Studies, the Corps did not identify potential mitigation sites until the recent negotiations with the state DNR, and then only approximately. It appears that 100% of the sites are agricultural and require seeding, 20% are outside the levee in the river course, and another 20% are miles away, and even out of the floodplain in Cape and Bollinger Counties.

The project relies heavily on the assumption of their success at wetland mitigation by the creation of forested wetlands from agricultural land. Regrettably, we have yet to develop a sufficiently sound understanding of wetland structure and function that we can confidently predict success in mitigation efforts.

Waterfowl, Shorebirds and Amphibians:

In assessing the waterfowl habitat the Corps uses crude, non-specific Habitat Evaluation Procedures that lump species and treat them as one. Unfortunately, the species are not equivalent, have different habitat needs, and could not all benefit from the project as the SEIS claims. Not surprisingly, the use of these models is rejected by experts in the field.

While acknowledging the loss of shorebird habitat (least terns and piping plovers), the Corps offers no mitigation since it assumes that conversion to rice paddies following project completion (even though this is a speculative conversion and is denied by the assumption that more lucrative corn and soybeans will be the crop of choice) will compensate for this loss.

Critical habitat patches for amphibians are the shallow flooded depressions that remain as flood waters recede and provide breeding grounds. These are unaccounted in the SEIS.

Aquatic Wildlife:

A study in the impacted area found 37% of Missouri's 214 fish species including several species

of state conservation concern, and one considered extirpated. The 1999 SEIS acknowledged that closing the gap would eliminate 97% of the fish spawning and nursery habitat for many river species. This would necessarily have a significantly negative effect on the populations of these Mississippi River species. Nevertheless, the disruption imposed on fish nurseries caused by breaking the connection between the river and its floodplain and tributaries was largely ignored in the early SEIS. It was only in response to much critical analysis of this problem that the Corps incorporated gates within the gap-closing levee. As indicated above, the plan is to allow these gates to open during the most critical fish-spawning period. The question must be asked, then, whether fish are likely to employ these gates as access routes into and escape routes from the floodway. The first point to note, of course, is that the entire width of 1500 feet will be reduced to four 10 ft by 10 ft box culverts. Simple probability indicates that this will dramatically reduce the potential migration of fish into and out of the floodway. Furthermore, even as the Corps recognized, it is completely unknown how fish will use these gates. Given the failure of fish to use similar culverts on other streams, the answer is quite probably that fish will not use them—defeating a significant purpose for their inclusion.

The project area is home to a number of mussel species including several of state conservation concern that exist in small vulnerable populations. Although the preferred plan, especially as modified by the DNR certification requirements regarding critical channels, includes techniques to reduce habitat destruction, the survival of mussels in the area depends on the successful re-colonization of disturbed habitat from adjacent small populations. Since mussel success is dependent on the presence of fish hosts to allow larval dispersal, an absence of healthy fish populations mussels would place the mussels in great jeopardy.

Water Quality:

Where the Mississippi River empties into the Gulf of Mexico a huge 'dead zone' is evident as a result of the concentration of nitrogen escaping from agricultural lands and flowing down the river. States adjoining the Mississippi have joined with the EPA to reduce nitrogen flow by 30%. One of the most cost-effective mechanisms for reducing this flow is wetland restoration since wetlands generally serve as nitrogen traps. The potential role of the floodway in serving as a nitrogen sink was not explored despite the fact that it lies in a perfect location to serve this role.

Additionally, there is a suspicion that the project violates several water quality standards that were inadequately addressed by the 404(b)(1) analysis.

Economics:

The reported benefit /cost ratio for the proposed project is 1.1:1. This is barely above the break even point. Therefore, any miscalculations that might lower the economic benefit or raise the economic cost pose potentially serious challenges to the entire economics of the proposal.

The economics of the project are accounted using an interest rate of 2.5%, and amount which has artificially depressed the cost by probably two thirds according to Dr. Tom Stinson, Minnesota state economist from the University of Minnesota. Furthermore, the estimated benefit assumes that new

continued on page 6...**Floodway Project**

Floodway Project continued from page 5

technology will increase crop yields while input costs remain the same. This presumes that agriculture will become more profitable, so drainage improvements will be worth more tomorrow than today. This, in turn, denies the historic pattern wherein prices actually decline while yield increases and input costs rise. Additionally, since the productivity of these soils depends on the nutrient composition that annually has been replenished by flooding, there is a question about whether farming costs will rise due to the need for adding synthetic fertilizers to the input costs. Finally, it must be assumed that the mitigation lands will be taken from among current crop lands, thus reducing regional productivity benefits from the project. Not surprisingly, the costs of acquiring mitigation lands seem not to have been accurately accounted since they have yet to be determined.

National Economic Development (i.e. contributing to the national production of goods and services) was cited in each SEIS as a primary justification for the project. Unfortunately, however, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture analyses, every wetland acre drained and turned to farmland actually causes national net farm income to decline. This is because although the farmer draining wetland benefits individually, the collective sum of farmers suffer reduced income due to excess production. Thus the project probably will have a negative rather than a positive impact on National Economic Development.

The total cost of the project has been constantly listed at about \$85 million even though mitigation purchase prices are still unknown and the cost simply of seeding these croplands with hardwood is probably another \$6 million. With the inevitable cost over-runs, the final price tag is probably closer to \$100 million. A critical national question is whether the project represents a wise expenditure of this vast sum of taxpayer money at a time when budget deficits are projected to soar to multi-trillions of dollars.

West versus east (people versus people):

The overall project goal seems to be to benefit the

rural communities of Southeast Missouri by enhancing agricultural productivity in the New Madrid Floodway and St. John's Basin and thereby promoting agriculturally related enterprises in this economically depressed region of the state. Unfortunately, however, this overlooks a critical element—namely the design purpose of the floodway. When engineered and constructed in the 1920s, the plan was that flood threats to communities on the eastern bank of the Mississippi River, notably those in southern Illinois and Kentucky, would be reduced by blowing or crevassing the front line levee at Bird's Point and allowing the river to flow over its historic floodplain and out through New Madrid gap. Allowing the river to expand over some 14 miles of floodplain clearly would reduce river levels and reduce flood dangers on the eastern bank. This feature was employed to good effect in 1937. Clearly, if achieved, the goal of promoting economic development in the floodway will bring population and necessary infrastructure into harm's way. Flooding the floodway will thus be severely discouraged since it would require destruction of the newly constructed levee, devastating residents enticed into the area, destroying their possessions, and undermining any newly developed infrastructure. The net result is inevitably that the designed purpose for this floodway will be defeated and the flood threat to residents of Illinois and Kentucky is increased.

Conclusion:

From the outset, the St. Johns Basin – New Madrid Floodway project has been promoted by residents of Southeast Missouri who feel they will benefit from flood control. Regrettably, rather than affording general economic benefits, it appears that the greatest benefit would accrue to a very small number of residents farming land immediately adjacent to the current levee gap. Any general economic benefit presumably trickles down to the community even though many farmers are absentee landlords. Meanwhile, flood control benefits that have been advertised for urban centers such as East Prairie and Pinhook are

largely overstated, or could be achieved in a much more direct and less costly manner. Meanwhile, from the outset scant consideration has been accorded the vast environmental and conservation benefits provided to the region and the nation by this valuable wetland area, the last of its kind on the lower Mississippi. The fact that the Corps was required kicking and screaming all the way to pay attention to its designated responsibility for environmental protection does not generate confidence in the ability of that entity to monitor and address any environmental problems that might occur even though the agreement with DNR clearly requires this.

It is interesting to note that the outcome of this project will inevitably be the enhancement of property values especially for those few landowners adjacent to the current gap. Since property rights advocates repeatedly argue that any reduction in property values resulting from government action should be adequately compensated, consistency demands that the same advocates should here be arguing that landowners benefiting from the project should reimburse the government for property value increases resulting from taxpayer funded development.

While we are sensitive to the suffering of those whose lives are negatively impacted by frequent floods, and we would welcome proposals that genuinely address this human suffering while simultaneously balancing reasonable consideration for environmental costs, the St. Johns Basin–New Madrid Floodway project fails on too many counts. Project certification should be overturned and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be sent back to the drawing board to re-consider project objectives, and develop a set of reasonable alternatives that consistently address these stated objectives while minimizing collateral damage to the environment and wildlife.

At some point, as a nation we must make a stand in favor of our environment and against destructive development proposals such as this. Now is the time! ☞

The Ozark Chapter Begins a New Energy and Air Pollution Project

Our Chapter has received a small grant from the National Sierra Club to assist in our work of fighting air pollution and promoting clean renewable energy. We have hired Melissa Blakley with this funding. Her job will be to work with volunteers to educate the public about the environmental and health consequences created by coal burning power plants and to promote energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy options. She will concentrate on Kansas City and Springfield, as proposals to construct new coal burning power plants at these locations are presently being considered.

Great Plains Power, an unregulated company created by Kansas City Power and Light (KCPL), has recently begun the permit process for building an 850 MW coal-fired unit near the existing KCPL Iatan plant in Weston, Missouri, in Platte County. City Utilities of Springfield (CU) is also planning a coal-fired power plant near the Springfield community.

Coal burning power plants create huge emissions. They generate acid rain chemicals, emit air-borne mercury, exacerbate smog, and contribute to global climate change.

Mercury is a neurotoxin that evidence suggests can cause mental retardation and other neurological

disorders in fetuses and young children. The Missouri Department of Health has issued a statewide mercury advisory again for 2003. The contamination levels in certain fish species put children, pregnant women, and women of childbearing years at risk. The health advisory states they should not eat *any* largemouth bass anywhere in the state of Missouri.

Other pollutants associated with burning coal include sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides which are linked to asthma attacks, lung disease and premature deaths. Children are particularly susceptible to the effects of air pollution because they breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults, and because their lungs are still developing. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health found that people living within a 30-mile radius of utility smokestacks in their study had a three to four times greater chance of premature death than those living outside the area.

Also, coal-fired power plants emit huge amounts of carbon dioxide which is the primary greenhouse gas causing global warming. We know global warming has the potential to disrupt virtually all the lovely outdoor habitats we have fought to protect over the years, as well as making life difficult for humans in many ways.

Utility companies frequently choose coal-burning units when they are expanding, citing coal as a cheap and clean fuel. They consider coal cheap because the costs to human health and to the environment are silently passed on to the public, borne by individual citizens and taxpayers rather than by the facility. The public, as well as businesses, pay for the artificially low electric rates by increased visits to the doctor, hospitalizations, increased insurance rates, lost work-days, and even premature deaths.

The Sierra Club believes Missouri should be planning its future with safe, clean, renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, and by drawing on the great potential of energy efficiency. These strategies will promote healthier living conditions, will be financially beneficial for the affected citizen ratepayers, and will help to preserve the environment.

Working committees in Kansas City and Springfield have been formed and volunteers are sought to assist in various capacities with this project. You are encouraged to join in! For more information contact Melissa Blakley at 816-741-8200, or m.blakley@earthlink.net. ☞

Ozark Trail Association.....continued from page 1 seen. But one thing is certain: whoever assumes the lead in completing the trail is going to need a strong volunteer force to accomplish it.

The Ozark Trail is lucky in that regard thanks to The Ozark Trail Association (www.ozarktrail.com). This new, volunteer, non-profit group was founded in late 2002 and is a solid compliment to the Ozark Trail Council. Rather than being composed of land owners and managers, such as the Council is, the Association is comprised of trail enthusiasts who want to contribute their resources to developing, maintaining, preserving, promoting, and protecting the rugged, natural beauty of the Ozark Trail.

It was founded in part in response to research conducted by trail enthusiasts in the late 90s who were interested in getting the trail completed. Their findings indicated that successful trail systems around the country shared a common factor – they all had a strong volunteer force dedicated to their existence and well-being.

A group of the volunteers approached the Ozark Trail Council with the idea, and the Council backed the plan. According to John Roth, one of the original researchers and a founding member of The Ozark Trail Association who has bravely assumed the role of coordinating and overseeing trail construction and maintenance for the Association, providing resources for completing the missing segments of the trail is a high priority. He states:

“People want to hike a through-trail. Our (The Ozark Trail Association) primary goal is to harness the volunteer spirit in the area and make it available to the trail and land stewards. We want to be there to provide assistance in the

development of the trail, to assist with construction, maintenance, and layout.”

Mike Bollinger, chair of the EMG Conservation Committee, agreed with Roth and pointed out that the Ozark Chapter shares much common ground with the Ozark Trail Association, noting that several active individuals are members of both organizations. Bollinger comments:

“Many of our members treasure the opportunity to hike such a substantial contiguous trail in their own backyard, and we’re committed to seeing the trail completed. But we’re also concerned with how the trail will be constructed and maintained in the future. We must avoid a trail concept which attempts to please all users in all segments as it may result in widespread usage conflicts and decrease the value of the Ozark Trail to all.”

The Ozark Trail was the focus of EMG Conservation Committee discussions throughout the summer, and they developed and refined a list of Club recommendations that were endorsed by the Chapter Executive Committee at their September 7 meeting. They plan on presenting the list to the Ozark Trail Council at the council’s next meeting, scheduled for October 25. (The location of the meeting is still being determined. Check www.ozarktrail.com for updates.)

“We’d really like to see Sierra Club members interested in the future of the trail at the Ozark Trail Council meeting in October,” Bollinger said. “It’s our opinion that the development now of clear goals and objectives by the Ozark Trail Council is the best hope to simultaneously enhance the current Trail and complete the future segments in accordance with the original vision of the Trail’s founders.”



Sierra Club and Ozark Trail Association volunteers conduct maintenance and construction along the Bushy Creek section of the Trail.

photo by Bob Gestel



John Roth of the Ozark Trail Association ties the last ribbon on the new Karkaghne route.

Courtesy Ozark Trail Association



A map of the completed sections of the Ozark Trail.

Courtesy Ozark Trail Association

Sierra Club EMG Conservation Committee Recommendations to be presented to Ozark Trail Council

- 1) Complete the Entire Length of the OT
- 2) Create Urban Segments
- 3) Designate a Defined Corridor
- 4) Define a Trail Width
- 5) Restore Natural Areas
- 6) Protect Designated Wilderness
- 7) Designate Hiking Only Sections
- 8) Prohibit ATVs
- 9) Oppose Races, Rallies, and Other Large Events
- 10) Protect Against Vandalism and Trash Disposal

Join us October 17–18–19th for our Annual Ozark Chapter Campout and Reunion!

It's that time of year again. The leaves on the trees will soon be turning and Sierrans will be gathering for our annual campout and retreat. It will be held October 17–19 at that great spot, beautiful Cuivre River State Park! We will be housed at Camp Cuivre.

Cuivre River is one of the state's largest and most pleasant parks, nestled in the Lincoln hills north of St. Louis. The karst geology and accompanying ecology make it a good example of classic Central Missouri deciduous forest ecosystem. There is a restored prairie, an oak savannah, sinkholes, woodlands, and a clear, rock-bottomed stream. There are many miles of well-marked, easy hiking trails suitable for every level of adventure.

As always, we'll have plenty of good food prepared by friendly fellow Sierrans. If you like to cook, feel free to volunteer to help. There will be special activities for kids and indoor stuff to do in the event of less than perfect weather.

Send in the registration form with your check by September 15th and a packet will be sent to you with all the information you will need. Make reservations at a later date by phone or email. Tent camping will be available on a first come first served basis. Hope to see you there!

Name: all persons attending			
Address:			
City/State/Zip:			
Evening Phone:			
#s		\$.
	child 0-3 yrs.	free	.
	child 3-6 yrs.	\$8	\$
	child 6-12 yrs.	\$15	\$
	adult 13+ yrs.	\$30	\$
	adult partial weekend *	\$20	\$
	limited income	\$15	\$
	Saturday dinner only	\$10	\$
	total fee enclosed \$		
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.			

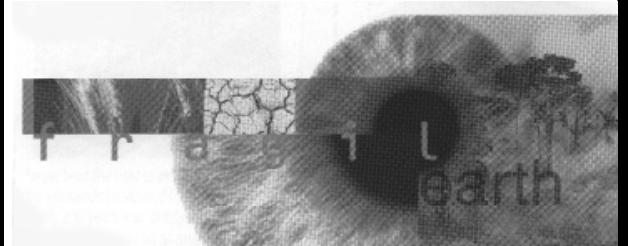
- Make checks payable to "Ozark Chapter Sierra Club"
- Print and mail form and checks to: EMG Office, 7164 Manchester Ave, St. Louis, MO 63143
- Any questions, phone: Tim Pekarek at (314) 621-4052 or e-mail greenellaheen@hotmail.com
- We must receive your reservation by Sept 15th.
- Camping fees will be refunded for cancellations received prior to Sept. 22nd.
- We will mail you an information packet containing map in advance of the Campout date.

Join us Oct 17–18–19 for our annual Ozark Chapter Campout and Reunion.

We will lodge at Camp Cuivre in beautiful Cuivre River State Park, one of the state's largest and most rugged parks. Hike scenic trails and enjoy plenty of good food prepared by fellow Sierrans. Activities for children. Everyone is welcome.

Send in your registration form today! Sorry we can't accept payment on the web. Please print out and mail to the address below.

HOW TO GET MORE FROM A GALLON OF GAS



don't waste it.

Increasing automobile fuel efficiency is the biggest single step the United States can take to reduce the threat of global warming. Over 40 percent of the oil we use in this country goes into our cars and trucks. That's why we're asking Ford and the other automakers to use existing technology to make cleaner cars that go farther on a gallon of gas, save time and money at the pump, clean up the environment and cut our country's dependence on oil.

Join the Sierra Club today. Together we can drive the message home.

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**FREE Sierra Club Member's
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Exp. date _____

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
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INTRODUCTORY	■ \$25	
REGULAR ■ \$39 ■ \$47
SUPPORTING ■ \$75 ■ \$100
CONTRIBUTING...	■ \$150 ■ \$175
LIFE ■ \$1000 ■ \$1250
SENIOR ■ \$24 ■ \$32
STUDENT ■ \$24 ■ \$32
LIMITED INCOME	■ \$24 ■ \$32

Contributions, gifts or dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.



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Stream Team Gathering in Eminence

by Angel Kruzen

The Scenic Rivers Stream Team Association (SRSTA), a conglomeration of Stream Teams watching over the Jacks Fork, Current, and Eleven Point Rivers in southern Missouri, recently held its annual picnic in Eminence. This year we were blessed with such luminaries as Joe Bacchant (one of the fathers of the Stream Team program) and his wife Fran, Scott Dye (Sierra Club Water Sentinel Director) and his wife Jan. Eight watersheds from around the state were represented, and about 75 people participated in picnicking and canoe racing.

Many SRSTA members regularly haul tons of garbage and debris out of the rivers and gather pages of data on the health of these streams. As with any picnic, the food was plentiful and scrumptious, as was the camaraderie! Normally, SRSTA members take to the river to burn off those picnic calories, but this year they got serious by staging canoe races. Much fun and friendly rivalry raised good spirits and reinforced a sense of belonging to a greater good.

It was encouraging to see a lot of young

faces in the race and at the picnic. There was even a backwards canoe race that should have been renamed a "submarine" race. Along with winner's trophies for the canoe races, Shellie Collins and David Simpson

were given a Stream Monitoring Award.

Many of the weekend floaters drifted by with their flotillas of friends and coolers to witness our tomfoolery and water sports. Many asked what group this was and what did we do. We would tell them with pride. So much of volunteer work is serious, but we do get to enjoy the streams we volunteer for and have some serious fun enjoying each other as well. This gives us a feeling of family and strengthens the volunteer bond.

I believe one of the reasons the Missouri Stream Team Program has been so successful is because it has incorporated a base principle that John Muir recognized early in his life: It is important to get people out in nature for them to truly understand and respect it. Amazingly, there are now over 2400 Missouri Stream Teams, representing a firm commitment of thousands of Missouri citizens to monitor, clean up, and enjoy Missouri's many fine streams. The program offers a "hands on" way for people to have a direct effect on water quality in the state and to be direct stewards of the waters of the state.



Having Faith – An Ecologist's Journey To Motherhood

Written by Sandra Steingraber

Reviewed by Gina DeBarthe

This book is written by an ecologist who guides us through her pregnancy and the infancy of her first child, Faith. She describes her womb as the first habitat for her unborn child. She then expands on this notion by discussing the environment that she is living in. As a scientist she explores the way the world around her affects her unborn child.

As she goes through her pregnancy she expands on how various toxins and pollutants in the environment affect the unborn child. She also discusses how these pollutants effect the growth of the developing fetus. She emphasizes how dangerous these toxins are, because in many cases the placenta does not filter them out, but in fact seeks out some toxins. Thus

the fetus suffers even a greater risk from the magnified exposure. She also notes that when the U.S. Government sets minimum standards for various pollutants they don't consider the unborn.

After her daughter's birth she notes the benefits of breastfeeding, but she also has concerns about the contamination of her breast-milk. She actually testifies for the United Nations on the danger of breast milk contamination. She even brings some of her own milk to show to the delegation. She points out that the nursing child is at the top of the food chain and is thus the most exposed to chemicals, toxins, and pollutants due to biomagnification.

Ms. Steingraber's book is easy to read and it succinctly deals with how the outside world can affect the inside world of the womb and of how these toxins affect the very young.



AN ECOLOGIST'S JOURNEY TO MOTHERHOOD

Having Faith

Sandra Steingraber

AUTHOR OF LIFE'S WORKS

State Employees: It Is Easy To Support Missouri Sierra Club

Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign (MSECC) is a program designed to make it easy for state employees to donate to their favorite non-profit organization. Although most state employees are aware of the program they may not have realized one of the charitable organizations they can donate to is the Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club.

The Sierra Club Foundation is listed in the MSECC employee's newsletter on page six. You can specify that your donation go directly to the Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club. Our charitable donation number is 8438. We are part of the Earth Share federa-

tion. You can learn more about the MSECC Charitable Campaign at www.msecc.org.

There are many great organizations doing wonderful work.

MSECC lists over 1,200. The Ozark Chapter of the Sierra Club asks members to consider the important work the Sierra Club does here in Missouri as one worthy of their support. The Sierra Club is recognized as one of the most active and effective environmental groups in the nation. But we are most effective when we act locally. We have been successful in Missouri, and we need your help to continue working on a number of very important issues.

Clean air, clean water, land stewardship, forest protection, and sustainable agriculture are just a few of

the areas that your donation may impact. We are one of the few organizations that has a lobbyist at the state capitol in order to continue to fight off the attacks at the state level that would weaken our environmental protections. Your donation will be used to alert members, generate phone calls, visit impacted communities throughout Missouri, and much more. We will put your money to work to protect Missouri's environment.

Please talk up the Missouri State Employee Charitable Campaign at your work place. Tell a friend about this easy and convenient way to show your support for an organization working to insure clean air and water for our families, and for our future. You won't notice a couple of dollars donated per pay period, but they will add up in a meaningful way.

**Annual Ozark Chapter
Sierra Club Ballot**



Ozark Chapter ExCom Ballot instructions

To vote:

- 1) Vote for **up to five** (5) people (you may write in additional names)
- 2) If yours is a joint membership, two (2) members may vote
- 3) Insert ballot into an envelope and address to
 Brian Alworth/Sierra Club Election Committee
 2444 Glenridge Drive
 Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
- 4) Write **your membership number** (the 8 digit number on top of the computer address label of your *Sierra* magazine) in the return address space of the envelope.
- 5) Affix a 37¢ stamp and mail to us so it arrives
by December 31, 2003.

Your official ballot for the Ozark Chapter Executive Committee Election is on the right of this page. The ExCom sets Chapter policy and oversees the business of the Ozark Chapter. It is made up of nine members elected from the membership at large (you), plus one additional member appointed by each of the four Sierra Club groups in Missouri. ExCom members are elected to staggered two-year terms. Of the current ExCom members, Gloria Broderick, Gina DeBarthe, McNeer Dillon, and Alex Harris continue in office. That leaves five members to be elected this year. You may vote for up to five of the candidates named on the ballot, or you may write in the name(s) of other qualified member(s). If yours is a joint membership, two members may vote. Write your 8-digit membership number in the return address space of your envelope to validate your ballot. The number will be verified before the ballot is opened, and separated from the rest of the ballot before counting to assure that your vote is secret.

Executive Committee Ballot Profiles

Doris Sherrick (Kansas City) In 1981 when Ronald Reagan appointed James Watt as his Interior Secretary, it seemed that all the progress to recognize environmental problems and implement protective legislation up to that time would be undone. As



someone who felt a strong connection to and a deep concern for the natural world I was very disturbed by this appointment and the implications it held for wilderness and environmental health. In searching for something I could do, I discovered the Sierra Club and became a member. It wasn't until the '90s though that I became active at the Group level. I have served as an Excom member, Membership Chair and Fundraising Chair for the Thomas Hart Benton Group, and currently serve as its Treasurer and as Treasurer of the Ozark

Chapter. I am very committed to being environmentally responsible not only with my lifestyle but also by being active in the Sierra Club. I would like to continue my efforts as a member of the Ozark Chapter Executive Committee.

Keet Kopecky (Kansas City) For the past 15 years, I have served in a variety of volunteer positions at the Ozark Chapter, including Political Chair, Newsletter Editor, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chapter Chair. While I continue to focus much of my professional attention on educating my students about the role they must play in restoring and preserving our environmental heritage, my service to the Sierra Club has grown beyond environmental activism. My involvement with other Chapter Chairs around the country has caused me to cherish the productive cooperation that characterizes the Sierra



Club in Missouri. As our Missouri volunteers face 21st century threats to our air, water, and natural areas, I want to continue working to support the productive synergy that comes from our local Groups working in harmony with the Chapter. I would be honored to continue helping to lead our volunteer efforts statewide on your behalf for the next two years.

Club in Missouri. As our Missouri volunteers face 21st century threats to our air, water, and natural areas, I want to continue working to support the productive synergy that comes from our local Groups working in harmony with the Chapter. I would be honored to continue helping to lead our volunteer efforts statewide on your behalf for the next two years.

Ken Midkiff (Columbia) I have served the Sierra Club at all levels, first as a volunteer in the Osage Group, then as Ozark Chapter Public Lands Committee Chair, before taking the staff position as lobbyist and director for the Ozark Chapter. For the past three years, I have served as the director of the Clean Water Campaign of the national Sierra Club. I am resigning my staff position as of




December 31, 2003, making me eligible to become a member of the Chapter Executive Committee at the beginning of 2004. I am currently a columnist for the Columbia Daily Tribune and author of the forthcoming book *The Meat You Eat* to be published by St. Martin's Press in June of 2004. My high priority issues include public lands (state, federal) and water protection; the rural quality of life including animal husbandry and sustainable agriculture; air quality across the state; restoring our state's rivers; and promoting the grassroots strengths of the Sierra Club.

My high priority issues include public lands (state, federal) and water protection; the rural quality of life including animal husbandry and sustainable agriculture; air quality across the state; restoring our state's rivers; and promoting the grassroots strengths of the Sierra Club.

I vote for ...
 (see personal profiles at left)

1st member	2nd member	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Doris Sherrick
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keet Kopecky
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ken Midkiff
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wallace McMullen
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Linda Chipperfield
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Wallace McMullen (Jefferson City) I have been interested in environmental issues most of my adult life. I am especially passionate about promoting energy conservation, renewable energy, and fighting global warming. I have been active on the Chapter Conservation Committee, the chapter's energy & clean air committee, attended national Clean Air conferences in Washington, worked on electric utility issues, and



have served as the Ozark Chapter's Midwest Regional Conservation Committee delegate. I am currently the MRCC Vice-Chair. I am actively involved in the Missouri Clean Energy Coalition, which has enhanced the Chapter's influence on energy issues. In Jefferson City I have been active in efforts to reduce urban sprawl, oppose the proposed levee, and promote non-motorized transportation. As Sierra Club members we now face major challenges in our efforts to protect clean air, clean water, combat urban sprawl, protect living species, wilderness, and the livability

of the planet. If elected I will strive to further the work of the Ozark Chapter in pursuing these goals as well as recruiting more active members, and fundraising. I will be honored to serve another term on the Executive Committee.

Linda Chipperfield (Springfield) About a year ago, I was looking for a way to be more active in protecting the environment in Southwest Missouri and while investigating several local clubs and groups when I read *Act Now, Apologize Later*. I was surprised and encouraged to learn about the rich heritage of the Sierra Club, where one person can actually do something to inspire change. I started looking into the local



Sierra Club and found that there wasn't one. I wondered how an area as beautiful and fragile as the Ozarks could not have an active group to help preserve it. So a few of us started getting together about once a month. Attendance is growing, slowly. We have taken on some local issues and had some successes. At present we are working with the Kansas City group on alternatives to burning coal for energy. I've really been recharged by getting involved with the Sierra Club and would be honored to represent this area on the Ozark Chapter Executive Committee.

Outings Continued

Oct 5 (Sun) Longview Lake Bike Ride, Grandview, MO. We'll ride about 12 miles on a paved bike trail alongside Longview Lake in eastern Jackson County. Dave Patton, (816)461-6091, dgpatton@comcast.net.

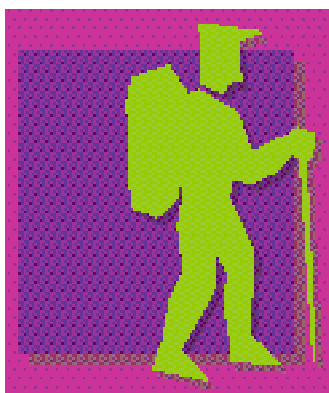
Oct 11 (Sat) Fall Hike at Hidden Valley Natural Area, Kansas City, MO. We will hike two–three miles in Hidden Valley Natural Area just north of the Missouri River and view the fall colors of the maples and paw paws.

Within is an area designated as a state natural area. It is characterized by loess hills, deep ravines, large native trees—such as 200 year old white oaks, and ferns — including the rare Goldie fern. The deep woods of Hidden Valley seem surprisingly isolated in spite of their location near the center of the metropolitan area. Bill Eddy, hikertwo@msn.com.



Oct 15-19 (Wed–Sun) Ozark Highlands Trail — Sylamore Section, Mountain View, AR. This brand new section of the OHT was completed in early 2003 and will eventually become part of the Trans-Ozark Trail. This multi-day backpacking experience will cover 25.5 miles over fairly easy terrain. Bob Wilshire, rjwilshire@yahoo.com, (913)384-6645.

Oct 25-26 (Sat–Sun) Backpacking at Indian Cave State Park, Nemaha, NE. Indian Cave State Park is located in Nebraska approximately forty–fifty miles northwest of



Squaw Creek Refuge. We will meet at 9 a.m. in the KC area, allowing us to carpool if desired. We will backpack at Indian Cave and stay overnight at one of its campgrounds. Most of the trail is easy, with some moderate sections. **In the event we**

are “rained out,” an alternate option will be to do some day hikes at the park and then camp near the cars. Contact the leader no later than October 10 if you are interested. A minimum of four participants is required. Craig Lubow, (913)299-6620.

Nov 1 (Sat) Perry Lake Trail Maintenance. Help us start our 13th season maintaining the Perry Lake Trail. Bring water, lunch, and tools. We'll start about 9 a.m. and finish by 3 p.m. Steve Hassler (913)599-6028, hassler@planetkc.com.



Nov 8 (Sat) Weston Bend State Park. We'll hike a trail that meanders through the woods and along the edge of the bluff, but also provides great views of the river. Lewis and Clark passed this site on July 2, 1804, and observed a prominent bluff that later became the site for Fort Leavenworth. Anne McDonald, pamcdonald@kc.rr.com (913)384-6645.

Nov 15-16 (Sat-Sun) Taum Sauk Mountain Backpack. We will begin at the highest point in Missouri. Hiking through a variety of geological features on this 12.8-mile weekend trek includes our state's tallest waterfall and Devil's Tollgate. For our finish, experience the quiet solitude of being at Johnson Shut-ins in the fall. Paul Gross (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com.

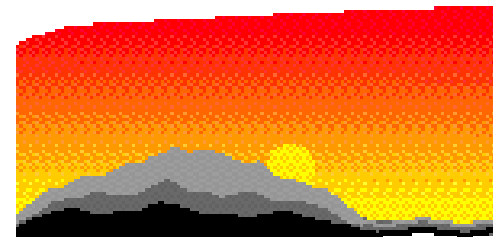
Nov 29 (Sat) Squaw Creek Wildlife Refuge. The whole family will enjoy seeing migrating bald eagles, geese and other wildlife. Steve Hassler (913)599-6028, hassler@planetkc.com.



Dec 5-7 (Fri-Sun) Devil's Backbone Wilderness Area. We'll backpack about 10 miles in the Devil's Backbone Wilderness Area. Dave Patton (816)461-6091, dgpatton@comcast.net.

Jan 10-11 (Sat-Sun) Perry Lake Trail Winter Campout. How many hardy campers will brave the icy shores of Lake Perry this January? Those who do will experience a frosty winter day, a breathtaking sunset from the campground on the bluff above the

lake, and the winter constellations sparkling in the night sky. Bob Wilshire, rjwilshire@yahoo.com (913)384-6645.



Trail of Tears Group

None submitted.

White River Group

None submitted.

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Exciting things are happening in Southwest Missouri

The White River Group (also known as the White River Forum for Reorganization) will now be holding monthly meetings on the third Saturday of every month. Mark your calendar and plan to attend these informative, fun meetings. Guest speakers on important issues in your area, interesting outings, hikes, and a good time with great people that want to explore, enjoy

and protect the beautiful Ozark region are what you can expect. Log on to www.missouri.sierra-club.org, click on outings and local groups, then choose White River and sign up to receive notices about upcoming events. You can also call (417) 864-5242 for times and location or check your local newspaper for announcements. ☺

SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS OZARK CHAPTER

East Missouri Group

Oct 17 (Fri) Cuivre River is awesome in the fall. Hike the 7 mile Sugar Creek Trail with us. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 p.m., week nights only).



Oct 17-19 (Fri-Sun) Chapter Reunion. Camp Cuivre in Cuivre River State Park near Troy, Missouri, will be our destination this year for the Ozark Chapter annual retreat and campout. Join us for a weekend of day and evening hikes through the woods, meadows, and savannahs of this gem of the state park system. Shared meals and barracks lodging are planned. Tim Pekarek (314)621-4052, or June Stevens (314)822-3430.

Oct 24 (Fri) Great overlooks and fall colors on our hike at Hawn State Park. 6-10 miles. Eat at St. Genevieve after. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7 p.m., week nights only).



Oct 24 (Fri) Visit the Wolf Sanctuary. First, we enjoy a campfire and hear stories about wolves (positive stories). Next, we go for a 1/2 mile walk to hear the wolves howl. We end the night with



hot chocolate. This outing is good for children. The price is \$9.00 per person. Must call in advance because we need reservations. Diane Favier (314)894-5549 before 9 p.m. please or email: flowerbearq@aol.com

Oct 24-26 (Fri-Sun) Missouri 101-"Swampeast," We will explore some of the unique areas of Missouri's southern-most counties. You will think you are at least in another state if you have not visited this area. We will

In order to participate on one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/> or call (415) 977-5630.

In the interests of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.

leave Friday evening to get an early start Saturday as the closest camping area is at Trail of Tears State park. Trip will include Mingo Swamp and Big Oak Tree State Park. Hopefully this will be post-mosquito time and the foliage at Trail of Tears is great! Kathy Wodell (636)240-0675, before 9 p.m.

Oct 25 (Sat) Ozark Trail Council will also hold its semi-annual meeting at Meramec State Park. The Sierra Club's new policy on the OT will be presented. Bob Gestel (636)296-8975, or gestel@sbcglobal.net

Oct 26 (Sun) South knob of Bell Mountain and a little-visited jewel of a stream called Padfield Branch with its surprising spring. We will use my secret trailhead – don't tell anyone. Wayne Miller (314)569-0094 or millwy@aol.com.

Oct 30 (Thu) Day hike at Weldon Springs, 6-8 miles. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7:30 p.m., week nights only).

Oct 31 (Fri) KATY Trail bike ride about 20-35 miles total. Eat at a local place. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7:30 p.m., week nights only).

Nov 1-2 (Sat-Sun) Backpack trip to Big Creek. We will camp on a gravel bar near the Current River. Bring along some river shoes for a remarkable trip. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352.

Nov 1-2 (Sat-Sun) Canoe/sea kayak trip on the Missouri River in the vicinity of Hermann, Mo. Enjoy the wide Missouri with scenic bluffs and sand bar camping (hopefully!). George Behrens (314)821-0247, after 6 p.m. only.



Nov 2 (Sun) Explore Columbia Bottoms Conservation Area on this flat but moderately strenuous 5-mile morning hike. Overlook the confluence of this Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, where Lewis and Clark began their epic journey. Jim Rhodes (314)821-7758.

Nov 5 (Wed) Wednesday Walkers second outing in Historic Old Florissant. Mostly flat on sidewalks so things with wheels are welcome. About three miles. Includes historic homes and Old St. Ferdinand's Shrine. There's a nice little lunch spot too. Kathy Wodell (636)240-0675, before 9 p.m.

Nov 7 (Fri) Taum Sauk to Hwy 21 hike. 7-8 miles, late lunch at Arcadia Cafe. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7:30 p.m., week nights only).

Nov 8 (Sat) Meander the trails of historic Castlewood State Park in southwest St. Louis County. Bring kites

for optional activity. Good for families and children. Lois and Joe Walsh (636)343-6875.

Nov 14 (Fri) Hike the Meramec State Park. 10 mile wilderness hike. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7:30 p.m., week nights only).



Nov 15 (Sat) Graham Cave St. Park. It's hunting season so let's take a hike in the State Park. The cave is nice but the waterfall is even better! This park is especially nice when there are icicles so hope for cold weather. We will visit both the top and bottom of this shelter cave which was once the home of ancient Indians. Kathy Wodell (636)240-0675, before 9 p.m.

Nov 21 (Fri) Rockwoods Reservation hike. Lunch at Soup-r-Salad Buffet (yummy) afterwards. Suzanne Smith (618)281-4762 (after 7:30 p.m., week nights only).

Nov 22 (Sat) Stroll Bellefontaine Cemetery's forested serpentine paths as we look at various unusual grave sites including that of William Clark and Aolphus Busch. Kevin Hunter (314)544-5157.

Nov 28-30 (Fri-Sun) Hike the Brushy Creek Trail, the newest backpacking trail in Missouri. 15 miles, moderately strenuous. Limit 10. Paul Stupperich (314)429-4352, lonebuffalo@earthlink.net.

Nov 30 (Sun) The Ozark Trail comes to St. Louis County (someday). Let's explore the proposed route by auto with short hikes at Castlewood, Staley Park, and Hunter's Ford Park. This is an afternoon outing and we'll plan to eat out. Jill Miller (314)664-7895, or Wayne Miller (314)569-0094.

Osage Group

None submitted.

Thomas Hart Benton Group

Oct 3-4 (Fri-Sat) Astronomy Campout, Linn County, KS. Join us at a super-dark site in Linn County, KS far from city lights. Bring your own food, camping equipment, mosquito repellent, lawn chair that supports head, cheap flashlight that can be painted red, and if you have them: binoculars and shade canopy, kite. Day trip on Saturday to Hillsdale State Park. Must arrive before dark or disable headlights. No white lights after dark. Rain/cloud backup date: Oct. 17-18. Come either night or both nights! \$10/person. Ellen Brenneman, (816)274-8062, ebrenn1@hallmark.com