



*Sierra Club Members float the Eleven Point River
Photo credit: Marisa Frazier*

Missouri's Clean Water Problem

By Gretchen Waddell Barwick

Missouri has a clean water problem. And due to outdated regulatory structures and partisan politics, it just may get worse.

Missouri has more than 350 blighted lakes and rivers. Our surface water, groundwater, and streams are regularly impaired due to urban runoff, bacteria, and factory farming. Industrial facilities dumped more than 2.1 million pounds of toxic chemicals into Missouri's waterways in 2012. The Missouri River is the seventh most polluted waterway in the U.S. due to agricultural runoff, irresponsible development, industrial waste, and other types of pollution. And children in many low-income and predominantly black neighborhoods are still disproportionately impacted by lead in their water. Unacceptable.

The Clean Water Act is about to celebrate its 50th birthday but here in Missouri the implementation and oversight of this life-saving act is constantly underfunded, politicized, and hidden in opaque and byzantine rules. This has led to lawyers, lobbyists, and industry specialists overseeing our clean water instead of the people most impacted.

The Clean Water Commission (CWC) is an appointed commission of Missourians that implements the Clean Water Act. Before 2016 the CWC was required to hold four of its seven positions for the general public – people who did not have financial or regulatory ties to polluting entities. But a veto-proof majority of

anti-environmental legislators changed that law in a last minute amendment that had no public hearing. The result? A stacked commission of industry insiders with financial and personal ties to polluting industries like corporate farming, wastewater management, and mining. The impact was immediate. Missouri saw more permits approved for factory farms which are hazardous to our groundwater despite public outcry. We saw dangerous permits with little oversight approved for utilities. The people have no say in the protection of our water.

So what can we do?

1) Get Political! Support environmental candidates and look at the voting records of your incumbents. Who are your elected officials really supporting?

2) Demand Transparency. The Clean Water Commission was stacked with polluting industries because of a last-minute addition to a bill which never got a public hearing. This is unacceptable. Demanding transparency from our legislators is key to our legislative process.

3) Advocate for Equitable Administrative Processes. By making the decisions more transparent and open to public input, we all benefit. Check out the resource by NEWHAB Building Anti-Racist Regulatory Processes here: bit.ly/Anti-RacistReg

4) Speak Up! Use your voice to protect the planet. Demand accountability from decision makers, submit written comments, show up to meetings, write letters to the editor, talk to your neighbors and friends. We can't do this without you.



CHAPTER CHAIR'S COLUMN

Celebrating 2021 and Looking to 2022

By Kevin Grooms

It takes no small amount of hope to be an activist. We believe in change, otherwise we wouldn't do what we do. The passion we have for our cause is how we fuel our determination, it's what gives us grit.

At the same time, unfortunately, there's a similar determination by some to stamp climate action, to sell public lands, to ignore the people struggling to stay in their homes and provide for their families. Our state is a particularly active battleground against these forces, backed by fossil-fuel money and industrial polluters. When I learn of the next onslaught of bad bills in Jefferson City, the realist in me says, "It's always something..."

I'm proud to say that we're a Sierra Club chapter that never quits. In the time that I've been a leader for Thomas Hart Benton group and our state executive committee, I've witnessed our budget growing, our staff numbers increasing and our campaigns expanding. Thanks to you, our membership continues to rise, along with donations and newly active leaders.

In my first year as your chapter chair, I've learned just how strong our staff and volunteers are, already, while reflecting on how we turn this great potential into even more action, and I can tell you that we're leveling up now, as I write. Our conservation chair Caroline Pufault, and public lands organizer Marisa Frazier, are teaming up with folks statewide to meet formally as our conservation committee, with various goals including pushing for water protections through tougher CAFO rules and reducing pesticide use, promoting "Dark Skies" through responsible lighting, advancing our club's "30 by 30" mission here on our home turf, and more.

Opportunities go beyond conservation. Our relatively new Democracy, Finance and Fundraising Committees are always open to new voices, and we hope to have new leadership at the

helm of our Political and Legislative Committees in 2022. My special thanks to Political Chair Ross Hunt for managing our endorsement process for the last six years.

Where do you see yourself within Sierra Club in 2022? I invite anyone, members and supporters alike, to email or text me, and I will be happy to help point you where you'd like to go.

Email: kagrooms@gmail.com Phone: 816-809-6906



Top left: Sierra Club Community Organizer Kane Sheek with Sierra Club members Representative Betsy Fogle and Dan and Mike Chiles. Top right: Sierra Club member John Madras canoeing on the Ozark National Scenic Riverway (ONSR) Bottom: Public Lands Organizer Marisa Frazier kayaking in the ONSR.

OUTINGS UPDATE

Staying Safe on Outings

Have you been getting outdoors more during the pandemic? If so, you aren't alone. Missouri parks saw a huge increase in visitors in 2020 – Mastodon State Park saw an increase of 153%!

This is great news because studies correlate contact with nature with improved mental and physical health including lower stress and blood pressure— something we all need right now!

And, if you're like us you are anxious for things to be getting back to "normal". During the pandemic Sierra Club completely halted our Outings program. The Missouri Chapter usually hosts more than 250 outings each year

statewide. This includes hikes, backpacking trips, classes, trail-maintenance, canoe trips, and more! But we needed to put the health and safety of our Outings Leaders, staff, and members first.

So we are excited to share that our Outings programs have resumed but with new safety precautions. Outings will be limited in size and there may be additional requirements depending on the scope of the outing. These guidelines are changing rapidly with the new information we receive from health organizations and our national Sierra Club office. If you have questions you can ask your outings leader about safety precautions or contact us anytime.



Betty Barwick (4 years old) explores Elephant Rocks State Park in Iron County, MO. Photo Credit: Gretchen Waddell Barwick

Find upcoming outings statewide:

www.sierraclub.org/Missouri



By the People - How You Can Guide Environmental Protection in MO

"Missouri citizens can have an impact on [the permitting] process by staying informed about the Department of Natural Resource's permitting efforts...providing written comments to DNR as draft permits are issued requesting more stringent requirements, or even requesting public hearings and providing oral testimony at hearings."

-Sarah Rubenstein, Staff Attorney Great Rivers Environmental Law Center

Read the entire article at sierraclub.org/missouri/permitting

THE SIERRAN

A biannual publication of the Missouri Sierra Club

MISSOURI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Chapter Chair: Kevin Grooms
- Vice Chair: Jennifer Conner
- Secretary: Caitlin Zera
- Treasurer: John Kissel
- Celesteal Clark
- Christine Doerr
- Tim Elwell
- Emmaline Giles
- John Maxwell
- Cathy Primm
- Debi Pratt
- Rajiv Ravulapati

MISSOURI STAFF

- Michael Berg
- Leah Clyburn
- Billy Davies
- Sara Edgar
- Marisa Frazier
- Britt Harris
- Andy Heaslet
- Andy Knott
- Ashton Kuehnell
- Kane Sheek
- Ed Smith
- Gretchen Waddell Barwick

WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

Ensure your environmental legacy by naming Sierra Club or your favorite Sierra Club Chapter in your will or trust. These gifts cost you nothing now. You can hold on to your assets for as long as you need them and you can change your beneficiaries at any time.

If you have named Sierra Club or your Chapter as a beneficiary in your will, be sure to discuss this with your estate planner.

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(800) 932-4270
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SIERRA CLUB

NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE



Read updates from each group online at:

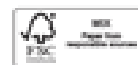
sierraclub.org/mo/2021update

Follow the Missouri Chapter Sierra Club on Facebook for updates! @mosierraclub

Don't Buy Spire's Fear-Based Campaign This Winter

"If Spire was truly worried about a massive calamity during the winter, it probably wouldn't have just issued a dividend increase to its shareholders."

Read the entire article from Michael Berg, Sierra Club Missouri Chapter Political Director at sierraclub.org/missouri/gasfear



30 X 30



The Road to 30X30

What is 30x30?

The 30x30 campaign aims to protect 30% of land in the U.S. by 2030. This is part of the Biden agenda but has been championed for several years by indigenous groups, black people, people of color, and environmental justice groups. Currently only 12% of land is protected. Protecting more land will stabilize the climate and safeguard biodiversity.

Learn more at our Conservation Committee Intro meeting December 15, 2021 at 6:30PM. Contact Marisa to RSVP: marisa.frazier@sierraclub.org

How do we get there?

There are lots of options! At least part of every major ecosystem needs to be protected. Less than 1/2 of 1% of Missouri's native prairie ecosystems remain and old growth forests are nearly non-existent. Missouri is an important flyway for birds and pollinators who would benefit from conservation efforts. We need diverse landscapes for a diverse population!

Its more guidelines than actual rules...

30x30 can look a lot of different ways in your community and every little bit helps meet our goals. From local native community gardens to protected riparian corridors along rivers, every protected area is a step towards protecting our planet. Leading scientists have warned that the current rapid loss of natural spaces is resulting in a mass extinction which is exacerbated by climate change. The 30x30 campaign is one response to this crisis. In Missouri 93% of our land is privately owned so we need voluntary private conservation and support from local and state governments as well as education for landowners and homeowners.

30x30 can look like:

- Urban green space such as transitioning empty lots and retired industrial facilities into community spaces that allow sports, social events, and relief from urban heat islands.
- Wetland and prairie restoration
- Planting trees in neighborhoods
- Protecting state parks
- Improving fire management practices in wild lands
- Reforestation of the Ozarks
- Managing forests on private land which can sequester 267 million metric tons of CO2 each year
- Utilize conservation easements and land trusts
- Growing cover crops... And more!

Executive Committee Candidate Statements



KEVIN GROOMS I'm proud to complete my third year on the chapter Executive Committee and first year as committee chair. I have also served two terms on the Thomas Hart Benton group executive committee, and three years as chair. I was born in Arkansas and raised in Kansas City where I live now, and have lived most of my life. I joined the Sierra Club as a way to return to the values of protecting the environment I learned in my youth. I have especially enjoyed engaging in the legislative process, introducing myself to elected officials and their staffs and in some cases establishing good relationships. The role of chair has given me the wonderful opportunity to work extensively with staff and volunteers. We've seen the Missouri Chapter expand its capacities as an organization, especially in service of our grassroots leaders and the goal of creating a more welcoming organization. I've served on the chapter Finance Committee since its inception, attended numerous trainings and collaborated with other leaders through the Chapter Strong strategic planning process. I'm currently working on the hiring committee to select a new development associate, and I'm prepared to see our fundraising efforts expand as a result. My mission in the coming year is to be a helpful presence for every group and committee, searching out ways leaders at every level can collaborate to achieve environmental justice in Missouri.



HELEN HOST Growing up in Western Pennsylvania, I was blessed to be in a family that enjoyed outdoor adventures: camping, hiking, and exploring through all 48 contiguous US states before college. These experiences instilled in me a love of the outdoors and appreciation for environmental preservation. I am a wife and mother, a trail runner, a cyclist, a skier and outdoor enthusiast! Professionally, I am a Physical Therapist with a PhD from Washington University in Saint Louis; my 30+ year professional career has been focused on improving health and wellness in individuals. My research focus has been optimizing physical function in older adults through increasing their physical activity. As a long-time supporter of environmental organizations including the Sierra Club, I realized in 2018 that I needed to become a more active participant in creating change. I've enjoyed helping with various campaigns with our local Sierra Club Chapter since that time. In the fall of 2018, I trained as a Climate Reality Leader (CRL) and became a CRL Mentor in 2020; additionally, I joined Citizens' Climate Lobby and am part of the Missouri Leadership Team. We are working tirelessly to bring our nation's Congressional leaders together, to combat the challenges of climate change with bipartisanship and to address environmental inequities. All individuals deserve a healthy environment in which they can thrive. My career experiences plus my love of the outdoors and strong devotion towards preserving and improving our world's environment, makes me a strong & enthusiastic candidate for this Sierra Club role.



DEBI PRATT My name is Deborah Pratt (Debi) and I am currently an active member of the Sierra Club- EMG. I currently chair the EMG Political Committee and serve on the Missouri Chapter Board. In describing myself, I most closely fit the description of a social justice advocate and activist. The collective power of passionate people is one of my fundamental beliefs. I have volunteered with numerous organizations that have social justice at the core of their mission and find this work to be very rewarding. I value the Sierra Club as a leading authority on global, national, and local environmental issues. The staff and volunteers I have met and worked with are committed to protecting—and improving—the environment for future generations. I believe their success comes from working to understand the issues and then helping to educate others on how to implement solutions. I would like to continue to participate with the Sierra Club through connecting environmental issues to social justice issues, i.e. the connection between poverty and poor health as it relates to environmental inequities. Working on electing candidates who understand and are committed to a pro-environmental platform is another area of interest for me and one in which I have some experience. Please let me know if you need any other information regarding my personal or professional experience.



SARAH RICHMOND My name is Sarah Richmond and I have been interested in conservation and environmental activism my whole life. Most recently, I was able to be part of the conversation around the Keystone XL Pipeline when I lived in Omaha, Nebraska. I am a Data Analyst by day, and I am hoping to bring that skillset to the Sierra Club through infographics, analysis and data visualization. Thank you for considering me for the executive board position for the Missouri Sierra Club.



STEPHANIE TODD For over 20 years, I've supported the Sierra Club and recently have become more active, working with the Conservation Committee and the Political Action Committee. I also act as a liaison between Missouri Sierra Club, St. Louis Audubon Society, and Missouri Chapter of International Dark Sky since they share many common goals. In the past year, I took the initiative on several issues where I felt I could make an impact. One of my projects is educating people about the detrimental effects of light pollution. As part of this effort, I am asking St. Louis businesses and buildings owners to turn-off lights during peak bird migration periods for Lights Out Heartland. I am also the focal for certifying "Dark Sky Places" for the Missouri Chapter of International Dark Sky. In this role as focal, I led a year-long effort that ended with certification of a local park in St. Louis County as the first Urban Night Sky Place in the country! I am also working to persuade cities to stop fogging or spraying for mosquitoes. I have talked to many people, including city councils, to understand their concerns and help educate them that fogging has practically no effect on mosquitoes but kills all insects and pollinators it contacts. I would like to join the Sierra Club Board to make an even greater impact for the environment.

MO Executive Committee Ballot

HOUSEHOLD VOTER 1

Individual Membership, use this column. Joint Membership, **voter 1** use this column.

- Helen Host
- Debi Pratt
- Sarah Richmond
- Kevin Grooms
- Stephanie Todd

Vote for up to FIVE (5)
One voter per household, per side.

HOUSEHOLD VOTER 2

Individual Membership, use this column. Joint Membership, **voter 2** use this column.

- Helen Host
- Debi Pratt
- Sarah Richmond
- Kevin Grooms
- Stephanie Todd

Vote for up to FIVE (5)
One voter per household, per side.

MO Chapter Executive Committee Ballot Instructions

Carefully read ALL instructions before completing or mailing your ballot. Ballots must be received by Friday, **December 31, 2021** in order to be counted.

- 1) To vote by mail you must use the ballot above with your address label attached to the back. This identifies you as an eligible voting Missouri Sierra Club member. You can also send by mail this entire page if that is easier. Ballots without the correct name and member ID will not be counted.
- 2) Vote for up to five (5) candidates. Indicate your choices by marking an X through the box to the left of the candidate's name. If yours is a joint membership, two (2) members may vote, each in their own column.
- 3) Put the ballot into an envelope, write **BALLOT** on the outside, and mail it to: **Elections Committee Sierra Club 2818 Sutton Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63143**. Be sure your address and membership number are included on the back of your ballot.
- 4) You can also vote online at: tinyurl.com/2021MOSCEXCom. You can only vote one time.
- 5) For questions, including the date, time, and place of ballot counting, please call the Sierra Club office at (314) 644-1011 or email Michael Berg at Michael.Berg@sierraclub.org.

White River Group, Thomas Hart Benton Group and Osage Group ExCom

The Sierra Club Osage Group, Thomas Hart Benton Group and White River Group are conducting this year's Executive Committee elections online. All White River Group members have the word "WRG" on their mailing address label, all Osage members have the word "Osage" on their mailing address label, and all Thomas Hart Benton Group members have the word "THB" on their mailing address label. If you are a member of one of these groups you can vote in your respective election. **Learn about the candidates and vote at one of these three links:**

White River Group: tinyurl.com/2021WRG
Osage: tinyurl.com/2021Osage
Thomas Hart Benton: tinyurl.com/2021Osage

Instructions appear before the ballot. You must vote before **11:59 pm on Friday, December 31, 2021**. Contact Michael Berg with any questions at Michael.Berg@sierraclub.org.



Conservation Newsletter

December 2021

PUBLIC LANDS & CONSERVATION NEWS

*Sierrans Hike Ozark Mountain State Park
Photo credit: Marisa Frazier*

Wild and Scenic Parks and Rivers Updates

By Marisa Frazier

2021 brought movement and changes to some of our most beloved parks: Ozark National Scenic Riverways (ONSR) and Eleven Point State Park. This summer, the National Park Service held a public comment period for the long-awaited Roads and Trails Management Plan review.

ONSR: Unmanaged ATVs, roads, and horse trails threaten ONSR by contributing to species decline and loss of biodiversity, and impacting water quality from erosion, habitat disturbance and pollution from horse waste. More than 400 Sierra Club members and a coalition of organizations submitted comments supporting the closure and restoration of all illegal roads and horse trails, establishment of a permit system to manage the impacts of horse use; elimination of vehicle camping on gravel bars outside of designated areas; and upholding the standards of protection necessary to preserve our National Scenic Riverways.

Eleven Point State Park: The oral argument in the lawsuit over the Eleven Point State Park took place in Poplar Bluff on October 19. This hearing was prompted after Attorney General Eric Schmitt filed an appeal of the

unfavorable 2020 Oregon County Court ruling to sell a portion of the park, thanks in part to more than 800 Sierra Club members who submitted comments asking for Schmitt to help protect the park. The Sierra Club partnered with a bipartisan team to file an amicus brief supporting the appeal. The State focused their argument on the fact that no one from Missouri State Parks has indicated an intent at this time to violate the easement, and any changes in the future would be made with their federal partners. We hope to see a ruling by the end of the year, but no matter the outcome we will continue our advocacy to preserve the scenic values and natural resources in this important habitat corridor along the Wild and Scenic Eleven Point River.



*Eleven Point River
Photo Credit: Marisa Frazier*