

N O R T H S T A R JOURNAL

NEWS ON OUR EFFORTS TO KEEP THE ENVIRONMENT HEALTHY FOR MINNESOTA COMMUNITIES

SPRING/SUMMER 2021
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FROM THE DIRECTOR AND CHAIR

Dear Supporter,

As we emerge from the pandemic, we want to say how deeply grateful we are for your support. You have kept us strong and financially secure, despite an incredibly difficult year. Staff and volunteers have led us through engaging virtual forums and hosted hundreds of events from volunteer team meetings to legislator town halls. Our activism has continued remotely, together.

Now that we are envisioning a world post-COVID, we are hoping to bring the best of remote life with us. That includes continued opportunities for our supporters to participate in chapter activities, regardless of where you live in Minnesota. And we've really missed seeing you face-to-face at outings, rallies, and volunteer events! We look forward to getting together soon as we resume in-person gatherings.

But when it comes to staying focused on the connections between racial justice and environmental advocacy, there is no going back to "normal." We know that the extractive corporations and anti-environment politicians win, if we accept that it's okay for some people to breathe dirty air, drink dirty water, and bear disproportionate impacts of the climate crisis. Across our campaigns, we are committed to centering equity and justice for all — regardless of what you look like or where you live.

Despite the year's challenges, we've had some big wins. In May, Minnesota became the first state in the Midwest to adopt Clean Cars emission standards to expand the availability of clean, electric cars and trucks and require all new cars to emit less pollution. With partners, the Sierra Club is supporting legal challenges to PolyMet; and we celebrated recent court victories that will send this troubled and toxic mine plan back to the Department of Natural Resources for a contested case hearing.

Our strategic investments in legislative lobbying and political power building are paying off. The Minnesota House passed historic climate and transportation legislation, including 100% clean energy and robust funding for public transit. We know that science is inconvenient to politics because it often costs the people who are more concerned with short term financial gain over the health of our climate and planet. We're urging legislators and Governor Walz to follow the science, and we're building a movement to hold them accountable to their promises.

Together we can realize a just and sustainable Minnesota. Thank you again for your support and everything that you do.

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HOLDING LEADERS ACCOUNTABLE State Legislature Update

Peter Wagenius

As we go to press, the State Legislature is in a special session. The regular session ended with some positive steps like the ECO act, a common sense update to our energy efficiency policy, but we need much more to tackle the climate crisis. We can trace the obstruction of serious climate action to lobbying from fossil fuel interests like Flint Hills Refinery and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce.

In the Democratic-controlled House, two major energy and transportation omnibus bills passed with every Democrat voting in favor. This is a big deal, and one the Sierra Club, many partner organizations, and thousands of Minnesotans have been fighting for. It shows that Democrats are more determined than ever to take bold action for our climate.

Meanwhile over in the Senate, all Republicans voted that climate change is not caused by human activity.

That's right — while House Democrats are working on solutions, Senate Republicans are still denying that climate change is even real.

Checking in on Governor Walz, we see he is not meeting his climate commitments. He's truly leading in some areas like supporting a policy for 100% clean electricity by 2040, but electricity only accounts for a quarter of our climate pollution. What about the other three quarters?

To avert the worst impacts of the climate crisis and to respond to an already changing climate, we need to eliminate all carbon emissions by 2050. This requires taking action across sectors — not just in electricity but transportation, agriculture, moving away from natural gas, and more. Unfortunately, Governor Walz seems to be caving to pressure from industry. He has permitted Enbridge's Line 3 pipeline to move forward, even though legal challenges haven't been heard in the courts. Unlike his predecessor Mark Dayton, Governor

Walz proposed no new ongoing funding for transit, although emissions from vehicles are the biggest source of climate pollution. To his credit, Walz has proposed making Minnesota the 15th "Clean Cars" state in the nation (and the first in the Midwest). Unfortunately he drastically undercut that action by pushing outdated and fake climate "solutions" like ethanol. Worse, his

As the 2021 legislative session winds down, we are building for 2022 and beyond. We are increasing pressure for climate action, in hopes that Governor Walz will create a comprehensive, multi-sector, science-based climate action plan. Such a plan, supported by House DFLers in the 2022 legislative session, would provide Minnesota voters a clear choice.

| Climate Action Report Card | |
|---|-------------------|
| Name: <i>Governor Jim Walz</i> | |
| SUBJECT: | GRADE: |
| Fund Clean Transportation | F |
| Switch To Electric Vehicles | C |
| State Investment In Clean Electricity | D |
| Push Utilities To Clean Electricity | B |
| Promote Sustainable Farming | D |
| Reduce Emissions from Homes, Industry, & Business | D |
| Sequester Carbon in Forests | D |
| Stop New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure | F |
| Create a Multi-Sector Climate Action Plan | Incomplete |

View the report card, including explanations on the grades, and learn how you can help online at www.walzclimatereportcard.org.

budget invests far more in biofuels like ethanol than in more beneficial electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

We knew going into this session that Senate Republicans were going to be the biggest obstacle, but we were expecting our Governor to keep his promises of bold action on the climate crisis. Governor Walz is now well into his term and, despite many opportunities, he is not even proposing most of the actions science tells us are required.

To encourage Governor Walz to act, a coalition of Minnesota environmental and progressive groups released a mid-term climate report card for Governor Walz. It includes specific recommendations for his administration. Unfortunately, his grades are not good now, but he still has time to make improvements.

Voters have changed more than many elected officials have realized. Public support for climate action has continually and dramatically increased over the past six years. Democrats in swing districts can really go on the offensive on climate in their elections. So can Governor Walz. Republicans in swing districts, by contrast, are trapped between base voters still invested in climate denial and swing voters who do not tolerate denial anymore. The data are clear: swing voters want climate action and we are bringing this message to leaders.

Peter Wagenius is the Political and Legislative Director at the North Star Chapter, and a "transportation omnivore" who rides buses, an electric train, an electric car and an electric-assist cargo bike.

MINNESOTA NEEDS 'PROVE IT FIRST' LAWS TO PROTECT WATER — AND LIFE

CELEBRATING WINS IN THE ONGOING FIGHT TO STOP SULFIDE MINING



The Lift Bridge in Duluth at sunset. Photo Credit: Sydney Dahl

Zabelle Stodola

When my husband, Bob, and I were deciding where to retire, one of our primary considerations was water: both proximity to it and purity of it. When we tell locals here that we retired to Duluth even though we didn't know a soul and had never experienced a winter this far north, they usually smile. But we haven't regretted our decision.

From the time we first arrived, we've loved the water and been involved with various initiatives concerning threats to water quality. We began to suspect that, despite being "The Land of 10,000 Lakes," Minnesota did not adequately protect its water heritage. Laws and regulations might be on the books, yet they are not consistently monitored or enforced. And we were surprised by how many politicians on both sides, and at all levels, failed to envision innovative job creation apart from extractive industries.

As Duluthians, we quickly learned about new threats to water quality, especially proposed sulfide ore mining

developments like PolyMet. There are no sulfide mines in Minnesota now, but in water-rich environments elsewhere, they have had potentially devastating effects. Recently, we have been heartened to read that the two mines furthest along in the permitting process, PolyMet and Twin Metals, have met with challenges thanks to the courts and new Biden administration officials' decisions to stand up for the law, people, and water quality.

WINS IN THE COURTS

For many decades Native American tribes in Minnesota have issued warnings about water quality. They have legal and cultural interests because water pollution affects tribal waterways as well as traditional food sources. In March 2021, the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa won a big court victory in its ongoing effort to stop multinational corporate giant Glencore from building the PolyMet copper mine upstream from their reservation. The Band had significant and legitimate

concerns that the PolyMet mine would worsen an already bad problem of mercury-contaminated fish and water for the community. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) knew of the problem and was supposed to notify the Fond du Lac Band so it could participate in the permitting process.

But the EPA failed to follow the law. As a result, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has suspended PolyMet's permit to fill or dredge a large area of wetlands for its mine. "It also means that five major permits for the \$1 billion PolyMet project are now stayed or under review," according to the Star Tribune. "The move spotlights the Band's groundbreaking effort to assert Indigenous water quality standards as a 'downstream state' under the Clean Water Act," the newspaper reported.

This latest victory builds on a myriad of legal challenges to PolyMet and Twin Metals led by advocacy groups such as the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, the Friends of the Boundary

Waters Wilderness, Water Legacy, Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, Duluth for Clean Water, Center for Biological Diversity, Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness and others to both PolyMet and Twin Metals.

Recent good news around Twin Metals, another proposed sulfide mine which risks polluting our beloved Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, includes:

- Prospecting permits have been sent back to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service for additional analysis.
- Senator Tina Smith — echoing repeated requests from Rep. Betty McCollum and others — urged the Biden administration reinstate a study that could lead to a 20-year moratorium on mining in the Rainy River watershed.
- Rep. Betty McCollum reintroduced legislation to permanently protect the Boundary Waters and continues her longtime leadership on the issue.

The Sierra Club is supporting this work—challenging the PolyMet air permit as a co-plaintiff, challenging the PolyMet dam safety permit as an amicus curiae, engaging in the administrative process on Twin Metals, and continuing to organize and advocate—because all Minnesotans, including the downstream communities of the Fond Du Lac Band and Duluth, deserve clean water.

MAKE THEM PROVE IT FIRST

As water becomes an even more valuable resource, northeastern Minnesota is well-positioned to see a boom in its economic fortunes. So what can we do to safeguard our water? First, Minnesota should adopt a Prove It First Law requiring independent scientific proof that a copper sulfide mine elsewhere in the United States has operated for 10 years or more and been closed for 10 years or more without causing pollution. The Sierra Club is proud to join a diverse, statewide coalition advocating for a Prove It First law and supports the 2021 state legislative effort led by Friends of

the Boundary Waters. In 2021, this bill advanced through the State House and maxed out on co-authors. As Sierra Club-endorsed State Senator Jen McEwen stated unequivocally in her recent Capitol Update, "We will not be the guinea pigs for untested sulfide mining in Minnesota."

In the wake of recent court victories, public engagement in this renewed process is imperative. We look forward to supporting communities across Minnesota in advocating for their right to clean water and invite you to join us.

Zabelle Stodola is a volunteer with the Sierra Club's Duluth Clean Energy Team and in her free time enjoys gardening, advocating for progressive causes, and spending time at the family cabin near Brule Lake.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND POWER



The author, Najma Mohamed, soaking in the sun at the Como Zoo.

Najma Mohamed

I'm proud to support Minnesotans in directly connecting with their elected leaders through the SierraAction Team. SierraAction is a team of volunteers striving to build power and develop leaders who can help achieve a more just and clean environment for Minnesotans.

One of the team's important activities is to host in-district meetings with elected officials, where constituents meet with their representatives and express their concerns about climate solutions. These meetings encourage constituents to build relationships with their elected officials while increasing support for the Sierra Club's campaigns.

In-district meetings are an effective legislative outreach tool because constituents are able to hold their representatives accountable through their voting power. As a SierraAction intern, I have hosted in-district meetings with Minnesota State Senators Jerry Newton and David Senjem, and Representative Shelley Christensen. In these meetings,

I have focused on creating an inclusive space where constituents can feel comfortable speaking.

We begin each meeting with a brief writing exercise answering the question, "Why do environmental issues matter to you personally?" I have heard a variety of responses ranging from constituents whose rural backgrounds fostered a love for the outdoors to those who have recently learned about the global environmental impacts of climate change. Some constituents have personal relationships with the elected officials, adding a familiar tone to the conversations, and some have never before participated in an in-district meeting. Participants have framed climate issues as business concerns, environmental justice controversies, and personal passions. This dialogue allows those who are not necessarily policy experts to claim their stake in environmental issues. Representatives are highly responsive when they learn about their constituents' personal feelings and commitments.

Hosting in-district meetings has been a learning experience for me. Thirty minutes fly by when there's so much discussion to be had and so many questions to be answered. The most rewarding part of this experience for me was building my political relationships and power while helping others do the same. Our representatives should be influenced by the public opinion on significant issues. More than ever, I recognize the importance of political representation and holding my representatives accountable.

Najma Mohamed is an intern with the Sierra Club SierraAction Team and a graduating Political Science and Sociology student at the University of St. Thomas. She grew up in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, with her parents, younger sisters, and brother. Najma loves to be in the sun, listen to true crime podcasts, spend time with her cats, and cook Somali food.

A ZERO WASTE LIFESTYLE WANTS YOU—AND SO DOES THE PLANET

Neely Atha

My zero waste lifestyle began after I heard the statement, "There may be a plan B but there is not a planet B." I was in awe of a reality I hadn't yet processed. Since then, I watched the documentary "COWSPIRACY: The Sustainability Secret" only to learn more about the destruction agriculture causes. Soon after, I became a vegetarian. Along the way, I've been educating myself more and more about the inconceivable and harsh truth about agriculture and the food industry. Disclaimer: I can't say I'm 100% zero waste, but I'm getting there.

Living a zero waste lifestyle benefits me and the planet. This includes reducing my intake of material goods, and in return, producing less waste. For example, over 40% of all food in America is wasted — tossed away to serve no purpose but take up space in a landfill.

GETTING STARTED

A zero waste lifestyle takes training. Don't be hard on yourself. Allow yourself to learn gradually. First off, you'll have to be able to say no to little things and deals. Figure out what you truly like. Focus on what you really need and start buying according to your tastes.

To avoid giving in to the little items that fill up your cart, create a plan before you go grocery shopping. And never go shopping while you're hungry! Make a list. A shopping list negates the tempting deals and desires you might encounter.

But it's not just what you buy, it's how. Abandoning your dependency on plastic can be intimidating, and there's a bit of planning required for your zero-waste journey.

Pay attention to the types of packaging that food and other goods come in. Some waste packaging is unavoidable, but try to choose items that come in easily

recyclable or reusable materials.

The bulk section may seem daunting, but each time it gets easier until you notice you've adopted a new habit. This section is exceptional because it benefits a circular economy — where you take, make, return and reuse over and over again.

Shopping this way not only supports the environmental movement and a circular economy, but it often supports independently-owned stores and puts money back into your local economy.

While working toward a zero-waste goal, focus on organizing and labeling your pantry. It's your best friend from here on out. When you're able to see what food is waiting for you to eat instead of plastic containers or cardboard boxes, you're able to hold yourself accountable to utilize food before the expiration date.

Finally, don't think you're going it alone. There are zero waste communities to join for support, including the Sierra Club North Star Chapter's Zero Waste Task Force.

Remember: there's always a way to help improve the environment and quality of life. Sustainability is a thousand small choices you make every day.

Neely Atha is a member of the Communications Team and Zero Waste Task Force. She has worked towards a zero waste lifestyle since 2019 and is an avid vegetarian. Her time is best spent landscaping, with animals or helping others around her.



The author, Neely, embracing the natural elements. Photo Credit: Neely Atha

Join the Sierra Club's Zero Waste Task Force!

In addition to supporting each other in living sustainably, we work to educate the community on ways to reuse, reduce, recycle and compost effectively. We lobby the legislature to reduce waste and minimize the impact on our natural resources. In 2021, we supported legislation to limit or remove PFAS from food packaging sold in Minnesota.

Repurposed litter containers retrofitted to planters. Photo Credit: Neely Atha



FROM EXTRACTION TO REGENERATION

Delaney Russell

In Minnesota, climate change might not be as extreme as other parts of the world, but we are still experiencing hotter weather, more severe storms, worse allergy seasons, air quality alerts, the shrinking of the boreal forest, invasive species, and more. Climate change and environmental destruction continue to accelerate, despite our work.

What will it take to turn the tide and start making meaningful progress toward a sustainable future? Here at the

EXTRACTING FROM “DISPOSABLE” PLACES AND PEOPLE

Extractive industries, and the lawmakers who enable them, profit through our systems of “disposable” places and people. Industries systemically target places and people where they can damage the environment and our health without paying the true costs of the damage. These places tend to be home to poor people and people of color. Along the same lines, industries pay workers as little as they can get away with (often less than a living wage).



Graphics courtesy of COPAL and the Frontline Communities Protection Coalition

Sierra Club, building on the leadership of Hop Hopkins and his article *Racism is Killing the Planet*, we’ve come to the conclusion that we need to go deeper and shift our mindset. A sustainable future depends on creating systems of mutually regenerative relationships with the earth and each other. This is in contrast to the current extractive and racist mindset in which it is acceptable to treat some places and some people as disposable.

Lawmakers typically support corporate power over people empowerment, cementing the disposable mindset and reducing people’s ability to insist on mutually regenerative relationships.

Here are some examples of extraction, based on the mindset of disposable places and people:

- Northern Metal Recycling was allowed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to operate in North Minneapolis for years. The

company benefited, while residents of North Minneapolis paid the costs: polluted air that contributed to extremely high asthma rates, poor childhood health, and more.

- U.S. Steel was allowed by the MPCA to continue violating water quality standards at its Minntac mine for years. U.S. Steel shareholders got the benefits, while degraded water quality harmed wild rice: an important food staple for the Anishinaabe people.
- Hennepin County Energy Recovery Center (HERC) is a trash incinerator that is operated by Great River Energy on behalf of Hennepin County. Hennepin County residents and corporations get the benefit of trash disposal and energy. The residents of North Minneapolis living near the HERC bear the costs: air pollution and lower quality of life.

Read more about these examples on the Healing Minnesota Stories blog; and from a Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) perspective, read *The Circle: Native American News*, and *Arts and Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder*.

MAKING IT PERSONAL

Taking this to the personal level, as an upper middle class white person, I get short term gains from the systemic shifting of costs towards others. In fact, I am shielded from even seeing the impacts of my life choices on, typically, Black, Indigenous, other people of color and low-income people. For example, I am but one degree of separation from the person who made my artificially inexpensive jeans, but, until seeing the movie *RiverBlue* at a chapter

environmental justice movie night, had no idea about how unbeneficial this transaction was to them (predominantly people of color) and to their immediate environment. But my gains are short term and shallow, cheap jeans vs. health of people and our waters. I would gain much more if we collectively had a mindset and government committed to the well-being of all people and places.

REGENERATING WITH SACRED PEOPLE AND LAND

It doesn’t have to be this way. We can and must build a new way of relating to each other and the earth that is mutually generative and renewing. We can start to see every person as sacred and every place as sacred, by being actively anti-racist and insisting on environmental repair.

We can insist upon equitable sharing of costs and benefits. We can insist that companies bear the cost of repairing any damage they cause to the environment, and pass that cost on to those who buy the goods. We can insist on conditions that value BIPOC lives, including good wages, low pollution, and an end to police brutality.

At the Sierra Club, we’re committed to doing this. We’re pushing ourselves and our leaders to enact pro-people, pro-environment policies.

Of course, this starts with doing some significant work on ourselves. We’re working to overcome patterns of white supremacy and adopt an active stance of equity and anti-racism. We’re learning how to stand as an ally when injustice occurs, to use our platform and power to amplify — not replace — the voices of BIPOC and low-income communities.

Our advocacy looks and feels different now. We’re deepening relationships with other organizations in the community who operate more from the mindset of regenerative relationships with each other. For example, we are actively supporting the Frontline Communities Protection Act, legislation championed and led by Communities Organizing Latinx Power and Action (COPAL). This legislation seeks to

protect neighborhoods that have borne disproportionate harm from high-polluting industries. It would require the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, when determining whether to issue a pollution permit, to consider the cumulative impacts of the pollution, not just the additional proposed pollution.

How have we been supporting COPAL? While offering our opinions, we’ve deferred to COPAL leadership in terms of bill language. We’ve participated in their social media week of action to raise awareness about this issue,



Graphics courtesy of COPAL and the Frontline Communities Protection Coalition

uplifting their message and adding our own perspective on why this legislation is universally important, even to those of us living in neighborhoods with clean air and water. And we’ve used our grassroots lobbying power to urge our members to call their legislators in support of this bill.

Other examples consistent with this new vision of regenerative relationship include advocating for:

- A just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, in which BIPOC people are included in the new energy economy from the ground up
- A public safety system that protects the lives of low-income and BIPOC communities and ends police brutality.

Changing our mindset isn’t easy. But it’s

essential. We do it because it’s right. We do it because our humanity, our well-being and our fights are interconnected. We do it because this is what it will take to reach a sustainable future.

Together we can make Minnesota a place where all, regardless of zip code or race, have clean air, water, lands and a healthy climate. No more will corporations, and the lawmakers who enable them, treat people and places as disposable. To make this our reality we must elect leaders who share our values and insist these leaders enact laws that

live up to our shared values. We can make Minnesota a place where we no longer tolerate extraction, but insist upon regeneration.

This year, the Change & Equity Team will be assessing how we are doing in making these shifts. If you have any thoughts on this, please reach out to Delaney directly at delaney.russell@northstar.sierraclub.org.

Delaney Russell is the co-chair of our Change and Equity Team, which oversees this chapter’s work to become more equitable, anti-racist, and connected to the movement as a whole. She is an avid (but mediocre) pickleball player and loves living near the mighty Mississippi River.

5 TIPS FOR CAMPING WITH A BABY



Enjoying the camp life. Photo Credit: Alec Olson

Alec Olson

Introducing my son to nature has been a high priority for me since my wife and I first discussed parenthood, but it's trickier than it sounds.

Parenthood is still new. I'm discovering what it means to be a dad, while chasing down my soon-to-be walking — but exceptionally fast-crawling — baby boy, August.

He's busy and curious, much like myself, which makes me all the more eager to get him into nature. But not so fast, I tell myself. (I also have a Post-it Note on my desk that says "Rome wasn't built in a day.")

Making that initial introduction to the outdoors must be positive, so he can experience the enjoyment and wonder that nature can bring. Otherwise, he could be left with a poor experience and a longing for the comforts and conveniences of indoors.

BELIEVE ME, I'VE BEEN THERE.

My wife, Ashley, who would not describe herself as outdoorsy, faced a perilous journey with me into one of Itasca State Park's backpack-in sites for my birthday in late June.

Any seasoned camper or backpacker knows what late June in Minnesota brings: Rain, bugs, more rain.

I packed my bag much heavier than normal hoping to bring some of the comforts of car camping along. It made the trek slower, with more time for mosquitoes to get at our ankles. I also lost my car keys on our way out, so I had to trek all the way back to our site with Ashley left outside of the car fending off bugs and rain.

I've made one poor introduction to the outdoors; never again (hopefully).

Now, with a 10-month-old in tow, memories of this cautionary tale keep me checking and rechecking my packing list so that August can enjoy his first camping season in Minnesota.

Here are five tips for camping with a baby, as told by a father who's still figuring it out.

1. Set achievable expectations and goals for the trip.

The talks I've had at home with Ashley don't focus on what to bring as much as they do on August's nap schedule and stroller-friendly hiking trails. It's important to set realistic expectations early on so everyone is in agreement.

Ultimately, for me, it's about getting out and enjoying time with family; just like the old fishing adage, "any day on the lake is better than a day at work."

While I enjoy hiking off the beaten path, sticking to paved trails will make traveling with my semi-outdoorsy wife and young baby easier, which will make the experience more positive.

Our expectations are to get (some) sleep in a tent, see Lake Superior, and get home safe. If done right, it'll be a great camping trip.

2. Make a plan, but remain flexible.

Winging it with a baby sounds terrible. At least it does for me. I'm the type who packs a week before the trip, carries the map and compass and the first-aid kit. Having a plan is second nature. Admittedly, I can be a little high strung. Bringing family along requires you to go with the flow. I still make a plan, but I know things change — just like diapers. Reacting appropriately to the needs of your baby will demand that some activities get canceled or delayed to prioritize feedings, diaper changes, or naps.

Many factors will require that the plan you make accounts for the unexpected — or at least respects it.

3. Keep camping and packing simple.

As you set expectations and make plans, it'll help to keep things simple. From your packing list to the

itinerary, a simpler trip will make it easier to remain flexible when the unexpected happens and to chart a new course.

Here are three areas to focus your attention on when packing up the family car:

Sleeping We invested in a mesh travel crib with a shade. This will better reflect August's normal sleeping conditions, while adapting to tent life. It will also help keep him contained during the night.

It's important to always follow guidelines set by the manufacturer of sleeping pads, bags and gear, and to check in with your pediatrician about safe sleeping practices.

Eating When August eats solids (he still nurses too), we give him fruits or vegetables, scrambled eggs, and other low-mess foods. Less time doing dishes means more time hiking.

For those bottle feeding, bring along enough gear to set up a dish station at camp to organize and sanitize bottles, including a larger stove with plenty of fuel, a large pot, and portable wash basin.

Hiking Consider EPA and CDC guidelines for applying sunscreen and bug repellent. Dress yourself and the baby in layers. Long sleeves, shoes, sunglasses and a hat will help shield your little one from bugs and the sun.

Choose a baby carrier wisely. Not all are created (or priced) equally. Base your purchase on your hiking level, goals, and budget.

4. Bend (or break) the rules.

No, I'm not advocating for burning garbage or littering diapers. Always follow Leave No Trace rules when venturing outdoors.

What I mean by bending the rules has more to do with thinking outside the box and parting ways with a purist's idea of camping.

When I think of camping, I imagine us staying in the state park nearly the whole time, hiking the trails, visiting the nature center (COVID permitting). Not sitting down at a restaurant in town. Not sheltering in the car from mosquitos or taking in some screen time while the little one naps. These activities don't scream "camping."

But being a parent is a full-time job, requiring superhuman abilities to forego sleep while powering through the day and caring for your kiddo. If the conditions are dire, consider visiting an ice cream shop or sitting in your car to catch a breath.

5. Stay positive — no matter what.

Taking others into the outdoors can be a challenge. It takes planning, preparation, and the grit to follow through. With the added challenge of a diaper bag, stroller and restless baby, our pre-parenthood camping trips are a thing of the past.

But that doesn't mean they can't be enjoyable.

By right-sizing expectations and goals at the very beginning, you set yourself up for a successful camping trip. While it's important to challenge yourself and your child to grow and learn his or her abilities, it's also important to do so incrementally to ensure it's not too much, too fast.

Like it says on my desk, "Rome wasn't built in a day." The best tip I can offer is to stay positive, no matter what, and enjoy camping with your family.

Alec Olson is a volunteer editor with the North Star Journal and proud survivor of his first camping trip with a baby.

CLIMATE JUSTICE AND JUST TRANSITION DEFINED AND IN PRACTICE

Patty O'Keefe

Climate justice and just transition are terms that have been used by environmental justice groups for decades. As they become more widespread, we thought that providing basic definitions and examples of both would be helpful, while keeping our eyes on the prize: a new system where everyone enjoys a healthy climate, clean air, clean water, and a safe place to call home.

"Climate justice" refers to the growing movement that puts justice in the center of the fight for a decarbonized world. Fossil fuel corporations, and the politicians they pay for, created and continue to exacerbate the climate crisis. Racism and classism help them get away with it by putting the burden of fossil fuel consumption primarily in Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and lower-income neighborhoods. In these areas, people historically have less economic and political power, thereby giving polluters the ability to locate refineries and

committing to center the leadership of these communities in the transition to a more sustainable and just world. And it means addressing racial and economic injustice when fighting climate change, so we get to the root of the problem.

"Just transition" means that no one will be left behind as we move toward a more sustainable world. It means reparative action that uplifts and affirms the lives of BIPOC communities who have been most impacted by pollution, as well as ensuring support for workers in fossil fuel industries. Transition to a lower carbon world can make society more equal if those most burdened by our energy system experience the benefits of the transition.

CO-OPTING CLIMATE JUSTICE

Lately we've noticed the terms climate justice and just transition are being co-opted by utilities, non-profits, and state agencies as a new form of greenwashing. They're doing this to appear as though they value environmental justice. But their actions don't always line up.



MN Renewable Now contactors and supporters look at a Solstar site in North Minneapolis. Photo Credit: MN Renewable Now

highways near their homes.

Climate justice means acknowledging that the climate crisis affects BIPOC and the poor first and worst. It means

For example, Minnesota Power, an investor-owned utility in Northeast Minnesota, claims they are committed to a "just transition" while simultaneously

planning to build a new fossil gas plant that will perpetuate climate injustices. Minnesota Power could play a part in a truly just transition by beefing up their clean energy portfolio. They could prioritize access and benefits from clean energy production (including community owned and rooftop solar), to environmental justice communities, plant communities, and low-income customers. Right now, customers across the northland have the opportunity to call out their utility and demand better. The Sierra Club is organizing to help bring Minnesotans' voices and demands for true climate justice to the Public Utilities Commission as they consider Minnesota Power's plan.

A NEW PATH FORWARD

Our intersecting systems of injustice are making climate change worse. The forces that treat the earth as disposable are the same forces that treat people of color and low-income people as disposable. To solve climate change, we need to treat the root of the problem rather than the symptoms. If we don't, the same corporate and political power dynamics will continue to erode civil society, and we won't have a powerful enough movement to save ourselves.

That's why we're excited to start a series highlighting good examples of climate justice and just transition work happening across the state. Our first story comes from MN Renewable Now (on page 13).

Patty O'Keefe is an organizer with the Sierra Club. When she isn't fighting for a just transition you can find her enjoying quality time with her cats.

MN Renewable Now: Creating Environmental Justice Through Solar Ownership

Kristel Porter

2020 was a crazy year for everyone. We planned to throw North Minneapolis' first Renewable Energy & Conservation Fair, and a Youth Leadership Conference in Renewable Energy. Due to the pandemic, we had to cancel both. Quickly, we pivoted. Our goal was to address the issue of climate change and connect our community with the resources needed to make the switch to renewable energy as soon as possible. We wanted to do something big. Through our Power North Project, we were able to work with over 200 households to move their electric bills to renewable sources and/or sign them up for energy efficiency audits and installations, thus reducing North Minneapolis' carbon footprint by over 1,000 pounds annually.

Although this was an amazing accomplishment, we kept running into the issue of equity. The neighborhood has a high renter population and a low median income. Property owners mentioned time and time again that they could not get financing for solar installations on their homes, typically because of their debt-to-income ratio. Due to generations of poor city planning and disinvestment in North Minneapolis, the community suffers from lack of economic activity. Many of the North Minneapolis residents who were engaged qualified for Energy Assistance. It made sense for them to build equity through ownership of solar arrays on their homes, which would also save them money on their electric bills.

North Minneapolis suffers some of the worst environmental injustices in Minnesota, with high rates of asthma and lead poisoning, due to an oversaturation of asphalt roof shingle plants and metal recycling facilities. Residents deserve an opportunity to choose where their power comes from and the ability to divest from practices that further pollute their environment.

assessors, the electricians, solar installers, and to the engagement team, everyone is from North Minneapolis.

This project will reduce North Minneapolis' carbon footprint by 288 tons a year and will reinvest over \$20k from utility bills back into the community annually. It will also create over \$300k in wages and will increase equity in these north Minneapolis properties by over



MN Renewable Now Executive Director, Kristel Porter (front row left) and a class of North High students learn about community solar options, including the array on their school. Photo Credit: MN Renewable Now

THE SOLSTAR PROJECT

MN Renewable Now spent the entire year creating the Solstar Project to address racial equity through renewable energy. Solstar will provide 24 North Minneapolis property owners a solar installation and the opportunity to sell the power created by them back to the grid.

The Solstar Project uses local contractors from North Minneapolis. From the solar

\$1.2 million. This project truly addresses racial equity through renewable energy ownership.

Kristel Porter is the Founder and Executive Director of MN Renewable Now, a member of the Sierra Club North Star Chapter's Executive Committee, and a board member at Fresh Energy. She also is an Environmental Justice Lobbyist and North Minneapolis Community "Earth" Activist.

The Solstar Project is currently funded at 90%. If you are interested in supporting this project, or want to find out more, go to www.mnrenewablenow.org

COMMUNITY SOLAR OFFERS EVERYONE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SAVE THE PLANET

A rural community solar garden using pollinator-friendly landscaping outside Faribault Minnesota and operated by Cooperative Energy Futures.
Photo Credit: Cooperative Energy Futures

John Krenn

The more electricity we generate from solar, the better for the planet. If you have a house and an unshaded roof, you can install solar panels. (For more information, see the “Solar Energy Company” link on the website of the Minnesota Solar Energy Industry Association.)

But if you are like many of us, you do not own a house, your roof is shaded, you are concerned about up-front costs, or you would prefer not to have panels on your roof. If one of those situations applies to you, you can get your electricity by subscribing to community solar, especially if you are an Xcel Energy customer.

The community solar garden process was established in Minnesota in 2013. (The Sierra Club and Minnesotans across the state played a major role in making this happen.) With community solar, a large “garden” of solar panels generates electricity. You “subscribe” to a portion of that electricity and pay the garden operator (not your electric utility) for the solar power generated. Although the law required only Xcel Energy, Minnesota’s largest electric utility, to create a community solar program for customers, some other electricity providers offer similar programs. For the Xcel program, there mostly are no up-front charges.

The electricity generated by the garden is delivered into Xcel’s grid. As a community solar customer, you will still get your electricity from Xcel’s grid. But, instead

of paying Xcel for the solar-generated power, you get a credit for that power on your Xcel bill.

If you subscribe to a solar share equal to your likely electricity usage, you will pay much less to Xcel and instead pay the garden operator. If the credits from Xcel exceed the value of the electricity

“WHEREVER YOU LIVE, CHECK INTO WHETHER YOU QUALIFY FOR COMMUNITY SOLAR AND HELP US ALL SAVE THE PLANET.”

generated by your garden subscription, Xcel will pay you cash at the end of the plan year.

As a community solar subscriber, you will continue to get your electricity delivered to your residence by Xcel, regardless of how much solar power is generated at your garden. Typically, summertime credits from Xcel exceed your electricity usage and wintertime credits are less than your electricity usage, because the garden will produce much more in the summer.

A GOOD DEAL FOR CONSUMERS AND THE EARTH

Monetary savings to community solar subscribers are likely and the benefit to the planet is guaranteed.

You will shift the source of the electricity you use to renewable sunlight and away from fossil fuels like gas and coal. It’s as though you are helping to create your own renewable power plant. Community solar’s capacity in Minnesota is now close to 800 megawatts, which is a huge contribution to the state’s electrical production.

By statute, you can sign up for gardens located in the county where you live or contiguous counties. Depending on your location, there likely are one or more garden operators to which you can subscribe. Contact the community solar operators in your county or an adjacent county on Xcel’s website on their Solar*Rewards Community (mn.

my.xcelenergy.com/s/renewable/solar-rewards-community and then go to the spreadsheet at “View the MN Solar Gardens in Progress”).

HOW TO SIGN UP FOR SOLAR

The state has provided guidance on the factors you should consider in entering into a community solar subscription agreement, which can be found at the Minnesota Department of Commerce’s Tips About Community Solar page. Another good source of information is the Clean Energy Resource Team.

Operators require subscribers to sign a long-term agreement, but most operators allow you to transfer or exit the agreement if your situation changes. Be sure to read the subscriber agreement on this issue before you sign.

Garden operators typically will check the credit scores of prospective subscribers. Even if you have a lower score, you may be able to convince an operator that your situation merits allowing you to subscribe. And there are developers working to increase access to community solar by not requiring credit checks.

If you are not an Xcel electricity customer your utility company may have its own community solar program. You will need to contact your provider directly to understand how their program works, as many are different from Xcel’s.

NOT AN XCEL CUSTOMER?

In these non-Xcel programs, the electricity provider itself typically operates the solar garden, and some ask subscribers for up front payments to “buy a piece of the garden.”

Wherever you live, check into whether you qualify for community solar and help us all save the planet.

John Krenn is the chair of the Sierra Club’s Clean Energy Team and chair of our Legislative Team. He is a recently retired lawyer who is proud to be volunteering and donating to support the work of the Sierra Club.

Beyond Coal & Fossil Gas to 100% Clean Energy

Minnesotans across the state are calling for bold action on climate justice and our teams have been working to advocate for a transition from coal and fossil gas to 100% clean and equitable energy. As of this year, all major coal plants in Minnesota have proposed retirement dates (although not all those dates come soon enough)! But Minnesota still imports a significant amount of coal from North and South Dakota, and Minnesota utilities are still proposing to build new fossil gas plants and pipelines, despite the risk for our climate and the risk for customers given the decreasing costs of clean energy and energy storage.

We proposed an alternative to Xcel Energy’s long term energy plan. Sierra Club’s “Clean Energy for All” plan would save customers \$2.2 billion, reduce more carbon emissions, does not include building a new 800 megawatt fossil gas plant and pipeline in Becker, and instead replaces retiring coal plants with clean energy like wind, solar and energy storage. Our plan also maximizes community and rooftop solar to ensure customers can share in the benefits of the clean energy transition.

In Northeastern Minnesota, we are mobilizing to call on Minnesota Power to stop its plans to build a new fossil gas plant in Superior, WI that our analysis found is not needed. Similarly, to our alternative to Xcel’s plan, we’re calling for a more rapid transition to 100% clean energy, more support for community and rooftop solar, and more action to ensure the energy transition benefits those most impacted by our energy system.

In Rochester, we’ve successfully organized to secure a plan for net 100% renewable energy by 2031. Now we are pushing Rochester Public Utilities to commit to fossil-free electricity by 2031 — including no new gas, and 100% electric municipal buildings — and establishing all-electric residential and commercial pilot and demonstration projects.

In Hennepin County, we have advocated for a climate plan grounded in climate justice. We are calling on the County to phase out the Hennepin Energy Resource Recovery Center (HERC), a trash incinerator that is an environmental injustice and carbon polluter.

At the state legislature, we continue to push for legislation requiring that 100% of Minnesota’s electricity to be generated from fully renewable sources by 2040 or sooner; expanding access to community and rooftop solar and energy efficiency; and other supporting policies.

OSPREYS RETURN TO THE BALLFIELD



"Clever Girl," the female osprey, on her nest at the ballfield. Photo Credit: Bob Suchanek

Bob Suchanek

HOME IS WHERE THE FISH ARE

The osprey family that I watched in a nearby ballfield last year left Minnesota in the fall before fishing waters froze. Mom, dad, and youngsters all headed for open water and good fishing south of here, perhaps as far away as South America. Last year's brood won't be returning this spring since they'll spend several years in the south before finding lifelong partners and returning to start families of their own.

I can't wait until the ospreys come back. The parents of last year's brood will be returning to their massive stick nest on top of the ballfield light pole. From my perspective 40 feet below it looks like the nest survived the winter, but I suppose they'll do repairs and tidy up in preparation for this year's family. This is a good nest, inaccessible to raccoons and predators but near lakes and streams that offer plenty of fish.

Ospreys are all about fish. Their diet is

almost entirely fish, and they live near fresh or saltwater locations where fish can be seen at shallow depths.

The scientific name for the local osprey is *Pandion haliaetus*, or Pandion's sea eagle; a fanciful reference to an ancient Greek king and the bird's aggressive pursuit of fish. Ospreys are hawks, but with wingspans of up to six feet and a regal demeanor, they are certainly eagle-like.

Ospreys attack fish from above, diving at high speed with legs first and claws open.

Research indicates an impressive catch rate, perhaps as high as seven fish for every 10 dives. These anglers don't waste much time staring at the water; the average hunting time before snatching a fish is just 12 minutes.

Once an osprey catches a fish it stays caught. According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, osprey feet "are unusual among hawks in possessing a reversible outer toe that allows them to grasp with two toes in front and two behind. Barbed pads on the soles of the bird's feet help them grasp slippery fish. When flying with prey, an osprey lines up its catch head first for less wind resistance."

Once settled in her ballfield nest, the mother osprey will lay up to four eggs. She'll do most of the sitting but dad will take over at times to allow her to stretch her wings and fish for herself. Dad will do most of the fishing for the entire family while the eggs are incubating and will fish for the young until they can manage on their own.

Young ospreys will attempt flight at two weeks of age but won't succeed until they've logged weeks of wing exercise time. They'll start flying and hunting after seven or eight weeks of age. Their first trip south, possibly as far as South America, will be five or six weeks later.

A CONSERVATION SUCCESS

Osprey numbers crashed during the middle of the 20th century. The pesticide DDT poisoned ospreys and caused a thinning of eggshells that proved fatal to baby birds. One survey of east coast osprey populations showed a 90% loss of breeding pairs.

When the United States Environmental Protection Agency banned DDT in 1972, osprey populations rebounded. The osprey is no longer an endangered species but protection challenges remain, including continued use of DDT in some countries and habitat destruction worldwide.

The osprey is one of the most widely distributed birds in the world. I've seen ospreys in many states, and I am never surprised to see them wherever fishing is good. I've even seen nesting ospreys in the desert. They're also one of the most traveled migratory birds; some ospreys may travel as much as 160,000 miles in their lifetime.

You can see migrating ospreys in the spring and fall; one of the best places in North America to watch the migrations is Hawk Ridge in Duluth, Minnesota. Hawk Ridge observers keep careful counts of individual bird species on the move over the city, and hundreds of ospreys are seen every year.

The fall migration count at Hawk Ridge is amazing — over 60,000 raptors and more than 200,000 other birds. According to the Hawk Ridge website, hawks begin migrating in mid-August and continue through November. Naturalists are on site from the first of September through the end of October.

Watching ospreys is one of the joys in my life; it inspires me to volunteer with the Sierra Club's Stewards group, which seeks to ensure our state agencies live up to their missions to protect our environment.

Bob Suchanek is a member of the Waters and Wetlands Stewards and an active naturalist. Learn more about our natural wonders by reading Bob's blogs online at sierraclub.org/minnesota/north-star-blog

The Stewards Volunteer Teams research, monitor and advocate for environmental issues.

The Forests and Wildlife Stewards are currently in the midst of advocating for legislation that will save forests and protect the wildlife within them. Highlights from the 2021 session include team chair Bob Graves' testimony in favor of bill HF 214, which adds a preference for natural carbon sequestration and climate change resiliency into forestry statutes. The Stewards are also seeking to influence Governor Walz's Subcabinet on Climate Change and are cultivating relationships with the members.

This legislative session, the Waters and Wetlands Stewards dove headfirst into two major issues: wake boat regulation and microplastic research. Wake boats, which create wakes large enough for people to surf, also damage docks, swamp boats, endanger swimmers, destroy waterfowl nesting sites, uproot native plants, and spread invasive species. Citizens concerned about this issue can ask their legislators for more funding for research and increased regulations until we better understand the overall impact of these recreational vehicles. Microplastics pose an ever-increasing threat to our waterways, our flora and fauna, and our health. Since the dangers and effects of microplastics are still largely unknown, we're asking the Minnesota Legislature to help establish standard methods for measuring microplastics so that we can get a sense of the scope of this issue. Only then can we begin to address it. For more information on both of these problems, check out the North Star Blog.

The Stewards have also been focusing on equity goals within their own committees and the broader North Star Chapter. On April 1, the Stewards hosted Ricky DeFoe of the Fond du Lac Band of Minnesota Chippewa. Ricky provided valuable insight on how to establish meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities as we seek to equitably confront environmental issues.

RACIST IMPACTS OF HIGHWAYS — CAN WE FIX THEM?

Steph Larsen

Transportation projects are racially neutral, and roads need to go where they need to go, right? Wrong.

Take the example of Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. This suburb north of Minneapolis has been impacted by several expansions of Interstate 94 over the years in attempts to reduce traffic congestion. The irony is that highway expansions actually increase traffic and congestion (a phenomenon called “induced demand”). Now, there’s a proposal to expand the highway even further, which would double traffic in Brooklyn Center from 60,000 vehicles per day to 120,000 vehicles per day. The plan would divert traffic from more affluent communities to low-income communities and communities of color.

For years, Brooklyn Center residents have been trying to get some answers to basic questions:

How many homes will be destroyed? How many families and businesses will be affected? How does the state plan to reduce air and water pollution in the adjacent Mississippi National River and Recreation Area? What is the plan to deal with the increase in the already high rates

of childhood asthma? How will the highway expansion affect the community’s access to green spaces? Why has bus service to Brooklyn Center decreased? Why is public transit not being used more heavily to reduce congestion?

Incredibly, the community is being pressured to endorse the project without having answers to these critical questions.

When I asked Brooklyn Center Mayor Mike Elliott what solutions he would like to see for his community regarding the highway expansion, he proposed that highway planners follow these practices:

- Reducing pollution, as well as social and environmental impacts on communities of color, should be part of any highway project. All alternatives that decrease vehicle traffic should be fully explored before a project is approved.
- Transportation planners and engineers must work directly with local communities and residents to ensure that traffic between communities is fairly distributed. Affected communities should be enhanced, not harmed.

- Alternatives to highway expansion that actually relieve traffic congestion — like public transit access, safe bicycle and pedestrian traffic — should be prioritized. Increased high-speed internet access and work-from-home policies should be explored.
- When spending funds that have already been allocated, residents should not be rushed into hasty decisions.
- President Biden’s executive order to ensure that 40% of federal climate investments benefit low-income communities and communities of color should be fulfilled.

TAKE ACTION NOW AT: sc.org/highways

You can support Mayor Mike by sending a quick message to Transportation Secretary Buttigieg. Urge him to not expand I-94 and Highway 252!

Steph Larsen is a senior online organizer with the Sierra Club’s Clean Transportation for All campaign. A version of this article originally appeared in Sierra Club’s national blog.

The Land Use & Transportation Team advocates for a Minnesota where everyone has a safe place to call home and the freedom to conveniently get around by walking, bicycling, public transit, or car. They work to secure long-term investments for clean transportation options for all, and policies which support a just, sustainable future. They are proud to have submitted over 6,000 comments in support of Clean Cars Minnesota, which received the greenlight for adoption in May and will expand the availability of zero-emission cars and trucks.

Brooklyn Center Mayor Mike Elliott on the Mississippi River. Photo Credit: Mayor Elliott.



EQUITY AND ICO: WORKING TOWARD OUTDOOR ADVENTURES FOR ALL

Courtney Gildersleeve

As members of Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO), we take joy in facilitating outdoor adventures for youth from community groups in the Twin Cities. Seeing young people delight in encountering a squirrel along the trail, learning a newfound skill, and gaining confidence in their own abilities make this work meaningful.

This past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has made our outings impossible, so our group has taken a step inward to look at our own commitments and principles, while trying to find new ways to connect with community partners.

While most of the volunteers in ICO are white people, the majority of youth who participate in outings are youth of color. As a group, we’ve been concerned about disparities of privilege and opportunity and wanted to address the ways racism can show up in our interactions.

Developing a statement condemning the murder of George Floyd pushed us to explicitly confront the ways that anti-Blackness, erasure of Indigenous communities, threats to the safety of people of color, and various other forms of oppression persist in outdoor culture. This led us to look carefully at many of our assumptions about our work and to commit to a new level of intentionality in our outings.

Since then, we’ve spent time in conversation with each other. Most of



our monthly meetings have begun with an environmental justice topic, often focused on a particular reading.

One of our early meetings of this type was grounded in a discussion of the troubling dimensions of the history of the Sierra Club, “Pulling Down Our Monuments,” which was published online in the Sierra Club blog. Another reading was “When Green is Blue”, published in the Parks Stewardship Forum, which critically addresses the role of law enforcement in state and national parks.

Additionally, we have spent time reflecting on particular outings and identifying areas that require transformation. We’ve been sharing resources, having honest conversations, and trying to develop a respectful form of exchange among members of our group.

Learning to practice such relationships in the space of our group is one of many stepping stones toward building the kinds of outings that we hope will become increasingly supportive spaces for Black, Indigenous & People of Color (BIPOC) youth.

With current vaccination efforts underway, we’re hopeful that ICO will be able to lead outings again soon. We want to continue in the spirit of transformation. We’re

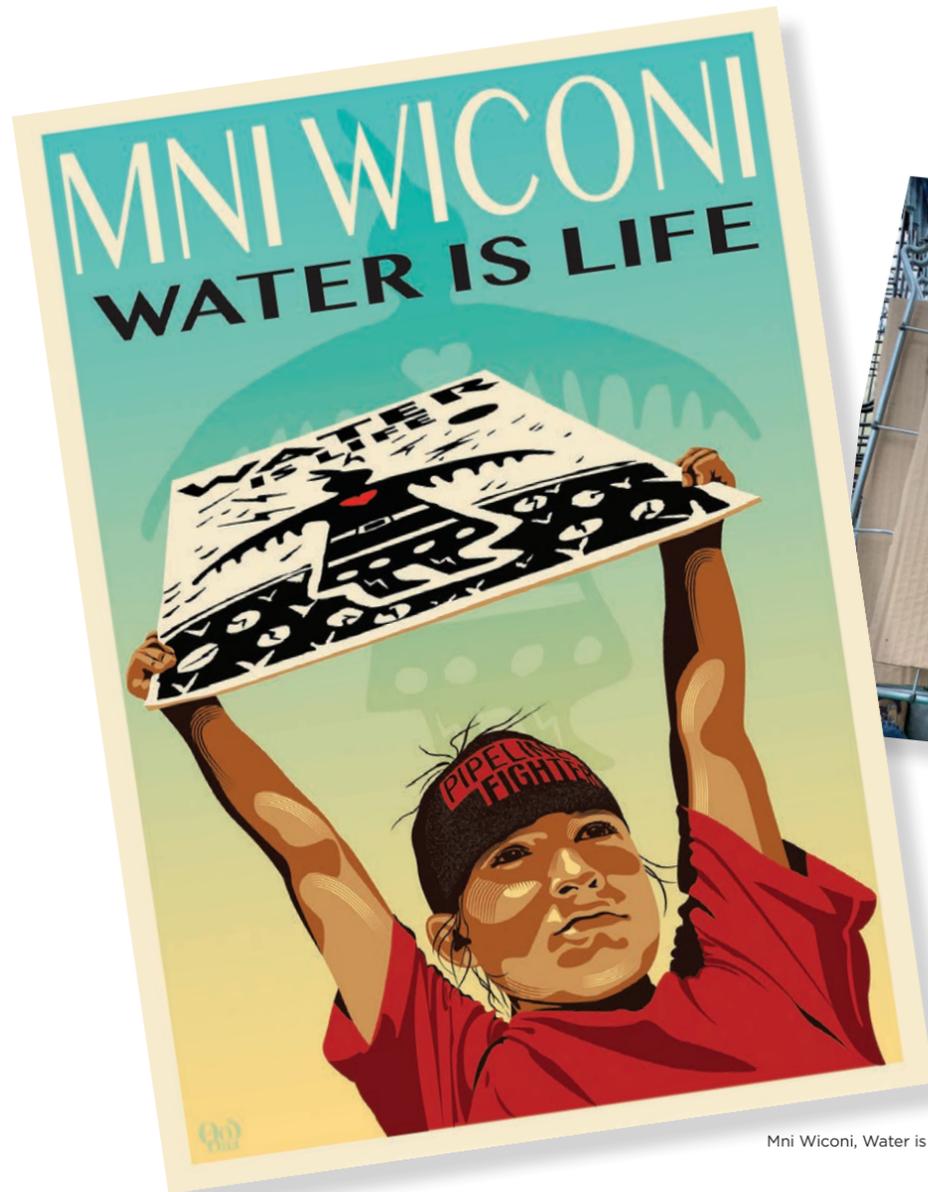
committed to listening to BIPOC youth and our partner organizations and learning from our interactions with them. We’re committed to forging more equitable ways of being together. We want to do what we can to facilitate outdoor adventures that are safe and joyful for everyone.

Courtney Gildersleeve is the environmental justice lead with the Inspiring Connections Outdoors group. She also is a community member in the George Floyd Square zone.



A pre-pandemic ICO trip to Willow River State Park

Line 3 'Art Storm'



Mni Wiconi, Water is Life, Ona Filloy, Australia



Pipelines are drippy, protect the Mississippi, Maggie Jaenicke, Saint Paul



Bird encircled by barbed wire, Zola, Canada



Blue embroidery, Libby London, Minneapolis



Zine pages with song lyrics, Molly Lloyd (lyrics by Rhubarb Cuddy), Philadelphia



Save our mother, save our lives, Lydia Wilkie, Saint Paul

Sophia Pechaty

Minnesotans want action for our climate, water, and treaty rights. We know Enbridge's Line pipeline is a threat to all. For years we have organized to stop Line 3 by advocating for Minnesota to follow its own state standards, mobilizing thousands of public comments, meeting with officials, and working closely with

allies to delay this project. Now that Governor Walz has reneged on his climate commitment and approved Line 3, we are:

- ramping up legal action with Native nations and other partners,
- supporting water protectors on the frontlines,

- leveraging our federal lobbying team to continue pressuring Minnesota national congressional delegates and President Biden to use their federal authority to stop line 3.

Above we are showcasing some of the amazing artwork contributed for the February 17th "art storm" led by our allies at MN350 and Stop Line 3. On the day of the art storm, we flooded social media with posts featuring homemade artworks and tagging President Joe Biden. This was one piece of a broader effort to increase pressure on decision-makers at the federal level.

Contributions came from professional

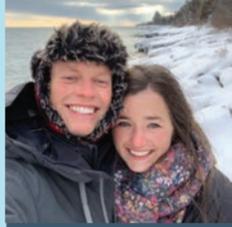
artists, activists, and volunteers of all ages and backgrounds. Posts from all over the state, nation, and world highlighted the environmental impacts, treaty violations, and other concerns that Line 3 represents.

In a time when our options for coming together were limited, the art storm brought together a diverse group of remote contributors, united in message: President Biden must #StopLine3 now.

Sophia Pechaty is a former Sierra Club intern and current communications liaison with the Stop Line 3 Team. She enjoyed curating the art for this piece and in her free time she loves crocheting, hanging out with her family, and breaking in her hiking boots.

DONATIONS MATTER

Everything you read about in this Journal is made possible with the support of your dollars. The North Star Chapter is proud to be supported by folks across Minnesota. From large gifts to small, each one makes a difference. Thank you!



"I donate to the North Star Chapter of the Sierra Club because it helps fuel the grassroots power we're

building in Minnesota," said Erik Hillesheim. "As a 25 year old, I feel financial pressures, but a small monthly contribution helps make sure I'm aligning my actions and dollars with my values."



"I have been a volunteer with the North Star Chapter for over 20 years," said Brett Smith. "I have seen

first hand the effectiveness of the Chapter's strategy of volunteer-led grassroots organizing. Talented and committed volunteers, who can work on issues that concern them most, leverage the work of an excellent staff. This strategy, along with a strong commitment to political action and to issues of environmental and social justice has created a powerful organization that is unique in Minnesota. I am proud to give it my financial support."



"When I came into a small inheritance from my father, I wanted to honor his environmental

activism by donating to an effective organization. Sierra Club fit the bill: responsive, responsible, local, powerful," said Marya Hart.

WAYS TO DONATE

ONLINE

Donations made directly to the Minnesota North Star Chapter are especially meaningful because 100% of your gift will stay in Minnesota for work on local and state issues you care about.

To donate online please visit sc.org/mn-donate! There you may make a one-time gift or become a monthly sustaining donor to the North Star Chapter.

VIA CHECK

If you would prefer to mail in your donation, please make your check payable to North Star Sierra Club and mail to:

Sierra Club North Star Chapter
2300 Myrtle Avenue, Suite 260
St. Paul, MN 55114

Contributions, donations, gifts, and dues to the Sierra Club support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. These contributions are not tax-deductible.

AND MORE

To give a tax-deductible contribution, a charitable IRA distribution, gift of stock, or to include the Sierra Club North Star Chapter in your estate plan, please contact State Director Margaret Levin at margaret.levin@sierraclub.org or: 612-259-2446.



A PROUD MEMBER OF



The Sierra Club Foundation benefits from workplace contributions to the Minnesota Environmental Fund, which provides a payroll giving option to support local member organizations that protect, conserve and restore Minnesota's environment.

To learn more about adding this giving option at your workplace, please contact Margaret Levin at 612-259-2446 or margaret.levin@sierraclub.org.

PASSION FOR THE OUTDOORS & VALUES INSPIRE DONATION

John Yackel makes gift in lasting memory of his wife Eleanor Yackel

John Hottinger

John Yackel grew up in Sanborn in southwestern Minnesota ("a small town with community spirit"). Living there sparked his life-long love of hunting and fishing and also triggered his passion for environmental protection. Spending so much time in the woods and open spaces, he learned to be an observer of nature. Over time, he began to notice damage caused by humans and signs of climate change.

He married his wife Eleanor in their early twenties and Eleanor added her spirited support for social and racial justice to their list of important family values. She continually put others first and worked tirelessly to stand up and speak out in protest when she saw injustice and oppression, doing so with grace and a heart for reconciliation.

At age 89, John continues to be an avid advocate of environmental protection and wilderness preservation. His loss of Eleanor on May 30, 2020, moved John to dedicate his most recent large contribution to the Sierra Club North Star Chapter in her memory.

John has continued to enjoy pheasant hunting in South Dakota and trout fishing in Montana and believes in the importance of preserving public access. In Montana, he saw how one person can

make a difference when a landowner persevered to protect a spring-fed stream from a highway expansion across his land. John has also seen a decline in fishing and hunting as costs grow and access becomes more restricted.

He has looked to the national and local Sierra Club to see the big trends that continue to emerge: To identify what is happening; to assess whether it is an

integrated, and they supported organizations that recognize this intersection.

In Minnesota, John is especially concerned about sulfide mining, and how international corporations could destroy our water with no fear of consequences. He values the need to battle unchecked capitalism that enables a small elite to ignore the human

consequences of their economic decisions.

During his lifetime of supporting the work of Sierra Club and other environmental organizations, John Yackel has come to recognize and incorporate one test for his activities: "You have to have the environment deep in your heart. Having children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, you think about [their future] a lot.... What is their environment going to be like? ...What is going to happen to them?"

This attitude will help each of us make the right decisions as we travel the road forward with him and

his beloved Eleanor toward a just and sustainable Minnesota.

John Hottinger is a lawyer and volunteer with the Communications Team who is eagerly reengaging in Sierra Club volunteer duties.

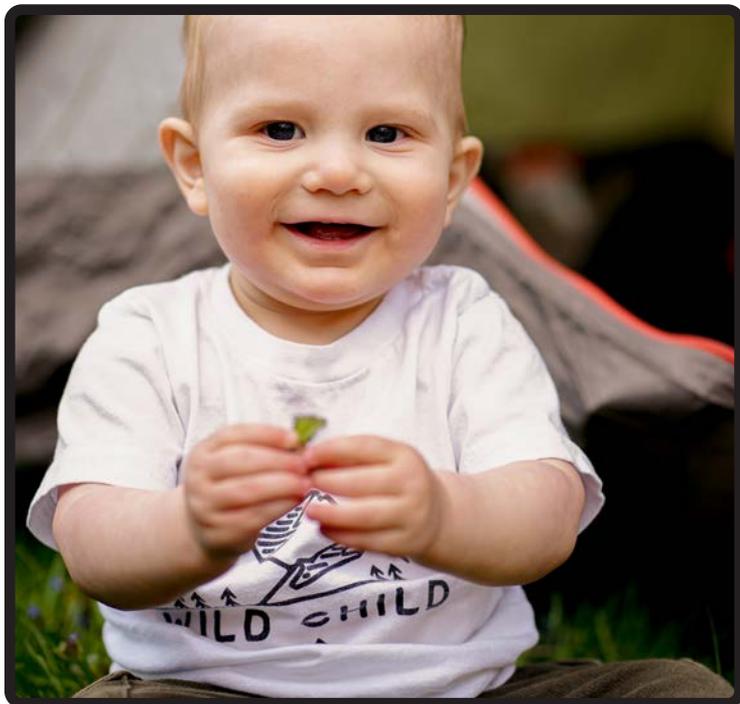


John Yackel with his great grandchildren.

opportunity or a mistake; and to learn whether it threatens the environment and social justice.

"I trust what I see the Sierra Club doing nationally and in Minnesota."

He and Eleanor were deeply committed to environmental protection, social and racial justice. Together, they understood how many issues are becoming



August Olson enjoys camping. Photo Credit: Alec Olson

or current resident

Volunteers Wanted!

Contribute your time to protect the air, water, lands and climate we all depend on.

CAMPAIGN TEAMS: Lead grassroots advocacy campaigns on our most pressing issues.

Stop Line 3, 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 PM
nancy.vezner@northstar.sierraclub.org
marcy.leussler@northstar.sierraclub.org

Land Use & Transportation, 1st Monday at 6:00 PM
alex.burns@northstar.sierraclub.org

Zero Waste, 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 PM
lori.olinger@northstar.sierraclub.org

100% Clean Energy, 4th Tuesday at 6:30 PM
john.krenn@northstar.sierraclub.org

GEOGRAPHIC TEAMS: Organize in your city for 100% Clean Energy.

Rochester, 2nd Monday at 6:30 PM
rick.morris@sierraclub.org

Duluth, 1st Tuesday at 5:30 PM
jenna.yeakle@sierraclub.org

Minnetonka/Wayzata, meeting times vary.
patty.okeefe@sierraclub.org

STEWARDS TEAMS: Research, monitor and advocate for environmental issues.

Forests and Wildlife Stewards, 2nd Monday at 7:00 PM
bob.graves@northstar.sierraclub.org

Waters and Wetlands Stewards, 2nd Monday at 7:00 PM
steve.ring@northstar.sierraclub.org

CAPACITY TEAMS: Share your talents and skills with us.

SierraAction: Use our grassroots power to impact legislation.
4th Wednesday, sathish.desai@northstar.sierraclub.org;
erik.hillesheim@northstar.sierraclub.org

Communications: Hone your photography, design, and writing skills.
Quarterly meetings, mary.blitzer@sierraclub.org

Equity Outreach: Spread the word about protecting our planet.
Ongoing events, charles.frempong-longdon@sierraclub.org

Outings: Find new friends and explore Minnesota parks.
Events restarting, greg.allison@northstar.sierraclub.org

Inspiring Connections Outdoors: 2nd Sunday at 4:00 PM
Help plan activities and events that provide access to and inspire new connections to the outdoors, among individuals, and between communities
mnico@northstar.sierraclub.org