



# Sauk-Calumet Group

August 2018 Newsletter Volume 37, Issue 2

## September 8 Chicagoland 2018 Peoples Climate March Rise for Climate, Jobs, and Justice! *by Ann Baskerville*

We're thrilled to announce this city-wide event is coming to our Sauk Calumet area!

12:30 pm Rally at O'Connor Park in Elwood, IL (about 1/2 hour SW of Frankfort Library).

Will County is home to the largest inland port in North America. Trains bring in shipping containers to rail intermodals in Elwood and Joliet. Semi trucks then pick up containers and deliver them to warehouses and distribution centers for sorting and delivery to big box stores or to customers' doors through e-commerce. As rail traffic increases, more and more warehouses are built in Will County. Amazon, for example, operates 4 warehouses in Will County and is now the single largest employer in the county. Increased semi traffic has meant increased diesel particulate matter pollution for people living near warehouses and driving on roads utilized by the semis.

Not only do the warehouses lead to more air pollution, groups like Warehouse Workers for Justice have documented a perma-temp labor system in many warehouses. Workers are employed through a staffing or temporary agency instead of being directly employed by the company operating the warehouse. Temp workers receive low pay and few benefits.

This year's Peoples Climate March is focusing on "Climate, Jobs, and Justice". When considering the amount of fossil fuels required to move consumer goods from Southeast Asia to a store or a doorstep and the poor treatment of warehouse workers, the coalition planning the march in Illinois decided to hold the march in Elwood, Illinois. Elwood is home to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad intermodal (owned by Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway)

In Elwood, residents and workers are coming together to challenge some of the most powerful corporations on the planet to demand clean air and workers' rights, and they want you to join them.

**Here are the details:**

**What: March + Rally for Environmental and Worker Justice**

**Where: O'Connor Park, 0 NE Dear Run, Elwood, IL**

**When: Saturday, Sept. 8 @ 12:30 PM**

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this event. We are demanding better pay and permanent jobs for warehouse workers, along with a transition to 100% electric vehicles powered by renewable energy. Chicago and Will County are the rail and transportation hub for the United States. We have a chance on Sept. 8th to make all people aware of the environmental cost of buying online and waiting for your package to arrive. By drawing attention to the environmental impacts, we can imagine a new future where we manufacture more of our goods locally, using 100% clean, renewable energy.

Please RSVP [here](#) and share this information with your friends and family. Want to meet up with other Sauk Calumet Sierrans? When you arrive at O'Connor Park, look for the Sauk Calumet Banner and Lorax umbrella. One final note, there is a parking lot at O'Connor Park with room for about 90 cars. If you are able, please park on a side street in Elwood and then walk to O'Connor Park. We would like to save the spots right next to the park for those who cannot walk long distances.

\*\*\*\*\*

## IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 1-2 – The Chicagoland 2018 Peoples Climate March

Page 2 – The Nature Fix Book Review

Page 3 – A Review of Illinois Environment Legislation

Page 4 – 5 A Look Back at Nature Sunday Hikes / Helpful Web Sites

Page 6 – S-C Sierra Club Group Meeting Schedule

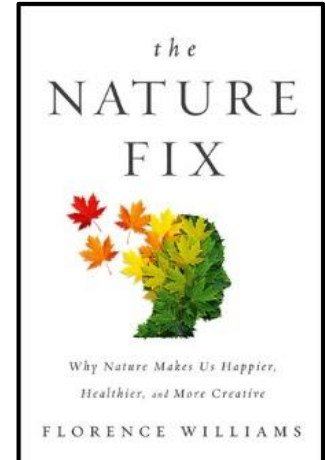
Page 7 – S-C Group Contacts / Illinois Sierra Club Outings / S-C Online Links

.....

## Highly Recommended Reading:

### The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative by Florence Williams, 2017

Outside Magazine journalist Florence Williams has researched and written an amazing and enjoyable book about the benefits of connecting with nature. Williams personally and experientially participates in research as she travels around the globe joining scientific teams exploring this connection. Some of the benefits the research reveals are not so surprising or new, such as stress relief or healing for the mentally ill and those suffering from PTSD or ADHD. But The Nature Fix also provides lots of evidence for its central contention that time spent in the natural world improves our ability to think and to learn and also heightens our creativity.



The message: Our lives, and by extension, our world will benefit by our getting outdoors! Often!

You might also want to check out Florence's blog: **Nature Fix**

<https://www.rei.com/blog/bio/florence-williams> - Lois Lauer, Sauk Calumet Chair

# A Brief Review of the year's Illinois Environment Legislation:

## Lots of good News!

*by Kathy Van Kampen, Sauk-Calumet Sierra Club*

### **Legislation Passed: Good News!**

#### SB3214: Solar Pollinator Certification

“The legislation will encourage solar developers to create habitats for bees, monarchs and other pollinators within their solar sites. These projects will create job opportunities for seed growers and landscape companies. Additionally, these plants will help reduce soil erosion and minimize fertilizer runoff into nearby waterways.” according to the Environmental Law and Policy Center (ELPC). PASSED, waiting for Gov. Rauner’s approval.

#### SB2773: Renewable Energy Financing

Allows the Illinois Finance Authority to help communities access funds for clean energy and energy efficiency projects. PASSED

#### SB486: Solar Property Tax Standardization

“sets a standard tax assessment value for large solar installations, creating certainty around the property tax revenue that solar farms will pay to local taxing bodies, helping to fund schools, roads and other critical services. . Signed by Governor Rauner. ELPC

### **Legislation Not Passed: More Good News!**

#### HB5293: Endangered Species Protections

Provided for a change in the composition of the Endangered Species Protection Board (ESPB), and “removed all state authority to oversee the conservation of federally endangered species”. This bill was never called for a vote.

#### HB4236: “Clean Coal”

Provided for the construction of a new coal plant in Eastern Illinois.  
This bill was never called for a vote.

#### HB5198: Plastic Burning

Permitted the burning of waste plastics by certain waste facilities which would have led to the release of dioxins and other contaminants into the air. This bill passed narrowly in the House but was never called for a vote.

Sources: Legislative Wrap-UP from the Illinois Environmental Council (IEC)

by Colleen Smith, IEC Legislative Director; Environmental Law and Policy Center

# The Good News in the Bad, Nature Sundays Hikes This Summer

*by Patrick Coffey*

This summer our Nature Sundays hikes took us from Fran Beck's former farm, to the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, to Paintbrush Prairie in Markham, to Tolleston Dunes and the DuPont Natural Area in Indiana. All of them had something special to offer.

Fran Beck is restoring former farmland to prairie and woodland. It's a labor of love for him. It's out in the middle of corn fields, but somehow he has attracted everything from birds, to butterflies, to frogs. His prairie is diverse and looks like a mature prairie should. Best of luck to Fran as he continues to build and grow his diverse nature site!

At the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie we tried, but we did not see the bison. We took the trail almost as far as we could to try to see the bison, but on this day the bison were hiding. Instead, we had to content ourselves with Bobolinks and Dickcissels, which isn't such a bad thing, as both birds are very rare. They rely on grasslands and prairies, so it's a good thing that projects like the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie are going forward to protect these rare birds.

At the Markham Prairies, Mary Anicich and Gary Horn were our guides. We visited three times: once in May, in June, and in July. We saw different wildflowers in bloom, as happens in native prairies, at each stage of the growing season. Gary Horn introduced us to many new plant species and even picked up a garter snake to give us a look. The Markham Prairies, known as some of the most pristine in Illinois, have many management problems due to the urban landscape they are now a part of. Fortunately, the Nature Conservancy is looking after these unique and rare prairies.



Gary Horn shows us a garter snake. I was surprised, it didn't bite him.

At the DuPont Natural Area in East Chicago, IN, we met Paul Labus. The DuPont Company agreed as part of a legal settlement to restore a natural area on their property. People like Paul Labus heard about it and started the work. What was once beautiful dune-swale habitat had become overgrown with Buckthorn and other invasive species. Paul and others worked on the

site and wrote grants for the work they could not do. The site is now once again beautiful dune-swale habitat, perfect for water birds and rare native plants.



Shooting Stars blooming in different colors.

Paul had a wealth of information for us. I asked him about the Karner Blue Butterfly, which no longer lives in the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, as it once did. This endangered species now exists on only a few other sites nationwide. Paul worked on the captive breeding program for the Karner Blues before they disappeared in Indiana. He said the reason they could not save them was because of climate change. The Karner Blues have several generations each year, but the most vulnerable generation is the generation that overwinters. In the fall the Karner Blues lay their eggs near Lupine plants, which are the only plants the caterpillars will eat when they emerge in the spring. Because of warmer temperatures in the spring, the eggs began to hatch too early, before the Lupines emerged. So, the spring generation of Karner Blues could not make it. Paul said that things are changing in the natural world. Some things we can protect, and maybe others we can't. As the temperatures rise, plants and animals are moving and adapting. But he says that, as he retires from his work at the DuPont Natural Area, that he trusts the new generation coming up to carry on the work.



Pat Coffey talking to a few members of the hiking group at Tolleston Dunes.

As we come to the end of another summer, I reflect that the chances for my generation to save the planet are slowly passing, too. As Paul said, it will soon be the next generation's work to take over. I guess that's the good news in the bad news. That we have so many wonderful young people whom we can trust to take over is truly good news.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Here's Some Helpful Internet Sites

If you are looking for a nearby place to recycle household items, try [Earth911.com](http://Earth911.com) . You can enter your zip code to find a list of local places that will take items that most places will not accept.

If you would like to see which candidates have earned the Illinois Sierra Club's endorsement for this November's elections, try <https://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/vote> . It is very important to vote for all levels of our government, so please get out and vote on Tuesday November 6<sup>th</sup> .

If you are looking for some great hikes to see fall colors check out the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore at <https://www.nps.gov/indu/planyourvisit/hiking.htm> . The Bailly Homestead/Chellberg Farm trail is relatively flat and usually gets very colorful. The Cowles Bog Trail and the Miller Woods Trail are longer with some dunes to climb but the fall colors are worth the extra effort. The [Indiana Dunes State Park](http://Indiana Dunes State Park) also has some nice trails that showcase the fall colors.

# Sauk Calumet Sierra Club Group Meeting Schedule

Meetings are held at 7:15 pm on the second Monday of every month at the Frankfort Library (21119 Pfeiffer Rd, Frankfort, IL) with the exception of June, July and August. All meetings are free and open both to Sierra Club members and to the public.

No meetings in June, July, or August

## **September 10: Climate and Maples at the Dunes**

What are the impacts of climate change on maple syrup production and can we manage for them?



Indiana Dunes National lakeshore Education Coordinator Wendy Smith will discuss the citizen science project that she coordinates studying Climate Effects on the Culture and Ecology of Sugar Maple Trees.

## **October 8: Wildlife Viewing in Botswana and South Africa**



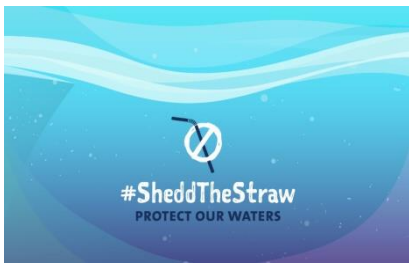
Sauk Calumet Sierran Al Sturgis will show slides and tell us about his adventures at three wildlife viewing camps in Botswana's Okovango Delta and a preserve near the Indian Ocean in South Africa.

## **November 12: Sustainability at IKEA**



Sauk Calumet Sierran Sebastian Di Clemente will tell us about the many facets of IKEA's ambitious *People and Planet Positive* sustainability strategy at their Joliet Distribution Center where he serves as Sustainability Developer.

## **December 10: Shedd the Straw!**



Plastic straws and other plastic pollution in the Great Lakes

Sarah Tulga, Conservation Specialist at the Shedd Aquarium, will discuss plastic pollution in the Great Lakes and promote the Shedd Aquarium's Shedd the Straw initiative.

## **January 14: Members' Slide Night**



Calling all members! Please bring a PowerPoint file or picture file of your latest outdoor experience, be it a grand adventure on the other side of the world or the beautiful butterflies of your own backyard. Call Lois Lauer at 708 (923-1550) if you have slides to share.

### Letters to the Editor:

Letters on content within the Sauk-Calumet newsletter should be sent to the editor at:  
[sc-editor@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:sc-editor@illinois.sierraclub.org)

Please include your full name and address, and reference the article on which you are commenting.

## Sauk-Calumet Group

### People You Should Know

**Pat Coffey\*** 708-720-2725  
Political Chair / Publicity

**John Field\*** 630-852-8202  
Treasurer / Web Site

**Jerry Heinrich** 815-476-6171  
Midewin Liaison

**Georganne Higgins\*** 815-936-9040  
Membership

**Lois Lauer\*** 708-923-1550  
Chair / Programs

**Ann Baskerville\*** 815-671-1275  
Chapter Excom Rep

**Christy Mazrimas Ott\*** 708-825-4163  
Conservation Chair

**Sharon Rolek** 773-646-0990  
Conservation Liaison - Calumet Region

**Rich Treptow\*** 708-747-0649  
Secretary, Climate Change Liaison

**Melinda Elliott\*** 708-701-6443  
Clean Power Liaison

**Steve Baker** 815 485 5273  
Outings Chair

**Gregory Ott** 708-895-1646  
Newsletter Editor

*\*Denotes an elected member of the Executive Committee*

The Sierra Club from the national level down to the local groups does so many positive things to help protect our planet. So let's get out there and enjoy our beautiful world. Click below for Sierra Club Illinois outings.



Remember to check our Sauk-Calumet Group website for current information and news updates on issues relevant to Illinois.

Click below to for our website.



We are also available on Facebook. You can click

<https://www.facebook.com/SierraClubSaukCalumet/>

to find us on Facebook.