



# Sauk-Calumet Group

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## EPA Sessions Held

by Pat Coffey, Sauk-Calumet Ex-Com Rep.

On Friday, November 8th, the U.S. EPA conducted listening sessions in Chicago on the subject of carbon dioxide emissions at power plants. The Obama administration is contemplating regulating carbon dioxide at power plants, and they were seeking feedback from the public on the issue. Carbon dioxide is a main contributor to global warming.

In addition to the "testimonies" given to EPA officials at the EPA building downtown, there was also a rally at the Federal Plaza. Sierra Club gave out free t-shirts to those who came - on a cold day, we wore them over our coats. They gave out 400 t-shirts, and there were many people left over who did not get t-shirts, so they estimated that there were about 450-500 people at the rally. There was music and there were several speakers. The rally lasted only about an hour or so, but judging from the crowd's reaction, everyone was excited to be there.

The listening sessions were even more significant than the rally, though. As someone who didn't speak, I was impressed with the way people presented their views to the EPA panel. People spoke on the effects of climate change on the environment, how it will affect and already is affecting people around the globe, and how it will affect future generations, including our own children and grandchildren. Each speaker was given three minutes to talk, so the "testimonies" were necessarily succinct, but they were also very eloquent and moving. No opponents of the regulations spoke at the session I attended, which was a good sign because at other sessions around the country, opposition to the regulations has been vocal. Companies like Peabody Energy have been busing in retired power plant workers to express their opposition to the regulations.

The Sauk-Calumet Group only had three members attend the rally, but some of us sent in written statements to the EPA. Written statements are also an important avenue of communication, since the EPA has to account for each written statement in their final formulations. The Sauk-Calumet Group can be proud that they participated in this event since these carbon regulations are an historic event, and it is obvious, whether we were able to attend on that day or not, that we all care about this important issue.



### Editor's note

To learn more, visit the following website:

<https://www2.epa.gov/carbon-pollution-standards/public-listening-sessions>

The EPA held 11 listening sessions across the U.S., including the one held in Chicago. The intent was to solicit ideas and input from the public and stakeholders about the best Clean Air Act approaches to reducing carbon pollution from existing power plants.

The website has the information you need to know about carbon pollution from power plants. You can also find out what the EPA is doing to reduce carbon pollution from power plants, and what regulations are proposed for future power plants.

And, if you would like to get more involved, you can also find out how.

# The Pet Coke Fight

by Sharon Rolek, Conservation Liaison- Calumet Region, Judy Lihota, and Tom Shepherd

The Southeast Environmental Task Force, SETF, leads the fight against the latest pollution threat on Chicago's southeast-side neighborhoods. A community meeting, hosted by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, was held on November 14, 2013. The residents complained about petroleum coke (pet coke) dust and expressed their concerns about how it would impact their health. Pet coke is a waste product of refining tar sands to produce oil. The pet coke stored along the Calumet River comes from the BP refinery in Whiting, Indiana. It is stored on three sites along the river: two sites belong to KCBX and one site to Beemsterboer. As BP completes its facility, the amount of pet coke will increase.

Since that meeting, Senator Dick Durbin, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel, 10th Ward Alderman John Pope and U.S. Representative Robin Kelly, have enjoyed personalized tours in the area of pet coke piles and debris to help enlighten them about the issue.

In the meantime, the Governor's Office submitted emergency measures to stop the pet coke deliveries. However, the Illinois Pollution Control Board denied the request claiming that the issue was not an "emergency".

The next step is to review and comment about the City of Chicago's Draft Regulations. The public comment period is extended to February 2014. With the help of the ELPC (Environmental Law and Policy Center), the IEC (Illinois Environmental Council), the Illinois Sierra Club, as well as the NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council), we are making it known that that we want an end to the air pollution caused by the pet coke dust

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## Election Year Update

By Mary Lubertozi, Political Education Chair

Election year 2014 has begun already, with candidates for state offices already having filed their petitions for party nomination in the March 15, 2014 Primary Election.

To be nominated in this election are:

- Governor and Lieutenant Governor of Illinois
- Illinois Attorney General
- Secretary of State
- Illinois Comptroller and Treasurer
- United States Senator
- Representatives in Congress
- State Senators
- Representatives in the General Assembly
- County slates appropriate to each county

To vote in the election, you must be a registered voter at your current address. Starting in January 2014, 17 year-olds will be able to vote in the March 18 Primary Election if they will be 18 by the November 4 General Election.

### **Election Schedule:**

#### **Voter Registration**

Tuesday, February 18 - last day to register to vote

#### **Grace Period Registration and Voting**

Wednesday, February 19 - Saturday, March 15

#### **Early Voting**

Monday, March 3 - Saturday, March 15

#### **Absentee - Mail Voting**

Thursday, February 6-Thursday, March 13 - dates to request a mail-in ballot. Monday, March 17 is last day for mail-in ballot to be postmarked.

#### **Absentee In-person Voting**

Sunday, March 16 - Monday, March 17

#### **Election Day**

Tuesday, March 18

Polls open at 6:00 a.m., Polls close at 7:00 p.m.

To have a voice in who will be on the November 2014 general election ballot, please vote in the March Primary.

# GLMRIS

*From material provided by Chuck Deringer from the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study*

The title is not a misprint! GLMRIS is an acronym for Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study, a study being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The goal of GLMRIS "is to prevent the transfer of aquatic nuisance species between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River basins through aquatic pathways." Aquatic nuisance species are invasive organisms that when introduced into a new habitat can produce harmful impacts on aquatic ecosystems. Nuisance species can be plants, animals or pathogens. Several examples come to mind: zebra mussels, Eurasian water-milfoil, round gobies, and, of course, Asian carp.

The Chicago Area Waterway System is the primary area being studied for GLMRIS because there are five water routes between the Mississippi River and Lake Michigan. One of the first steps in the study process was to determine what aquatic species presented the greatest threat. Thirty-five species were identified as species that could move and become established in both basins and could likely have harmful impacts. Thirteen of those were targeted by GLMRIS as being high risk:

scud, bighead carp, silver carp, bloody red shrimp, a diatom, fishhook waterfleas, grass kelp, red algae, reed sweetgrass, ruffe, threespine stickleback, tubenose goby, and viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus.

In a study of potential controls that could prevent the movement of these species between basins, eight alternative plans were developed after soliciting input from stakeholders in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. Stakeholders include federal, state and local agencies, nongovernmental organizations, Native American tribes, and the public. The alternatives include various control technologies, and/or physical barriers that would separate the basins.

During the review and selection process, the Army Corps continues to engage interested parties through meetings, the internet and social media. If you are interested in learning more about GLMRIS, or if you wish to subscribe to their e-mail updates, visit the GLMRIS website at <http://glmr.is.anl.gov>.

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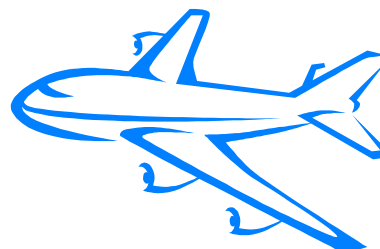
## Proposed Lake Calumet Airport + 20 Years

*By Sharon Rolek, Conservation Liaison- Calumet Region & Judith Lihota*

Over 60 people filled the Hegewisch/ Chicago Library meeting room on November 23 to remember how the Lake Calumet Airport proposal was defeated. From February 1990 until the fall of 1992, the communities of Hegewisch, the Village of Burnham, much of the East Side of Chicago, and Calumet City were under the threat of destruction to make way for a proposed Lake Calumet Airport. Because of great participation from local citizens and friends who opposed the plan, the proposal to site the airport at Lake Calumet was defeated (but it was never removed as the selected site).

Also at the meeting was Anthony Rayson of the Peotone area who represented STAND (Shut This Airport Nightmare Down). STAND is the organization that formed in response to the alternate proposal to site the third Chicago airport near Peotone rather than at Lake Calumet. He updated attendees on the status of the proposed Peotone Airport - some of the needed land has already been acquired by the state. While our state of Illinois has no money for our existing priorities, it

has invested \$100 million tax money to a project that the FCC has not yet approved. The passenger airlines have always been clear that they will not fly into Peotone. Yet, certain politicians claim that this project will be THE job-creating miracle that the Southland has been deprived of for many years. So, between the proposed Peotone Airport and the Illiana Expressway that would connect to the Peotone Airport, many of the family farms between the towns of Crete, Beecher, Peotone and Monee will be gobbled up to accommodate the airport's 35 square mile footprint.



# Spring Outings

by Steve Baker

## March 22:

1 p.m.-4 p.m. Bicycle maintenance workshop. Get your ride ready for Spring! Limited capacity, so pre-registration is necessary.

## April 19:

Canoeing, probably on the Mazon or DuPage Rivers, depending on weather and water levels.

## May 17:

Biking on the I & M or Wauponsee Glacial trails. Should be a great time for spring flowers and redbud trees.

## May 26:

Annual Memorial Day Paddle. Location to be announced.

These outings are generally suited for "advanced beginner" level participants or greater. Plan on about 3-4 hours of actual activity plus travel and lunch/dinner as applicable.

For pre-registration, further information, and specific requirements for each outing, contact Steve Baker at [trinitysb@msn.com](mailto:trinitysb@msn.com)



## Volunteer Workdays Near Your Home

If you enjoy working outdoors, please consider volunteering in one or more of your local natural areas. Contact information for workday schedules is listed below:

**Cook County Forest Preserves** [www.fpdcc.com](http://www.fpdcc.com) or  
[www.fotfp.org](http://www.fotfp.org)

**Will County Forest Preserves**  
[www.reconnectwithnature.org](http://www.reconnectwithnature.org)

**Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie**  
[www.fs.usda.gov/midewin](http://www.fs.usda.gov/midewin)

## 2014 ExCom Election Results

Congratulations to the following Sauk-Calumet ExCom members who have been re-elected to two year terms:

John Field

Mary Lubertozzi

Pat Coffey

Also, the ExCom welcomes Christy Mazrimas Ott who has recently been appointed.

## Illiana Public Hearings

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has released the Illiana Corridor Project Tier Two Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Tier Two DEIS is available for public comment and review. It may be viewed on the web at [www.IllianaCorridor.org](http://www.IllianaCorridor.org) or at local libraries within the study area (Will County, Illinois and Lake County, Indiana).

Interested persons are invited to attend one of the public hearings that IDOT will conduct. Persons may stop in at one of the two locations listed below between the hours of 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

**In Indiana - Tuesday, February 18**  
**Lowell Middle School**  
**19250 Cline Avenue**  
**Lowell, Indiana**

**In Illinois - Wednesday, February 19**  
**Local 150 Training Facility**  
**19800 West Arsenal Road**  
**Wilmington, Illinois**

Attendees are encouraged to provide oral or written comments. Comments will be included in the public record. Also, IDOT representatives will be available to answer questions.

**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**

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Steve Baker<br>Outings                                  | 815-485-5273 |
| Pat Coffey*<br>ExCom Rep. / Publicity                   | 708-720-2725 |
| John Field*<br>Treasurer / Web Site                     | 630-852-8202 |
| Connie Heinrich<br>Newsletter                           | 815-476-6171 |
| Jerry Heinrich<br>Midewin Liaison                       | 815-476-6171 |
| Georganne Higgins*<br>Membership                        | 815-936-9040 |
| Lois Lauer*<br>Chair / Programs                         | 708-923-1550 |
| Mary Lubertozzi*<br>Political Education                 | 708-747-1359 |
| Sharon Rolek<br>Conservation Liaison,<br>Calumet Region | 773-646-0990 |
| Bob Schwaan*<br>Vice-Chair                              | 630-243-0305 |
| Rich Treptow<br>Publications,<br>Climate Change Liaison | 708-747-0649 |

\*Denotes an elected member of the Executive Committee

**Sauk-Calumet Program  
Schedule**

Meetings are held at 7:15 p.m. on the second Monday of every month at the Frankfort Library with the exception of June, July and August. All meetings are free and open both to Sierra Club members and to the public.

The Frankfort Library at 21119 Pfeiffer Road is located on the south side of Lincoln Highway (Rte.30) between LaGrange Rd. and Harlem Ave.

**Feb. 10 Polar Bears**

Brookfield Zoo bear-keeper Christy Mazrimas Ott will show slides and talk about the life, behavior, and plight of these amazing creatures in the ever warming Arctic Ocean.

**Mar. 10 Service Trips to Alaska and Montana**

National Sierra Club Outings Leader Chris Beamsley will show slides and tell of the service trips that he has led to Denali National Park in Alaska and the Bitterroots in Montana.

**Apr. 14 Wind Power**

Jeff Smith will talk about what's happening with wind energy in Illinois

**May 12 Galapagos**

Rick Stuckey will show slides and talk about the fascinating flora and fauna of these volcanic islands.

There are no meetings in June, July or August