

Legislative Update

by Mary Lubertozzi, Political Education Co-chair

The Sauk-Calumet Group succeeded in holding meetings this spring with three of our state legislators to educate them on the Illinois Chapter legislative priorities for this year. We met with Senator Maggie Crotty, D-19, and Representative Al Riley, D-38, both of whom have been supporters of Sierra Club legislative priorities in the past. We are grateful for their support and co-sponsorship of major environmental bills again this year. We also had the opportunity to meet with Representative Anthony DeLuca, D-80, who has also been supportive of Sierra legislative issues in his first term. The Sauk-Calumet Group encompasses a large geographic area, and other state legislators who represent a major numbers of our members include: Senators Toi Hutchinson D-40, Emil Jones D-14, Edward Maloney D-18, Christine Rodogno R-41, and A., J. Wilhelmi D-43; and Representatives Monique Davis D-27, Kevin Joyce D-35, Lisa Dugan D-79, Emily McAsey D-85, and Jack McGuire D-86.

Three Sierra Club priority bills succeeded in the 2010 General Assembly session. Two pieces of solar energy legislation – HB 6202 and HB 5429 passed both houses and were signed by the Governor.



House Bill 6202 requires Illinois regulated utilities to start buying some electricity from solar power plants starting in 2012 with amounts increasing steadily until 2015 when 6% of renewable energy purchases must come from solar power plants. By providing a reliable market for solar developers, these purchase targets give the growing solar industry a green light to invest in Illinois and create new jobs, revenue and clean energy in our communities. According to the Environmental Law and Policy Center, more than 5,000 solar panel installation, manufacturing and maintenance jobs will be created because of this legislation. House Bill 5429, the Homeowners' Solar Rights Act, clarifies the rights of homeowners who live in areas with homeowner or

condominium associations to put solar panels on the property. The Act also outlines the process for that to occur. Many homeowners who have wanted to hire local contractors for rooftop solar projects have been thwarted by outdated association rules.

Another environmentally friendly bill that passed both houses of the state legislature and was signed by the Governor is HB 6099 that bans the commercial use of phosphorous on turf grass.



We are very pleased to report that ALL of the Senators and Representatives in the Sauk-Cal area supported HB 5429. In addition, all legislators except Christine Radogno, who did not vote, and Careen Gordon, who was absent, voted for HB 6202. We especially thank Representatives William Davis, Kevin Joyce, and Al Riley for co-sponsoring this bill. HB 6099 received support from all our legislators except for Senator Emil Jones, who did not vote on the bill. Representative William Davis cosponsored this bill.

I want to especially thank Bernie Kopera, Rich Treptow and Al Sturgis for joining me in the meetings with these legislators. It is particularly helpful in meeting with legislators when at least some of the participants are their constituents in order to demonstrate that the issues have constituent support. We would be happy to have more members join us in meeting with legislators in our area, so please contact me at 708-747-1359 or at larmarke@att.net if you are interested in being part of our legislative efforts.

Your Executive Committee Needs Your Help!

by Steve Baker, Acting Chair

Want to be more involved? The truth is, most of what the Sauk-Calumet Group does is generated by the membership, especially those members who are the most active in the Group. If you have "issues", this could be your golden opportunity to influence where the Group spends its energy.

In the past year, the Group has moved its meetings to Frankfort with the result that more people are attending meetings. Opportunities to get involved in more issues are growing. We would like to grow our communications efforts as well so we're recruiting members who would like to work on our newsletter or who could help out on electronic postings. As you know, the Chapter no longer mails out the *Lake & Prairie*, so the Sauk-Calumet Group will now be doing much of its communication on-line. It is also important that we have your e-mail address so that we can keep the lines of communication open.

The Sauk-Cal Group is also looking for a new Secretary, and an Outings Leader or two would be more than welcome as well. If you'd like an idea of what these jobs entail, join us at an ExCom meeting.

The pay, of course, is about what you'd expect: making new friends, getting involved in important projects, and that warm glow that comes from having done your bit to keep the Earth a good place for us all. Contact Steve Baker at trinitysb@msn.com for more information.

Editor's note: The ExCom meets on the third Monday of each month except for June and August. Meetings are held in the homes of the ExCom members. The responsibility of the Secretary is primarily to record the minutes of the meetings and to provide them to other members of the ExCom. The responsibility of the Outings Leader is to organize and lead outings, generally in the local area.

America's Great Outdoors Initiative

by Connie Heinrich, editor

The *America's Great Outdoors* initiative was launched in April of 2010 when President Obama asked the Secretaries of the Departments of Interior and Agriculture, the Administrator of the U.S. EPA, and the Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality to lead an effort "to listen and learn from people across the country about their experiences in our great outdoors."

As part of the process, forums are being held across the country to seek public input in order to develop a 21st century strategy for America's outdoors. On August 30, Sauk-Calumet Sierrans Jerry Heinrich and Rich Treptow attended the forum held at the Field Museum in Chicago that was hosted by the IDNR, Chicago Wilderness, City of Chicago Department of Environment, Openlands, Chicago Park District and the Field Museum.

Four guiding questions were presented to those in attendance, and participants were given the opportunity to comment either verbally or in writing:

Challenges: What are the obstacles to conservation, recreation, or reconnecting people to the outdoors?

What works? What are the most effective programs and strategies for conservation, recreation, and reconnecting people to the outdoors?

Federal government role? How can the federal government be a more effective partner in helping conservation, recreation or reconnecting people to the outdoors?

Tools: What additional tools and resources would help make these efforts even more successful?

In seeking "ideas for protecting the places you love," the agencies entrusted with gathering those ideas are especially interested in hearing from the young people of our country. They are the future.

Because not everyone is able to attend one of the forums, the *America's Great Outdoors* initiative has a website: www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors/ where the public is invited to submit ideas and join the conversation. Please do join in the conversation and let your voice be heard. We need to insure that the country's outdoors will continue to be "great". On November 15, 2010, the agencies will report back to the president with recommendations for a 21st century conservation agenda, so it is important that you contribute your ideas now.

President Obama has also proclaimed September to be National Wilderness Month. He invites "all Americans to visit and enjoy our wilderness areas, to learn about their vast history, and to aid in the protection of our precious national treasures."

Consider volunteering in our public lands on these special days:

September 11: National Day of Service and Remembrance

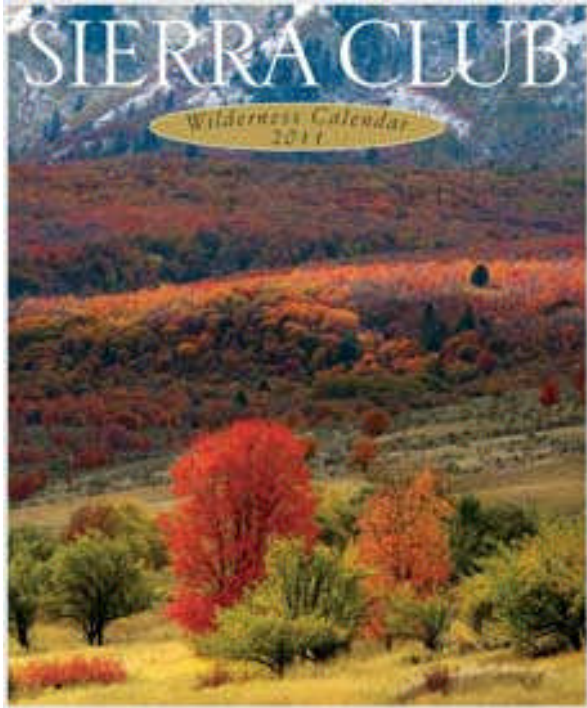
September 25: National Public Lands Day

Many local parks, preserves and open-space areas will be offering volunteer opportunities.

Sierra Club Calendar Sales

by Rich Treptow

Our 2011 Sierra Club calendar sales project is up and running. The beautiful Wilderness and Engagement calendars can be used to dress up a wall or a desktop, and they make great gifts for friends and family. They can be purchased at our monthly Sauk-Calumet meetings throughout the fall.



The money raised by this project balances our annual budget and supports our group events and the environmental causes that we stand behind.

Thanks to our members who gave their time and energy to this effort last year. If you would like to help out this year, send an e-mail to r-treptow@earthlink.net. The amount of time required is small and the rewards are many. Admittedly, the pay isn't too good.

Zander Woods Walk

submitted by Paul Strand, Conservation Co-chair

The Friends of the Forest Preserves will lead a guided nature walk in Zander Woods on September 18 from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Highlights of the tour are "cool plants, fall food, and secret discoveries of an old sand mine". Zander Woods is located on Thornton-Lansing Road in Thornton. Meet in the Wampum Lake Forest Preserve parking lot on Thornton-Lansing Road.

For more information on this event or to check on other volunteer opportunities, see the Friends of the Forest Preserves web site: www.fotfp.org/getinvolved/volunteer/

Outings

by Steve Baker, Outings Chair

Where did the summer go? Let's get out there before Winter sets in!

Sept. 26, Sunday:

Bike the newly-resurfaced I&M Canal Trail. Lunch will be at Duffy's in Utica, and it's downhill all the way back.

Oct. 23, Saturday:

The Umpteenth Annual Fox River Color Cruise. Canoe or kayak the Dells of the Lower Fox River at the peak of the fall colors. Bring a lunch, liquids, and dump clothes.

Nov. 28, Sunday:

The annual Walk-off the Turkey Hike at Starved Rock State Park. Lunch afterwards.

Preregistration is required. Contact Steve Baker at trinitysb@msn.com for more information.

Outings are generally suitable for participants of all ages and levels of expertise. Non-members are also welcome to attend.



photo by Lois Lauer

Enjoying the view of the Kankakee River

The Kankakee River bridge pictured above is on the Wauponsee Glacial Trail, part of the Forest Preserve District of Will County. The Wauponsee Trail runs from Joliet to the Kankakee River with trail access at Joliet, Manhattan and Symerton. The trail can also be accessed through Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie.

Letters to the Editor:

Letters on content within the Sauk-Calumet newsletter should be sent to the editor at: 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

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Rich Treptow	708-747-0649
Publications	

*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 July and August. All meetings are free and open both to Sierra Club members and to the public.

The Frankfort Library is located on the south side of Lincoln Highway (Rte.30), about three miles south of I-80, between LaGrange Road (Rt. 45) and Harlem Avenue (Rt. 43). The address is 21119 Pfeiffer Road.

Sept. 13 Beyond Oil !

We'll start the meeting with national Sierra Club's outstanding "Beyond Oil," and then proceed to discuss the implications of this tragic wake-up call for us to end our dependence on oil. We'll have letter writing supplies and petitions to aid the Gulf Coast communities and to ask our elected officials to develop a bold plan to move the U.S. beyond its oil addiction.

Please note: Because of Columbus Day, our October meeting is changed to the 1st Monday.

Oct. 4 Women in the Wilderness

Sierran Lois Lauer will share her slides and tales of adventure along the Minnesota – Canadian border lakes with three other women this summer, embellished with the best of Lois' photos from 20 previous trips in the Boundary Water wilderness.

Nov. 8 Current Legislative Issues

Illinois Sierra Club director Jack Darin will speak on the status of state and federal legislation, both recently adopted and projections for what may come up in the Illinois veto session or in Congress after the elections.

Dec.13 Grand Canyon!

Sierran Bob Moffitt will show his amazing slides and tell tales of his numerous trips through the Grand Canyon by raft and by foot. Bob's photography and outdoor skills combine to make this a great show!

Jan. 10 Member's Slide Night

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