



Sauk-Calumet Group

June 2017 Newsletter Volume 36, Issue 2

Climate Change Woes and Hopes

by Lois Lauer, Sierra Club Sauk Calumet Chairperson

Many of us feel pretty strongly that President Trump and the 115th Congress have made numerous ecologically disastrous decisions in the past 4 months. They have supported corporate deregulation and growth, at the expense of the health of our environment. And now our President has withdrawn the U.S. from the Paris Climate Accord. For those of us committed to protecting this fragile planet, we probably screamed and/or moaned, but now are asking, “What can we do?” Actually, the answer is plenty! In addition to the personal choices we all make every day which affect this planet, some states and cities are boldly making an end run around the destructive decisions coming out of Washington. Four governors have formed a new United States Climate Alliance which commits the states of California, Washington, New York, and Massachusetts to the Paris Climate Agreement. So one thing we can do is contact Gov. Rauner to let him know we’d like him to join the Climate Alliance. Even more impressive is the action of 187 mayors (including Chicago’s Rahm Emanuel) who have committed their cities to the Climate Mayors Agreement, for cities who strive to uphold the Paris Climate Agreement. Information about urging your city to join this effort can be found at <http://www.climate-mayors.org>.

A similar effort to fight climate change is already going on within the Sierra Club. In February, our Sauk Calumet Group formed a Community Action subgroup for those who want to be more politically active. At our first two meetings, we dealt with federal, state, and county issues. But at our March 25 meeting we also discussed Sierra Club’s newest initiative called Mayors for 100% Clean Energy, which encourages mayors of cities, big and small, to sign on to a vision of 100% clean energy. So far, this initiative includes four towns in Illinois, including two in our own Sauk Calumet area: Chicago Ridge (Mayor Charles Tokar) and Park Forest (Mayor John Ostenburg)! That leaves about 83 other towns in the Sauk Calumet area. That’s where we all come in. I encourage you to check out the website for Mayors for 100% Clean Energy (<http://www.sierraclub.org/ready-for-100/mayors-for-clean-energy>) and contact your local mayor. A few years ago Sierra Club launched a Cool Cities initiative, in some ways a precursor to the Mayors for 100% campaign. The Sauk Calumet area had 13 Cool Cities, the most by far of any group in Illinois. I’d love to see us do this again! We obviously live in an area of folks who care for our planet. We have 2 mayors committed so far. Let’s go for 13. Then let’s go for 85! Let’s go for 100%!

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Page 1 – Climate Change Woes and Hopes
- Page 2 – Sauk-Cal Group Participates in Will County Freight Survey / Service Outings
- Page 3 – Nature Sunday Hikes
- Page 4 – Tales From The Trails
- Page 5-6 – The People’s Climate March Washington, DC
- Page 7 - The Climate March in Chicago
- Page 8-9 - Women’s March Weekend
- Page 10 – The Sauk-Calumet Group Meeting Schedule
- Page 11 – S-C Group Contacts / Illinois Sierra Club Outings / S-C Online Links

.....

Sauk-Calumet Group of the Sierra Club Participates in Will County Freight Survey *by Ann Baskerville*

Members of the Sauk-Calumet Group of the Sierra Club participated in the "Will County Community Friendly Freight Mobility Study" conducted by Will County and the Will County Center for Economic Development. The purpose of the study is to analyze the effect of freight on Will County's roads and communities. Since 2005, two large intermodal centers (places where freight is moved from one mode of transportation to another, such as between a train and a semi-truck) have been built in Elwood and Joliet. These intermodal centers have led to an increase in truck traffic on interstates and local roads.

Sauk-Calumet members advocated that the study focus on fixing and improving existing roads, such as I-80 through Joliet, instead of advocating that new roads like the Illiana Tollway be constructed. Sauk-Calumet members highlighted some of the natural treasures in our area, such as the Kankakee River and the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. Members made the case that these natural resources cannot be replaced and should be protected from increased truck traffic, especially when reasonable alternatives exist.

Service Outings - Hike and Litter Pickup *By Bob Schwaan*

Meet new people and make friends as we observe wildlife and enjoy beautiful scenery while hiking five (5) miles and **picking up litter** on topography formed by the ice age.

Where: Sag Valley trail in the [Forest Preserves of Cook County](#), Palos Park, IL

When: Friday 6/9/2017 9:00 a.m.

Friday 6/23/2017 9:00 a.m.

Trash bags will be provided. Bring your own gloves, if desired.

To register or for more information, please contact Bob Schwaan at

SierraBob5000@outlook.com. Limit 12.

Nature Sundays 2017

By Patrick Coffey

Another summer season is upon us and time to hit the trails. Last year on our hikes we saw the first bison calves born at Midewin only days after their birth. We also saw beautiful prickly pear cactus in bloom at Braidwood Dunes and Savanna, in Braidwood, IL. This year we hope to see this year's new calves again at Midewin and rare orchids in bloom at Pinhook Bog in Indiana. Join us, as time in nature is never wasted.

Here is the schedule of hikes this summer and fall:

Sunday, June 11th at 2:00 pm - Sundrop and Sundrop South Prairies, part of the Markham or Indian Boundary Prairies in Markham, IL. This hike will be led by site steward, Gary Horn. We'll be seeing early summer prairie wildflowers. We'll meet at the Central Park School parking lot at [3621 151st St., in Midlothian](#).

Saturday, July 8th from 1:00-3:00 pm - Pinhook Bog in Indiana - This hike is part of a series of Open Houses with the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, and Ranger Ryan Koepke will be there to tell us about the site. We hope to see orchids in bloom. The address of the parking lot is [700 N. Wozniak Rd., Michigan City](#).

Sunday, July 16th at 5:00 pm - Hegewisch Marsh in Chicago - This site is mainly a wetland site with open woodlands. It's located just south of the corner of [130th St. and Torrence Ave.](#) The Torrence Avenue Bridge is now open if you are driving from south of 130th Street.

Sunday, July 30th at 9:00 am - Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie - We are going to visit some of Midewin's trails we haven't seen before. Meet at the River Road Seedbed Trailhead. There are directions to the site on the [Midewin website](#). Ann Baskerville will co-lead this hike.

Sunday, August 13th at 9:00 am - Braidwood Dunes and Savanna, Braidwood, IL - This site has sand savannas and sand prairies, and hosts prickly pear cactus and six-lined racerunners. The [Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve website](#) has directions to the site.

Sunday, August 27th at 5:00 pm - Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie - We'll be looking for the bison again, so bring binoculars if you have them. We'll be meeting at the Iron Bridge Trailhead, located on the East side of Route 53, about 1.1 miles south of Hoff Rd. There are directions to the site on the [Midewin website](#). Ann Baskerville will co-lead this hike.

Sunday, September 10th at 2:00 pm - The Old Plank Road Trail in Matteson - We will see the end of the prairie year at a site greatly challenged by invasives. We'll meet at the north end of the Pep Boys parking lot at the gazebo. Pep Boys is at [21610 S. Cicero Ave. in Matteson, IL.](https://www.google.com/maps/place/21610+S+Cicero+Ave,+Matteson,+IL+60443/@41.5188889,-87.6833333,15z)

Sunday, October 15th at 2:00 pm - Goodenow Grove in Beecher, IL - We hope to see beautiful Fall colors just beginning at this time. We'll meet in the Plum Creek Nature Center parking lot. The Nature Center is at [27064 Dutton Rd. in Beecher, IL.](https://www.google.com/maps/place/27064+Dutton+Rd,+Beecher,+IL+60015/@41.5188889,-87.6833333,15z)

For more info or to R.S.V.P., email Patrick Coffey at patrick.coffey@illinois.sierraclub.org.

Tales from the Trails

Story and photos by Robert Schwaan, Outings Leader

People often ask me what I am going to do with my life. I respond by telling them I volunteer and plan to continue doing so. Some respond to my answer with “Why?!” I feel that nature often affects people in a positive and lasting way.

A person close to me shared a picture of herself taken at [Little Red School House Nature Center \(LRSN\)](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Little+Red+School+House+Nature+Center,+LRSN,+IL+60443/@41.5188889,-87.6833333,15z) when she was in elementary school. She has very dear memories of that outing. The picture was taken in 1969. Talk about a lasting impression!



I was watching an American bald eagle flying over Long John Slough through the scopes located inside LRSN. I turned around and noticed an exhausted-looking father and his very active children. I asked the father if he had seen the bald eagle. He did not believe that there was a bald eagle in the area. After I showed him proof through the scope, the mood changed to one of elation and enthusiasm. He immediately called out to his children to witness the unbelievable event. I was happy to see a family enjoy the excitement together.



I was hiking with a friend and his wife in the Southwest region of the Cook County forest preserves. He said the area reminded him of the time he visited LRSH when he was in second grade (decades earlier). He was happy to learn that LRSH was a short drive from where we hiked and wanted to go to the LRSH immediately! My last recollection of my friend that day was that of him and his bride holding hands and heading for the White Oak Trail. He was able to share fond memories with his wife. She was able to learn new things about her husband. They both were able to create new memories together.



If I could provide a positive and lasting experience for at least one person, I feel that my volunteering efforts will be worth it.

Explore. Enjoy. Protect. **Volunteer.**

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?” - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The People’s Climate March in Washington, DC

by Christy Mazrimas-Ott

I’m a large carnivore keeper at Brookfield Zoo and have been working with polar bears for 24 years. This includes being a volunteer for Polar Bears International (PBI) since 2008 and becoming more involved with polar bear conservation. When I heard PBI was going to the Washington, DC Climate March on April 29th, I knew I had to be there and join them. Polar Bears are the poster child for climate change as their Arctic Sea ice habitat keeps diminishing. PBI not only focuses on polar bears but also their main threat: climate change. On the Friday before the People’s Climate March, PBI alumni had [Citizen’s Climate Lobby](#) (CCL) training with Stephanie Doyle and training with members of the [National Network for Ocean and Climate Change Interpretation](#) (NNOCCI). During the evening we focused on making our signs for the march. I decided to have a polar bear melting with tears coming down its one eye with the text, “I’M MELTING”.

Saturday the 29th we were up bright and early to catch the metro to make our way to the corner of Madison and 3rd to march with the Defenders of Truth Group - scientists, educators and health community. The PBI alumni came to the People’s Climate March as a strong force to show today’s leaders we are concerned and engaged citizens demanding limits on greenhouse gas emissions. I personally came to the march because I had never done anything like this

before and knew I had to fight for the polar bears I take care of and their wild counterparts that are truly in trouble.

We started lining up on the street at 11am, but it wasn't until 1pm that we began marching up Pennsylvania Avenue to a roaring cheer. To top it off it was above 90°F with a chance to break the old heat record for 29 April, how ironic for a Climate March. In fact one sign said, "April is the new August." Once we were moving it helped with the heat. There was lots of chanting by PBI alumni, "Ice, Ice Baby," "It's getting hot here, so take off all your coal" & many more.



I was holding my own sign, chanting, holding one of the PBI banners, taking photos, trying to read other people's signs & just trying to absorb and take in the whole experience. Some fellow PBI alumni did see Al Gore marching just ahead of us. As we went past Trump Tower there was a lot of booing & hissing going on amongst the crowd, but all orderly and peaceful. At 2pm we stepped off the street and on to the sidewalk and sat down. We all started pumping our hand to heart 100 times, symbolizing the first 100 days of Trump's presidency, then applauding ourselves at the end. We got back up and started marching again. Our goal was to surround the White House, but there was a bottleneck where the march split up into two directions and we just were not going anywhere. So we decided to go to the final gathering place for the People's Climate March, the Washington Monument where speakers, art and music all transpired to share grass root solutions to the climate crisis we are facing and celebrate in today's success. This included showing huge support for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by leaving signs on the building's stoop after the People's Climate March.



All in all over 200,000 strong, young and old took a stand for “climate, jobs & justice” in Washington, DC on April 29, 2017. To sum it all up; I was walking back to the metro station after the march and there was a young girl sitting with her sign that simply said, “Trump Act Like A Grown Up”.



The People’s Climate March in Chicago

By Gregory Ott

I spent a Saturday in late April marching with thousands of amazing people who braved the cold and the rain for a common cause. We all believe that our government should be doing more to protect our environment. I met the Sauk Calumet Sierra Club Group at the Chicago Board of Trade Plaza.



Then we walked to Federal Plaza where everyone gathered for the speeches from several different groups that organized the march. It was here where I met so many people with incredible stories about why they decided to march today. The signs were serious, clever, artistic and humorous and most were being held up by smiling people. I began to realize that these people came here to send a message and have a good time. This was contagious.



After the speeches we marched up State Street to the Chicago River. Despite the cold rain, I had a huge smile on my face as the marchers filled State Street from sidewalk to sidewalk for several city blocks.



The march ended across the Chicago River from Trump Tower where signs were held high for photo opportunities. As the crowd began to disperse, a group of drummers started playing on Upper Wacker Drive. A party began when everyone circled around the musicians and began dancing in the rain. I stood among strangers with a common cause celebrating arm in arm with each other. Over a month later I am still smiling about how much I loved marching with these people. Sometimes I need to be reminded that there are diverse groups of people that can join together for a great cause and then have unbridled fun with each other on a city street with a cold rain falling. Thank you for letting me march with you.

Editor's Note: Maribeth Meaux sent the following as an email to members of the Sauk-Calumet Group. It was this email that inspired me to join the Climate March. She has allowed me to print this for everyone to read.

Women's March Weekend

By Maribeth Meaux

I want to share my thoughts with you about two special events I attended this weekend that were very meaningful and inspiring. On Friday (the day of Trump's inauguration), Faith In

Place hosted a vigil for our common home at their offices a block from Trump Tower in Chicago. Faith In Place is a diverse group of people from various faiths who have come together to share in a commitment to care for the Earth. During the vigil, we called upon elected officials to sustain sound environmental policies to preserve the Earth for future generations. We sang and prayed together and found comfort in the fact that all of us gathered there were from differing backgrounds and faiths, but we all shared common concerns and common goals for the future of our planet. The diversity represented at the event was what made it special; it was powerful to hear and join in the prayers from different faiths including Jewish, Hindu, Native American, and Christian traditions. The Oneness of all people, and even the Oneness of all life on the planet, was acknowledged. We are all in this together and we must work to ensure that our leaders hear our voices as we speak in support of care for our Earth.

On Saturday, I marched with members of the Sierra Club in the Chicago Women's March. This event was incredibly emotional and awe-inspiring. Michigan Avenue was a sea of people; over 250,000 women, men, and children of all walks of life came together to voice a vast array of concerns in response to Trump's unacceptable agenda. Sierra Club members in our group held signs calling for climate action and other environmental protections along with signs expressing solidarity with immigrants, women's rights, gay rights, and the Black Lives Matter movement. It was wonderful to see so many different kinds of Chicagoans marching in support of each other in such a respectful and kind manner. Not all of the marchers shared the same causes, but we all respected each other's right to be heard and we found common ground in our rejection of Donald Trump and his lack of respect for the environment, women, immigrants, people of color and even his lack of respect for the truth. This was such a high quality group of people that everyone even showed respect for the site of the rally by trying not to step on the grass! I for one felt honored to march among such a varied cross-section of American citizens and chanting along with them: "This is what democracy looks like!" Now, after the march, the challenge will be to maintain this level of action and determination. The Women's March was a great first step, but we must ensure that the event was not the end, but only a beginning. At least now we know as we go forward and face the challenges ahead that we have huge amounts of support as we work to reject Trump's unacceptable policies. There were so many creative posters displayed during the march, but perhaps my favorite was one that read, "I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change – I am changing the things I cannot accept!" As for me, I cannot accept a reversal of the policies that address climate change or the elimination of protections in place to preserve the quality of our air and water. I cannot accept the destruction of public lands so that they can be used to make oil and coal companies rich. I cannot accept the proliferation of the practice of fracking that jeopardizes sources of fresh water and destabilizes fault lines. I cannot accept a future for my children where they will not be able to enjoy the natural beauty of our Earth, its wild lands, and its biodiversity. I am "fired up and ready to go" and I hope the passion and energy from the Women's Marches continues to burn brightly for all of us as we face the challenges ahead.

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

Sept 11: Invasive Species in the Great Lakes



“**Making Waves, the Battle for the Great Lakes:**” The film’s producers Brendan and Jessica Walsh will be here to answer questions about this new [documentary](#).

October 9: Northeast Illinois Indigenous Plants: putting the right plant in the right place!



Kelsay Shaw from [Possibility Place Nursery](#) will speak about growing native trees and shrubs.

November 13: Hog Farm Pollution Control and other State Legislative Issues



Terri Treacy, [Illinois Sierra Club](#) Springfield Representative, will discuss CAFOs (contained animal feeding operations), the pollution they produce, and current proposed legislation to regulate CAFOs and other environmental matters.

December 11: Exploring Newfoundland!



Gregg Ott and Christy Mazrimas Ott will tell tales and show slides of their adventures on this remote Canadian island, known for puffins, caribou, icebergs, black bears, and humpback whales! (Click on photo to see Newfoundland Tourism video)

January 8: 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

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* Political Chair / Publicity | 708-720-2725 |
| John Field* Treasurer / Web Site | 630-852-8202 |
| Jerry Heinrich Midwin Liaison | 815-476-6171 |
| Georganne Higgins* Membership | 815-936-9040 |
| Lois Lauer* Chair / Programs | 708-923-1550 |
| Ann Baskerville* Chapter Excom Rep | 815-671-1275 |
| Christy Mazrimas Ott* Conservation Chair | 708-825-4163 |
| Sharon Rolek Conservation Liaison - Calumet Region | 773-646-0990 |
| Rich Treptow* Secretary, Climate Change Liaison | 708-747-0649 |
| Melinda Elliott* Clean Power Liaison | 708-792-7240 |
| Steve Baker Outings Chair | 815 485 5273 |
| Maribeth Meaux* Community Activism | 708 712 5097 |

**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.