



News of the
Southeast Gateway Group
of the Sierra Club
DECEMBER 2013 / JANUARY 2014
VOLUME 32, NO. 6

SOUTHEAST SIERRAN

WE NEED YOU!!

Are there topics you'd like to hear about? Are there projects you'd like us to do? Are there places you'd like go with the group? Then we want YOU at the January Planning Meeting! It's a relaxed time to share the trials and triumphs of 2013, and set plans for 2014. Saturday, January 25 is the day, River Bend Nature Center (3600 North Green Bay Road, Caledonia) is the place. We'll brainstorm possible programs, conservation projects and outings, and consider the direction our group should take.

You are especially invited if you are new to the group and would like to be more involved. Meet at 9:00 (promptly, please!) for coffee and snacks; pizza lunch is provided. We will adjourn by 3:00pm. RSVPs welcome, but not required, to melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net.

THE DECEMBER POTLUCK

As the solstice approaches we notice shorter daytimes and chillier nights. We anticipate (or dread) the snow, and wonder what 2014 will bring. It's the time for Sierra friends and members to gather for sharing good times and good food. So please join us as we celebrate the season on Thursday, December 19th, at the Sealed Air YMCA, Campus Drive, Mount Pleasant. There's only a small kitchen and few supplies, so it's imperative that you bring your dish ready for serving, or needing only a bit of warming. Please bring your own table service, and, if possible, let our hostess with the mostest, Donna Peterson, know what you'll bring, so that we may plan accordingly. Arrive at 5:30 for appetizers and conviviality, serving about 6:00 - 6:15. The YMCA has a no alcohol policy, so please do not bring wine or beer to share.

We will have a white elephant raffle, so if you have a nature/outdoor related item to donate, bring it along.

Book Club

The Sierra Book Club will meet at Mary Ann Ortmayer & Harry Knipp's home, the fourth Thursday, January 23, 2014 @ 5:30pm for a pot luck supper with the book discussion at 7:00pm. The address is 4033 Wickford Pl, Racine. The book to be discussed is "Forests for the People, The Story of America's Eastern National Forests," by Christopher Johnson and David Govatski. The book is about the environmental impact of hydraulic fracturing, "fracking," that is presently occurring in our National Forests. The authors discuss the history and permitting of drilling and whether it should be regulated or stopped. For more information about the author and the book please refer to the OCTOBER/NOVEMBER SEGG NEWSLETTER, page 1. The book can be purchased at your local bookstore (\$35 new). RSVP to Mary Ann @ 262-554-5058 if you are coming for dinner.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER

December 12th, Thursday 6:30pm: ExCom Meeting at UW-Parkside, Tallent Hall, vending room. Meetings are open. If you have items for the agenda, contact melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net or any ExCom member.

December 19th, Thursday 5:30pm: Annual December Potluck at the Sealed Air YMCA, 8501 Campus Drive, Mount Pleasant. Bring a dish to pass and your own plate, cup and flatware. For more information see pg. 1.

JANUARY

January 16th, Thursday 6:30pm: Program Meeting, Urban Forestry at the Kenosha Northside Library, 1500 27th Avenue, Kenosha. For more information see pg. 6.

January 23rd, Thursday 5:30pm: The Sierra Book Club will meet at Mary Ann Ortmayer & Harry Knipp's home, 4033 Wickford Pl., Racine. Potluck supper at 5:30pm, with book discussion at 7:00pm. The book to be discussed is "Forests for the People, The Story of America's Eastern National Forests," by Christopher Johnson and David Govatski. For more information see pg. 1

January 25th, Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm: Annual Planning Meeting at River Bend Nature Center, 3600 North Green Bay Road, Caledonia (Racine). For more information see pg. 1.



SIERRA CLUB
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YES! I want to be a member of the Sierra Club and help preserve the Beauty of the Earth. **FREE GIFT WITH MEMBERSHIP**
[\(see membership info\)](#)

NEW MEMBER NAME(S): _____
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 CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
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From time to time, we make our mailing list available to other worthy organizations. If you prefer your name not be included, please check here.

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Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
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Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible. They support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$2 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$1 for your Chapter Newsletter.

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2014 Sierra Club Calendars



Buy from us and support local conservation work!

Calendars will be available at the December potluck (and the January Program Meeting for procrastinators) or contact John Berge at 633-8455
 Wall calendars-\$11
 Engagement style-\$12

FROM THE CHAIR



A Small Victory in the Struggle with Invasives...

By Melissa Warner

When mechanical control (like pulling and digging) invasive plants is too difficult, and when chemical control (herbicides) is inadvisable, then biological control of invasive species sounds like an ideal

solution. If all the invasive plants only had critters that ate them, they wouldn't be so – well – invasive! In their original habitat, these plants DO have insects and other herbivores that find them delicious, but importing them here must be done cautiously, or we may find the insect likes our native plants even better. Then we would have an invasive insect as well as the invasive plant to deal with.

Two loosestrife beetles (*Galerucella californiensis* and *G. pusilla*) have proven to be effective in the control of purple loosestrife. In April, Jim Hooten and I assisted SEWISC (Southeast Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium) in transplanting purple loosestrife plants into pots so they could be grown under netting. When the plants were well established, the beetles were added; they ate in peace and reproduced like crazy! By July, the host plants with beetles were ready for release. Jim and I placed six beetle-laden plants in the area of Six Mile and Foley Roads in Caledonia. We removed the netting, and told the beetles to chow down! Over time, as the beetles eat the loosestrife and multiply, we should see less of this pesky invasive. The beetles survive the winter, and their progeny are ready to eat loosestrife in early spring.

It's important to realize that the beetles do not eliminate the loosestrife; they merely control its population. They make it "play fair," so to

<http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/segg>

speak. The plants will not grow as tall, nor will they produce as many flowers and seeds. Thus the use of beetles is suitable in an area where the loosestrife population is too large to be controlled by mechanical or chemical means.

We need more folks throughout the SEGG area who are willing to raise the beetles for release next summer. It's not difficult, and we can get free equipment for you. If you have room for a kiddie wading pool, you can easily raise five or six plants full of beetles. Find out more here, <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/documents/2012PurpleLoosestrife.pdf> or contact me.

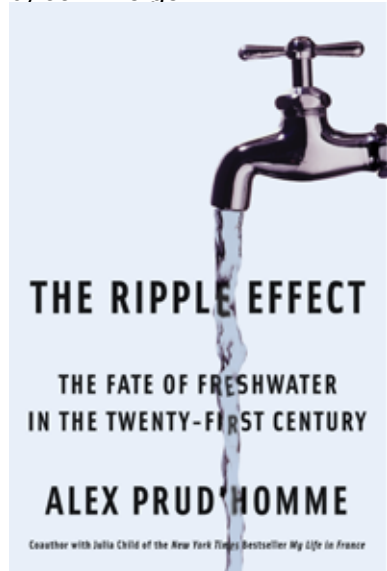
If we want to eliminate the loosestrife, we have to find it early. The River Alliance has established Project RED (Riverine Early Detection) that uses folks who will paddle or walk along waterways to locate populations of loosestrife, Japanese knotweed, Phragmites, and other invasives that are not yet well-established on our waterways. We've designated some routes in the Lower Root...you could volunteer to observe on the Pike or IL Fox. Here's the information... <http://www.wisconsinrivers.org/conservation-projects/project-red>

We will never get rid of all the invasives to the extent that we would like, but biological methods are important tools in the never-ending struggle.



THE FATE OF FRESH WATER

by John Berge



This is the fourth and last of a series of articles which I was asked to write summarizing Alex Prud'homme's "The Ripple Effect: The Fate of Fresh Water in the Twenty-first Century". Part IV is labeled "Water in the Twenty-first Century: Conflict and Innovation".

The first discussion in this part of the book concerns the Sacramento Delta in California where the conflict concerning the use of a finite amount of water is very apparent. How much water should go to power generation, manufacturing, food production and how much should be left for "nature" which obviously includes fish? Close to 80 percent of all water withdrawals in California are for irrigation. It is legal there for farmers to divert as much water as they want from rivers and aquifers without paying for it as long as it is used "beneficially". Water removal and "land reclamation" have decimated the salmon and smelt fisheries. Conflicts between groups are inevitable and vitriolic. What level of government should have the deciding factor? There are 220 government agencies that have jurisdiction in the Delta. Academician Peter Gleick is quoted as saying, "the Delta system is really a giant Rube Goldberg-esque machine. They've twisted so many knobs and pulled so many levers here that no one really knows how the Delta's plumbing works anymore." On the other hand, the Pacific Institute found that, "If California farmers used more efficient irrigation technologies, they could save enough water each year to fill Hetch Hetchy Reservoir sixteen times."

The next discussion is on the privatization and the rise of "Big Water". One hundred times more water is stored underground than in all the streams, rivers and lakes combined. Yet, we are pumping it out in most places faster than it can be recharged. In Texas, entrepreneur T. Boone Pickens bought large areas of land just for their water rights, holding on to this "fossil water" to be sold in the future to the highest bidder. He even formed his own water supply district which allows him to issue tax-free bonds, the power to levy taxes and to

use the power of eminent domain to finance a 328-mile pipeline across 11 counties and 650 pieces of private property to bring the water from his ranch to the rapidly growing population in Dallas-Fort Worth. This is but one example of the rising question: Is water common property or a commodity? The author predicts that, "As water becomes an increasingly valuable resource, sodden nations, such as Canada and Norway, could become the wealthiest countries of the twenty-first century, perhaps even forming a water cartel, 'the next OPEC.'"

Much water in the United States is already privatized. Veolia, a \$38 billion company based in Paris, France, runs municipal water systems in the US from Tupelo, MS to Indianapolis, IN and wastewater treatment plants from Woonsocket, RI to Wilsonville, OR. Atlanta, GA privatized its water system in 1999 with another French-owned company, United Water, but after just four years of a twenty-year contract, too many major complaints led to "amicable dissolution" of the contract and a return to a public utility. Numerous other examples of the battle between public and private water are given and make very interesting reading.

The nexus and conflict between water use and power generation is the next vital discussion in Prud'homme's book. Water is used in the production of power from virtually every source. According to Sandia National Laboratories, "each kilowatt-hour of electricity using coal ... requires 25 gallons of water." Conversely, the water industry uses about four percent of all electricity generated in the US. Already Arizona and Idaho have denied power plant permits because of concerns of water usage, and denials are expected to increase as the population grows and energy demand increases. Natural gas burns cleaner and produces less carbon dioxide than other fossil fuels, but 90 percent of natural gas wells use hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. Each well uses 3 to 8 million gallons of water. The process has been blamed for contaminating ground water, streams and rivers and impacting people's health. Shale rock and tar sand mining are both intensive users and contaminators of water. The retorting of oil shale in Colorado will require 200,000 to 300,000 acre-feet annually, according to Western Resource Associates. The tar sands of Alberta contain more oil than the fields of Kuwait, Norway and Russia combined. But Alberta is one of the driest part of Canada; it takes an average of three to four barrels of water to produce one barrel of bitumen. Their licenses allow the oil companies to take 3.3 billion gallons of fresh water a year, with plans for up to 4.2 billion gallons from a river that doesn't have that much flow.

Continued on p. 5

CONSERVATION CORNER

It's Just a Theory

by Rebecca Eisel

It just happened again; someone in my family told me that Global Warming is "just a theory". Sigh!

This is practically a weekly occurrence. If it isn't a family member, it's a friend, a co-worker, a neighbor, someone online, or someone on TV. I'm not sure which part of it bothers me more: that they don't truly understand Global Warming or that they don't truly understand science.

The word "theory" in science means something very different from how it is used in everyday language. Think back to science classes in school; remember the scientific method?

1. Make observations about something.
2. Formulate a hypothesis based on those observations. This is an attempt to explain what is being seen.
3. Use the hypothesis to make predictions.
4. Test those predictions with experiments or by making a lot more observations.
5. Based on the results, confirm or reject the hypothesis.

When a hypothesis is confirmed repeatedly with verifiable evidence by many different people, it becomes a theory. In other words, when something is a theory in science, there is a vast body of evidence to back it up.

Here are a couple other things that are "just a theory":

Cell Theory – the theory that all living organisms are made up of cells,

Atomic Theory – the theory that all material substances are made up of atoms.

Theories in science are something that have so much evidence to support them that it is unlikely they will ever be proven wrong. When the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says they are 95% sure global warming is real and humans are causing it, that is a great deal of certainty. If someone was 95% sure a medicine would save their life, they'd take it. So why aren't we doing more to address Global Warming?

Maybe too many people just don't understand what a theory really is.

Continued from p. 4

To close this summary, which can't possibly cover all the subjects covered by Prud'homme, I would like to cite some interesting items on bottled water. In 2007, Americans "consumed over 8.7 million gallons of bottled water, worth \$11.5 billion." His math may be questionable (I think he lost a decimal point somewhere) but bottled water can cost between 240 and 10,000 times as much as tap water. Also mind-boggling is the number of independent brands that have appeared in the US. "They include Tibet 5100 from Tibetan glaciers; Jana Skinny Water from Croatia, a 'no-calorie water ... to help people lose and maintain their weight'; K9 Water for dogs, including Toilet Water (chicken flavored), Gutter Water (beef) and Puddle Water (liver); Liquid OM, said to contain vibrations from a giant gong that promotes a positive outlook; Holy Spring Water, said to be blessed by a rabbi, a priest, a monk and a shaman; 018 Fruit Water, extracted from Australian fruit; Aquamarine waters in flavors called I am lucky, I am Healthy, and I am Loved; Spiritual Water, a purified municipal water sold in bottles with ten different Christian labels such as the Virgin Mary and the Hail Mary; and Tap'd NY, purified water from New York City tap that sells for \$1.50 per bottle and has a label promising 'No glaciers were harmed in making this water'. Among the strangest bottled water available is MaHaLo Deep Sea water, taken from three thousand feet beneath the Pacific off the island of Kona, Hawaii." The Kyono Company desalinates it and sells it for \$5.50 per bottle as "the most nutritious beverage on earth ... older than Jesus"!

You will have to read Prud'homme's book to find out more interesting facts about bottled water and other aspects of water in the 21st Century. I strongly recommend it.

January Meeting: Trees, Please...

Trees are important for many reasons, from energy savings and erosion control, to aesthetics and shade. There are many factors to consider when selecting landscape trees and shrubs. What benefits do you want them to provide: birds? wildlife? flowers? fruit? shade? autumn color? Matt Koepnick, City of Racine Arborist, will discuss the many benefits of trees in our home landscapes and in Cityscapes. Born and raised in Racine and educated at UW-Stevens Point, Matt returned to Racine in 2010 as arborist after six years of Resource Management in Nevada.

Did you know that a rough approximation of home values in parts of a city can be estimated from aerial views of tree cover? What are the factors that affect the urban forest...the trees we find in the city streets and parks? Join us at the January meeting and discover what an urban arborist does. We will be at the Kenosha Northside Library, 1500 27th Street, Kenosha, on January 16th. Join us for light refreshments at 6:30.

SEGG WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Salem	Jamie Weber
Racine	Patti Drumm, Mabel Dipriest

"Southeast Sierran" editor, Himani Gupta, has taken a short sabbatical. In her absence, Dana Huck has volunteered to fill in. All articles, photos, calendar items, comments and corrections for the February-March 2014 issue should be sent to dhuck1105@wi.rr.com by the January 1, 2014 deadline.

SEGG Conservation Committee Update

By Barry Thomas

On November 7, I chaired a meeting of the SEGG Conservation Committee to discuss how best to move forward following the departure of chairperson Laura Feider. There was a consensus of those attending that it would be better to have regional co-chairs for Kenosha, Racine and Walworth Counties.

The duties of the co-chairs would be to be aware of local environmental issues in their counties and to encourage SEGG members to attend meetings, write letters to the editor, contact legislators and, possibly, to schedule special meetings dealing with these issues. They might also arrange field trips to visit areas of concern or to view successful projects. In addition, they would coordinate workdays in their counties for such things as invasive species removal and roadside clean-ups.

There would be no regularly scheduled meetings, but the co-chairs would need to meet periodically to set goals and formulate budgets. Please contact Melissa Warner, melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net, if you are interested in becoming a co-chair for your county. Further discussion of this new approach will take place at our January planning meeting.

Council of Club Leaders Report

By L.D.Rockwell

What is the Council of Club Leaders (CCL)?

“Bylaws: Section 3.2: Duties and Responsibilities

Each delegate shall attend all Council meetings to serve as spokesperson for his/her chapter or committee in Council deliberations on internal administrative and operational matters of the Club: shall serve as the key liaison between national entities and her/his chapter and shall perform other duties and responsibilities as established by the Council. Chapter delegates to the Council shall represent the Club membership as delegates to an annual meeting at the Club for the purpose of discussing the activities and operation of the Club and making recommendations to the Board.”

My travels to San Francisco for the Council of Club Leaders annual meeting was very informative and I believe productive since I am now arriving at an understanding of the duties required of the delegate. Our CCL meeting began with a message from Michael Brune.

Executive Director’s Report - Michael Brune:

Today there is an event across the country called “Draw the Line.” This action follows in line with what we have been doing with 350.org called “Do the Math.” If we want to keep the warming of the Earth at 2 degrees or below; and, we want a 50/50 shot at keeping it warming at this goal, then two-thirds (2 /3’s) of all fossil fuel reserves have to stay in the ground. Keep in mind that (the top climate scientist at NASA) James Hansen says we should be shooting for more like one and a half (1.5)

degrees instead. Pessimism stifles our ambition and minimizes, to a degree, what it means for individuals to take on big risks. Our vision needs to be very clear. We need to fight for 100% clean energy! That is what Sierra Club stands for at this time. We stand for a clean, safe, secure and sustainable environment.

Trans-Pacific Partnership Team -- Nicole Ghio, Ilana Solomon This is a new trade agreement and is NAFTA on steroids. Pay attention or we lose more jobs

CCL Resolutions Presentation

New Standards for SC Logo Products: The CCL requests that National Sierra Club consider applying our environmental and economic justice principles to the sourcing of the Sierra Club logo-marked items. In plain English, it was resolved to give preferential consideration to U.S. suppliers for SC logo clothing and gear for sale and presentation.

47 yeas, 6 nays; 2 abstentions. Resolution Passes.

Earlier Notice of Chapter Allocations: The CCL asks the Board of Directors to complete its budget process earlier so decisions about Chapter allocations and grants can be made at the September Board Meeting.

48 yeas, 7 nays, 0 abstentions. Resolution Passes.



Explore, Enjoy And Protect The Planet

SEGG Leadership

SEGG Executive Committee

Melissa Warner (Chair).....melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net

Kari Olesen (Vice Chair).....(262) 995-4455

Wendi Schneider (Secretary).....wendianne@yahoo.com

LD (Red) Rockwell (JMC ExCom).....Ld.jarockwell@elknet.net

Other Group Leaders

Jeff Sytsma (Treasurer)..... Jeff12759@aol.com

Betsy Georg (Political Liaison).....bgeorg@hotmail.com

Dana Huck (Hospitality).....dhuck1105@wi.rr.com

MaryAnn Ortmyer (Book Group).....maortmyer@gmail.com

Rebecca Eisel (Webmaster).....SeggWebAdmin@gmail.com

The newsletter of the Southeast Gateway Group of the Sierra Club is published six times each year by the Group newsletter staff. Please send articles, photographs of group activities, letters, calendar items and/or corrections and comments to Dana Huck at:

dhuck1105@wi.rr.com

Check out the newsletter in color, calendar updates and much more at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/segg/>.

Visit our facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/sierraclubsoutheastgatewaygroup>.

DEADLINE FOR

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2014 ISSUE IS

JANUARY 1ST 2014

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<https://www.Facebook.com/SierraClubSoutheastGatewayGroup>



Jim Hooten digs purple loosestrife to feed the beetles he raises *Photo: Jay Warner.*



Melissa Warner and Jim Hooten release beetles that will eat purple loosestrife. *Photo: Jay Warner.*