



News of the
Southeast Gateway Group
Of the Sierra Club
August / September 2014
Volume 33, No. 4

SOUTHEAST SIERRAN

Meet Wisconsin's Amphibians and Reptiles at September 18 Program Meeting (rescheduled from last March)

Join us on September 18, 6:30pm at (location TBD) to meet some of Wisconsin's most interesting amphibians and reptiles (herptiles) up close and personal. Randy Hetzel, wildlife biologist, will share his extensive knowledge and collection of these fascinating critters. This would be a great time to bring your friends along!

Randy is a career wildlife biologist and naturalist with "experience from songbirds to grizzly bears." Often referred to as "RandyMan" by friends and colleges, Hetzel's work and travels encompass a wide range of species and habitats. His presentations entertain and educate people about nature.

"I've never really focused on just one part of ecosystems, realizing the importance of how all of the pieces fit together and play on each other" says Randy. "While it was very exciting to work with grizzlies and black bears, the truth is that other topics interest me just as much. Small mammals, songbirds, and plants are just as interesting and important as bears, maybe with a little less adrenaline."

The list of species RandyMan has worked with is enormous, in addition to decades of habitat work, spanning the continent from Alaska and the Rocky Mountains to Wisconsin. His projects and experiences include research, cover typing, controlled burns, habitat improvement and invasive plant control.

Randy was fascinated by animals and all things natural as far back as he can remember. "I was an avid bird watcher since the fourth grade," says Hetzel, who only wanted binoculars for Christmas. "I used most of my spending money on books and field guides about nature topics. Sometimes I run into people that I knew from grade school or high school and when the conversation reveals that I am doing wildlife work, people usually say something like 'I knew that you would end up doing something like that.' "



In a world of immense environmental changes and challenges Hetzel sees more than ever the importance of conservation. "We really owe it to future generations and the long term well-being of our planet to conserve the components of the natural world," said Randy; "to me these remaining gems of natural heritage are more important than any amount of wealth."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUGUST

August 23rd, Saturday 9:00 am: Invasive species work day at Colonial Park (Racine). Dress for the weather with sturdy shoes and long pants, bring your own drinking water, and be prepared to dig burdock and/or cut woody invasives. Contact Melissa Warner, melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net, (Colonial Park) for more information.

SEPTEMBER

Vision 2050 Workshops! See article pg. 8!

Sept. 9th, Tuesday at 6:00pm- Walworth County Matheson Memorial Library and Community Center

Sept. 10th, Wednesday, 6:00pm- Racine County Racine Civic Centre

Sept. 16th, Tuesday, 5:00pm- Kenosha County Kenosha Civil War Museum

For more information and/or to register, please click on or copy the link below:

<http://vision2050sewis.org/Vision2050/WorkshopRegistration>

Sept. 18th, 6:30pm– (location TBD) Program meeting (rescheduled from March), Randy Hetzel, Amphibians and Reptiles of SE WI. **See pg. 1**

Sept. 20th, Saturday 9:00 am: Invasive species work day at Colonial Park (Racine). Dress for the weather with sturdy shoes and long pants, bring your own drinking water, and be prepared to dig burdock and/or cut woody invasives. Contact Melissa Warner, melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net, (Colonial Park) for more information.

Sept. 20th, Saturday 9:00am: Highway 38 Cleanup. Meet in the parking lot of the little church on the corner of Highway 38 and Four Mile road for assignments, safety vests, bags, etc. Wear good walking shoes, weather appropriate clothing, and you may want to wear gloves. There will be a pot-luck lunch afterwards at Warners, 4444 N. Green Bay Road, Caledonia.



Don't Let Mosquitoes Get The Bite on You!

An important part of mosquito control around your home is making sure that mosquitoes don't have a place to lay their eggs. Because mosquitoes need water for two stages of their [life cycle](#), it's important to monitor standing water sources.

- Get rid of standing water in rain gutters, old tires, buckets, plastic covers, toys or any other container where mosquitoes can breed.
- Empty and change the water in bird baths, fountains, wading pools, rain barrels and potted plant trays at least once a week to eliminate potential mosquito habitats.
- Drain temporary pools of water or fill with dirt.
- Keep swimming pool water treated and circulating. <http://www2.epa.gov/mosquitocontrol/remove-mosquito-habitats>

YES! I want to be a member of the Sierra Club and help preserve the beauty of the Earth.

FREEGIFT
 WITH MEMBERSHIP
(new members only)

NEW MEMBER NAME(S) _____

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CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE (optional) _____

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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.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES (check one) **INDIVIDUAL** **JOINT**

SPECIAL OFFER	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
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
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

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 \$7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletter.

PAYMENT METHOD (check one) CHECK VISA MASTERCARD AMEX

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FROM THE CHAIR



Our John Muir Chapter is considering redrawing group boundaries. It would leave the state with six groups and four “undesigned territories,” including most of the northern part of the state, an area most impacted by the Penokee Open Pit Mine proposal. While the boundaries of the Southeast Gateway Group would barely change, and thus impact us only a little, the implications for the state are larger. We are a small group in terms of land area, and

even so our members sometimes travel an hour or so if they want to attend a program meeting or outing. Some of the larger groups comprise six or eight counties, thus making active participation even more difficult than it is for us. JMC is not abandoning these members however; on the contrary, ongoing communication through emails and the Muir View will reach folks who may be able to organize an active group in their territory.

There are many ways to be a member of Sierra Club, and the state’s 13,800 members indicate that we are meeting many different needs. For some, it is the knowledge that they are financially supporting the nation’s oldest and most successful grassroots environmental organization, and they trust the leadership to work toward appropriate objectives. The SIERRA magazine, with interesting articles and access to a wide variety of outings nationwide is a compelling reason to be a member. For others, it’s the newsletter or email communication that brings them information from a trusted source on issues such as mining, fracking, climate change and water quality. Many of these folks write Letters to the Editor, email their elected representatives, or sign environmental petitions. Some enjoy gathering socially with others who hold similar values. Still others value Sierra for our ability to work on local issues, as we do with our highway cleanup, monarch habitat enhancement and invasive species work. Every thing we do matters!

What defines a group, such as SEGG, is having an elected volunteer executive committee and publishing a newsletter. We are at the time of year where we need members to be part of the Executive Committee, or the Conservation, Political or Program Committees. While we have an excellent newsletter editor, she would appreciate articles from the membership. If you are able

to do more, consider stepping up to be part of one of these committees. Contact Nancy Hennessey (262 822 5639) or hennessey.nancy@gmail.com; she is coordinating our search for leadership for 2015 and beyond.

Please accept my personal thanks for your commitment to Sierra Club and all you do for Mother Earth. Thank you for your dues that keep the national organization funded for research and advocacy. Thank you for the letters and emails that keep environmental issues on the legislative agenda. Thank you for your work on conservation projects here in SE Wisconsin. Southeast Gateway Group has more than 800 members, and we have a significant effect on our community with our dues, our actions, and our voices. Make yours count!

Did You Know:

The 4th District Court of Appeals recently lifted a stay on the training of hounds on wolves, which means hunters can train their dogs on wolves 24/7, 365 days a year without a license or any restrictions. Hounds are fitted with GPS collars, and run miles ahead of their handlers. Hound and wolf interactions result in injured and/or dead dogs and wolves. Wisconsin is the only state in the union with a population of wolves that allows the use of dogs to hunt them; other states prohibit their use due to the inherent danger to the dogs. An attempt to pass a bill prohibiting the use of dogs last year sponsored by Senator Risser was thwarted by Senators Tiffany and Kedzie, and the bill died prior to reaching the floor. Contact your legislator and let them know how you feel about using dogs to hunt wolves!



Nominations Needed for 2015 Executive Committee

The Nominations Committee is currently seeking candidates for the fall election to the SEGG Executive Committee. Nominations Committee members are Nancy Hennessy, Dana Huck, and Barry Thomas. If you are interested, or know of another Sierran who would be a good candidate for the ExComm, please contact Nancy Hennessy at hennessy.nancy@gmail.com.

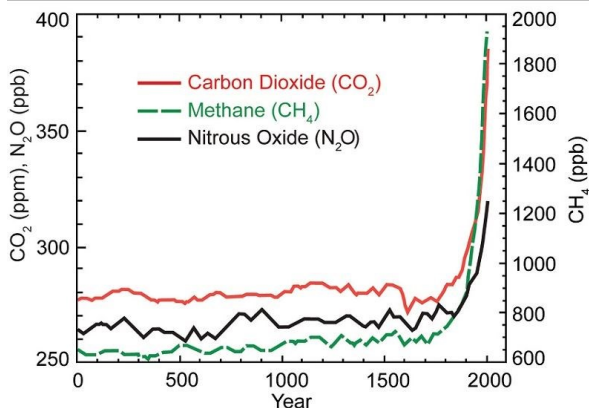
People's Climate March in NYC

Who: Chapters, Campaigns, Programs and Volunteer Leadership

Why: To advance the movement demanding action on climate

Michael Brune.
Executive Director Sierra Club

The Sierra Club and other environmental organizations are planning a march to the United Nations in New York on **September 21st** to coincide with the summit of World Leaders working on Climate Change to encourage movement from a dirty fuel economy to clean energy prosperity.



Greenhouse gas emissions over the years

Graph courtesy of the EPA: <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/>

This march, as proposed, will also include Avaaz; (Avaaz is an online campaign organization that's halfway between an NGO and a megaphone. European sister to Move-on.org) 350.org, and Earth Justice as well as other environmental organizations. Also to be included in the march will be labor and community organizations with expectations to mobilize several thousand environmental enthusiasts.

The main focus of this march will be bringing to the attention of world leaders the dire conditions of the planet. We will demand a world with cleaner air, stronger communities, and more broadly shared economic prosperity. We must let our world leaders know that dirty fuels must stay in the ground.

People's Climate March will provide an opportunity to further our campaigns, chapters, groups, and departments, and build power toward working successfully in future climate change events and activities. With full intent to take climate disruption at full speed and push other nations to be involved in clean energy.

If you are not able to attend this march it is suggested and encouraged to provide assistance and support for all facets of this plan.

It is also proposed that on the day of the march chapters, groups and all campaigns involved in the march, rally at some point (multiple if necessary) within the their state in support and solidarity for the assembly in NYC.

At this time details are still being worked out. There will be additional information to follow.

If you have questions I will try to answer. If I am not able I will check with JMC & Liz Wessel for additional clarification. My contact information is:

Home phone: [\(262\) 742-306](tel:262742306) or
ld.jarockewell@elknet.net

You may also submit your questions to:
Becki Clayborn -
becki.clayborn@sierraclub.org

Fixed Rates and Fixed Games

By Thomas Rutkowski

Apparently free market principles are fine for the general public, but not good enough for Wisconsin's utilities. A month after WE Energies submitted its rate plan for 2015 to the Public Service Commission, it submitted a proposal to increase the fixed rate paid by all customers by 75%, a move that would crush incentives for energy efficiency and renewable energy. Madison Gas and Electric, Alliant Energy, and the Wisconsin Public Service have proposed similar increases, roughly doubling the fixed rate and lowering the actual price of electricity. This struggle between fossil fuel utilities and clean energy is taking place in some form throughout states across the country. Given the new EPA regulations requiring a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emission from coal-fired power plants, this move seems backwards and poorly timed, unless you're the CEO of a dirty, outdated industry that can't quickly adapt to technological change.

Citizens making their own power is a scary trend, one that, in the minds of utility officials, requires such drastic measures to prevent. The great majority of Wisconsin residents, whether Republican or Democrat, would like to see more clean energy for obvious reasons. Besides eliminating greenhouse gas when it is most urgent to do so, clean energy keeps twelve billion dollars a year from leaving our state to purchase fossil fuels. It will provide more jobs and cleaner air which would, in turn, result in great benefits in public health.

Why, then, is so much effort exerted to stop this trend? The Edison Electric Institute has identified distributed power, the kind of power created on hundreds of rooftops instead of at one central plant, as the "largest near-term threat to the utility model" according to a recent article by Al Gore in [Rolling Stone](#). As the cost for solar photovoltaic power generation decreases, as it has by 20% a year for the last four years, more and more people are creating their own power. In response utilities have argued that they must increase costs to remaining customers which, in turn, creates even more incentive for people to create their own power. This is the cycle that Gore describes as the "utility death spiral" and it seems to be already happening to utilities in Europe. If WE Energies keeps losing customers, who will be left to pay for that massive coal plant in Oak Creek that was built despite much opposition?

You can become an advocate for the clean energy future by becoming a member of RENEW Wisconsin or the National Alliance for Solar Choice. Most importantly you can log on to the Wisconsin Public Service web site and register your opposition to these fixed rate hikes. WE Energies proposed rate increase is identified as Docket or Case Concern 5-UR-107.

In the end, WE Energies will have to embrace clean energy if they are to survive, but it will be the clean energy they own, not the energy produced by residents and other businesses. Distributed power and clean energy pose a threat to the very concentration of power and money that is polluting not just our atmosphere, but also our political system. When powerful utilities request regulations from politically appointed officials in the Public Service Commission to eliminate superior and competitive forms of energy, we will all pay a higher price, not just for kilowatt hours, but in global warming and public health problems. We also lose faith in the democratic process when the game has been fixed.

According to the EPA:

"Most of the warming of the past half century has been caused by human emissions of [greenhouse gases](#).^[1] Greenhouse gases come from a variety of human activities, including: burning fossil fuels for heat and energy, clearing forests, fertilizing crops, storing waste in landfills, raising livestock, and producing some kinds of industrial products."

[1] NRC (2010). *Advancing the Science of Climate Change*. National Research Council. The National Academies Press, Washington, DC, USA.

GOOD NEWS FOR HIKERS!

by Lila Berge

A new and intriguing route up Gibraltar Rock has been added to the Ice Age Trail in southern Columbia County. Last fall, a dedicated group of 369 volunteers spent five, cold, blustery days opening a part of Gibraltar Rock that was not accessible before. This new trail takes the hiker on a route uphill through white pines to a gorgeous vista on the very top of this shear rock. In April of this year volunteers returned to extend the trail another half mile and make it safe for hikers to access the bluff edge.



I remember the view (or the hike up the hill) took my breath away when local friends led us up there across private lands many years ago. Now it can be reached over Ice Age Trail lands. Take County Highway J out of Lodi to JV for access. Joanna Kramer Fanney (608-592-7817) is the Coordinator of the Lodi Valley Chapter of the Ice Age Trail. For additional information, contact her at iwannahike@yahoo.com. Fall color time is coming and it is worth the trip. There are other IAT hikes in Rock, Walworth/ Jefferson and Dane Counties on the way. [photo credit, WI DNR]

SEGG WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS!

Burlington	Mary Schultz, Taylor Volbrecht, Sharyn Smith, Gary Bronson
Caledonia	Michelle Tucker
Darien	Jeffrey Klarich
East Troy	Jean Barnes
Elkhorn	Scott Schumaker
Kenosha	Edward Kubicki, Ronald Karaway, Terry Honey
Lake Geneva	Brendan Dobbin
Mt Pleasant	William Whitnall, Joann Shea, Josephine Dittberner, Lynn Doe, John Lee, Laurissa Mertins
Pleasant Pr	June Salb, Steven Gold
Racine	Sheila Blada, Thomas Bernhardt, Alexis Scheel, Lisa Hempel, Marianne Floyd, Kira Olson, Amy Jo Cagney, Elizabeth Kiel
Salem	Kim Macleod
Walworth	D Featherstone
Waterford	William Runge, Joseph Peck, Susan Merlo

Autumn Assembly

Sierra Club's Autumn Assembly, featuring keynote speaker Ron Seely, will take place October 10-12, 2014 at the [Phantom Lake YMCA Camp in Mukwonago](#). The Autumn Assembly is a fun, family-friendly event featuring indoor and outdoor environmental activities for people of all ages. This year's Assembly will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act and include updates on our campaigns to expand clean energy and transit and protect Wisconsin's water, land, and wildlife for future generations. [Check out the JMC website to see the preliminary schedule](#) for this event; then register by mail or online by September 15 to avoid late fees. We hope to see you there!

Keynote speaker Ron Seely was an award-winning reporter for the Wisconsin State Journal and a three-time winner of the Wisconsin Press Association's award for environmental reporting. In 2013, Seely was hired by the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism where he serves as an editor and reporter focusing on environmental issues.

In addition we'll hear from a range of other experts on topical conservation issues. Attendees will get an update on metallic mining in the Penokees and learn how we successfully fought proposals to strip local control from sand mining decisions. Carl Siegrist will discuss solar energy's potential in Wisconsin, and WISPIRG Director Bruce Speight will discuss reducing highway spending and expanding public transit. We will also learn about the threat proposed tar sands expansions pose to the Great Lakes region. We'll also get the latest on Waukesha's proposed Lake Michigan water diversion and update on the lethal threats posed by White Nose Syndrome to populations of our native cave-nesting bats.

For more information, click on:

<http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/aa.asp>

Ron Seely



Summer Fun at the 2014 June Picnic!



Andy and Darlene



Barb, Dennis, and Barry



Cooks John Harry and Jeff!



Mary, Donna, and Lila enjoying the ambiance!



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 Schneier (Secretary) wendiannette@yahoo.com
- LD (Red) Rockwell..... ld.jarockwell@elknet.net
- Tom Rutkowski..... natom@wi.rr.com
- Judy Rockwell.....jjrockwell@gmail.com

Other Group Leaders

- Jeff Sytsma (Treasurer).....jeff12759@aol.com
- Betsy Georg (Political Liaison)bgeorg@hotmail.com
- Dana Huck (Hospitality)dhuck1105@wi.rr.com
- Mary Ann Ortmyer (Book Group) maortmayer@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

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2014 ISSUE IS SEPTEMBER 1ST

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

Vision 2050: Land Use and Transportation in SE Wisconsin

The *next round of interactive workshops has been scheduled*. The September workshops will solicit your input on a series of conceptual, sketch-level scenarios, illustrating potential land development patterns and transportation systems for the Region in the year 2050. We will be asking: what are the most important factors to consider when comparing scenarios? Then we'll ask you to tell us what you like or would prefer to see changed under any or all of the scenarios. When public review of the scenarios is complete, we will take the input we receive and move to the next step of the VISION 2050 process: developing more detailed alternative plans.

Each workshop will last about 90 minutes and is open to the general public. Snacks and refreshments will be provided at each workshop. We are asking residents to let us know in advance if they plan to attend so we know how many people to expect. Sierrans are encouraged to attend and provide input, since sustainable land use and efficient transit systems will reduce sprawl, a Sierra priority.

See page 2 for the dates and locations of the workshops!

