



News of the  
Southeast Gateway Group  
of the Sierra Club  
FEBRUARY/MARCH 2015  
VOLUME 34, NO. 1

# SOUTHEAST SIERRA

## VOTE TO MAKE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL VOICE HEARD

Spring elections will be held soon. The primary will be on Tuesday, February 17th, and the general election will take place on Tuesday, April 7. Since the voter turnout for spring elections is usually lower than that for fall elections, your vote is very important. Judges, nonpartisan state officials, and local officials are elected in spring.

It is important that we have elected local officials who care about environmental issues. Environmentalists in Racine County were able to partner with county officials to save River Bend Nature Center. The County used LAWCON funds to purchase the property. A similar arrangement is working in Kenosha at Pringle Nature Center.

Local officials also make decisions about zoning. They decide where commercial development, industrial development, and residential development will be permitted and where local roads will be constructed. They can work to improve local public transportation. Officials can encourage community gardens and the use of alternative energy or make these more difficult.

Between now and the election you can learn more about the candidates by attending forums, reading the newspaper, talking with friends, and listening to the radio. Then go to the polls on February 17 and April 7.

## How “Well” Is Your Well?

Last fall, Clean Wisconsin published a report from their study of molybdenum and other contaminants in wells in SE Wisconsin. They have discovered unsafe levels of moly and other contaminants in both school and residential wells throughout Racine, Kenosha, Milwaukee and Waukesha counties. These contaminated wells appear to be located near sites where over one million tons of coal ash have been used in various projects including spreading on farm fields and recreational trails, and put in structural fill under roadways and schools. Clean Wisconsin focused on the “beneficial re-use” of coal ash in unencapsulated applications, and discovered that the closer wells were to coal ash “reuse” sites, the higher the levels of molybdenum contamination was likely to be. What are the health effects of excess molybdenum in our water? How serious a problem is this?

Tyson Cook, the lead author of the report, will explain the implications of their work, and present recommendations to address this problem. Please join us as we explore this important issue. See the full report at <http://www.cleanwisconsin.org/proxy/files/dont-drink-the-water-report-clean-wisconsin.pdf>

**March 4-6 Sustainability Summit 12th Annual Sustainability Summit and Exposition at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee. The theme is Climate, Energy, Water, Food, Health. Speakers include Todd Ambs, Ed Begley, Jr., Lynn Braoadus, and Will Allen. See <http://www.sustainabilitysummit.us/> for details on presentations. Contact Don Ferber, [d\\_ferber@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d_ferber@sbcglobal.net), if you can spend a few hours at the John Muir Chapter booth; volunteers have free admission.**

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## FEBRUARY

**February 9th**, Monday, 3:00 - 5:00 pm: ExCom meeting at UW-Parkside, Tallent Hall, vending room. Meetings are open to all. If you have items for the agenda, contact [ld.jarockwell@elknet.net](mailto:ld.jarockwell@elknet.net) or any ExCom member (See p. 7).

**February 12th**, Thursday, 6:00 - 8:00 pm, "Changing Weather and Climate in the Great Lakes Region" MOOC introduction and signup session at Kenosha Northside Library, 1500 27th Ave., Kenosha. (see Dec. 2014-Jan. 2015 issue, p. 7 for more information)

**February 11th**, Wednesday, 6:00 pm, Screening of "Disruption: Climate. Change." at the Racine Public Library, 75 Seventh St., Racine. Free and open to the public. (See p. 4)

**February 19th**, Thursday, 6:30 pm: Program Meeting: How "Well" is Your Well? Kenosha Northside Library, 1500 27th Ave., Kenosha. (See p.1)

**February 21st**, Saturday, 2:00 pm, Screening of "Wild versus Wall" at The Bradford Community Church UU, 5810 8th Ave., Kenosha. (See p. 4)

**February TBD**, Snowshoe outing. Sign up for SEGG eNews for more information.

## MARCH

**March 4th-6th** Sustainability Summit 12th Annual Sustainability Summit and Exposition at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee. (See p. 1)

**March 6th**, Friday, 1:00 pm & 7:00 pm: "Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time," will be shown at the Siena Retreat Center, 5637 Erie St., Racine, followed by a brief presentation by Dr. Curt Meine, the film's narrator and Leopold biographer. Cost: \$10. For more information, call April at 262-898-2590

**March 9th**, Monday, 3:00 - 5:00 pm: ExCom meeting at UW-Parkside, Tallent Hall, vending room. Meetings are open to all. If you have items for the agenda, contact [ld.jarockwell@elknet.net](mailto:ld.jarockwell@elknet.net) or any ExCom member (See p. 7).

**March 19th**, Thursday, 6:30 pm: Program Meeting: Dr. Patrick Pfaffle, Carthage College Student Outreach Co-Leader, Room 120, Bioscience Building, Gateway Technical College Campus, 3520 30th Ave., Kenosha. (See p. 7)

**March 21st**, Saturday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, Midwest Renewable Energy Association Solar Power Course, University of Wisconsin - Parkside. (See p. 4)

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

**FREE GIFT**  
WITH MEMBERSHIP  
(new members only)

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NEW MEMBER NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

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EMAIL (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

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
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.

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**The SEGG eNews provides new and updated information between newsletters. Sign up to receive eNews by emailing Melissa Warner, [melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net](mailto:melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net)**

## From the Chair



By L.D. Rockwell

As the newly elected Chair for the Southeast Gateway Group it is my honor and privilege to submit the Chair's report for the February-March newsletter. As previously stated this is, an honor and a privilege, albeit a challenge. I have immeasurable shoes to fill following Ms. Warner. I would urge one and all to join me in giving Melissa a very well deserved "Thank

You" for her perseverance and longevity in guiding SEGG for the past six years. When I attended other committee meetings with other leaders from JMC Chapter, all voiced the same respect for the conduct of SEGGs programs and adherence to JMC protocol. So Melissa, from all SEGG Sierrans, a tremendous thank you!!

I would also like to introduce our new Vice-Chair Tom Rutkowski. Tom has been with the SEGG ExCom for a brief period, although he is a long-time Sierra Club member. I have a long commute from Walworth County to meetings, Tom may sometimes lead the ExCom and other programs because of Wisconsin's uncertain and sometimes uncompromising weather patterns. I welcome Tom into this leadership role.

Our challenges for the coming year are of immense proportions. As we all know, we took a harsh, critical hit with the November elections. Now we must double our efforts, work harder for our environment and strive to correct these short comings.

As we move forward I encourage one and all to hold me accountable. If you see a reason to question me please do not hesitate, to ensure I measure up to the standards required of this position.

Looking forward I wish to put forth a positive note. We continue to make progress on the environmental front. As you are probably aware, several communities and counties bordering, or in the actual line of fire, on the Enbridge Pipeline route have issued motions/petitions to the DNR to put Enbridge on notice to file complete and thorough hazard reports. It is significant to note that Enbridge had another spill of a tremendous

amount of oil. This time north of the U.S.-Canadian border. Just after vehemently denying; any probable break or leak in their pipes.

On a National note from Michael Brune;

"2014 was a banner year for the environment, and Sierra Club supporters like you made it happen: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published rules to regulate carbon pollution for the first time ever, the 179th coal plant was retired making way for cleaner forms of energy like solar and wind, and President Obama designated three new national monuments, that will be protected forever because of your hard work"

This is a very satisfying note and we need to keep up our efforts. The nay-sayers hold sway over the purse and the legislative agenda but we have PEOPLE power.

I am encouraged by the push from the National Sierra Club to bring young high school & college members into the (SSC) Sierra Student Coalition. I have been attending webinars presented by National drafting a program for the summer. Although it is in the planning stages they are progressing forward with opportunities for youth engagement and leadership development with the SSC.

On a local note, we have a major push by WisDOT to expand the interstate system through Milwaukee County and also in Rock County. Several proposals have been put forth. All are extremely hazardous to the environment and continue the trend of bigger and expanded highways, encouraging additional traffic to increase the consumption of fossil fuels and cause more greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. What is needed, as we are all aware and some choose to ignore, are more public transportation options.

The remedy is, of course, contacting your State Senator and State Representative expressing your concerns about this unreasonable expansion of any highway system. Using the following link you can contact your state Senator and/or Representative. [www.legis.state.us](http://www.legis.state.us)

The following State Senators and Representatives have formed a coalition to urge WisDOT to reject and refuse more highway expansion: State Senator Tim Carpenter, State Rep. Daniel Riemer, State Rep. Mandela Barnes and Milwaukee Alderman Bob Bauman called on the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to reject both highway expansion options presented by WisDOT at the first of two public hearings on the

*Continued on p. 4*

## WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME IN WISCONSIN

By Lila Berge

A fatal fungus disease affecting bats was first discovered in Wisconsin in Grant County last spring and in North America only in 2006. Recent estimates suggest that around 6 million bats have died in the USA of white-nose syndrome (WNS) over the last seven years, especially in the northeastern and lower midwest states where most bats hibernate in caves and mines. The fungus appears not only on their noses, but on their faces, ears, wings and feet. It is spread from bat-to-bat by microscopic spores while hibernating or possibly by people going from one hibernating spot to another.

Seven species of bats are found in Wisconsin: little brown myotis, northern long-eared myotis, big brown bat, eastern pipistrelle, eastern red bat, hoary bat and silver-haired bat. Each species has a different call which can be identified using special hand-held ultrasonic monitoring equipment which reduces the frequency down to where our ears can hear it. Melissa Warner and others are using this equipment and have demonstrated it to the Group along the Root River and elsewhere. We have also placed bat houses in Colonial Park. The DNR has a video on how to build and place bat houses available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=iS8Ycz2Cy\\_w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iS8Ycz2Cy_w).

Bats consume insects as they fly, equal to their own weight on a good night. These insects include garden and agricultural crop pests, disease-carrying mosquitoes and other pests. A million bats have been estimated to eat annually 694,456 tons (!) of night-flying insects. You can learn more about bats and how you can help from <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/bats.html>.

### JOIN THE CLIMATE CHANGE DISCUSSION

"Disruption: Climate. Change." will be shown on February 11th, at 6:00 pm at the Racine Public Library, 75 Seventh Street, Racine. It is the story of our unique moment in history. We are living through an age of tipping points and rapid social and planetary change. We're the first generation to feel the impacts of climate disruption, and the last generation that can do something about it. The film enlarges the issue beyond climate impacts and makes a compelling call for bold action that is strong enough to tip the balance to build a clean energy future. This film is free and open to the public.

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

*From the Chair - Continued from p. 3*

future of I-94's East-West Corridor between N. 16th Street and 70th Street (between Marquette and Zoo Interchanges).

With that said I am putting forth a provisional task to the members of the Group. As Melissa stated at the Christmas Dinner, our fund drives have arrived at a short fall. The rain barrel program that Jeff has been conducting and carrying out has reached the plateau. The market is saturated. We need to find new funding initiatives, to keep the pocketbook full or some semblance close to that. So the task I am putting in your hands is to don your thinking caps and suggest some with new and helpful ideas for raising money.

### INTERESTED IN GENERATING POWER FROM THE SUN AND CUTTING CARBON POLLUTION?

On Saturday March 21, 2015 the Midwest Renewable Energy Association will present a one day course on solar power. Topics include different types of solar arrays, Ohms law, and pricing of installation. The course will begin at 9am and conclude at 5pm and will be held on the campus of the University of Wisconsin at Parkside (room TBD). The cost is \$55 but there is a small scholarship fund available and which is also accepting contributions. Please contact Dr. Ross Astoria with questions about the course, the scholarship fund, or to register. [rossastoria@yahoo.com](mailto:rossastoria@yahoo.com) or [astoria@uwp.edu](mailto:astoria@uwp.edu).

### U.S Border Policies Examined in "Wild Versus Wall"

The Bradford Community Church UU, 5810 8th Ave., Kenosha will host a screening of "Wild Versus Wall" on Saturday, February 21st at 2:00 pm. U.S. policies along our southern border are proving ineffective, costly, and harmful to people and the environment. It is clear that undocumented immigration is not a problem that can be solved at the border. Without a comprehensive effort to address the root causes of immigration, migrants will continue risking their lives to cross the borderlands and the wildlife and wildlands found along the border will continue to suffer. This is an opportunity to learn more about this controversial issue and join in the discussion after the showing.

# PROTECTIONS RESTORED TO GREAT LAKES WOLVES

By Elizabeth Huntley

On December 19, 2014, District Court Judge Beryl A. Howell recently held that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service violated the Endangered Species Act ("ESA") when it issued a final rule delisting gray wolves in nine states ("Final Rule") because its interpretation of the ESA to support delisting was "unreasonable".

In Howell's decision, she noted that "The D.C. Circuit...at times...must lean forward from the bench to let an agency know, in no uncertain terms, that enough is enough." This may be in reference to the fact that in addition to the Final Rule, the FWS had made three previous attempts to delist the Distinct Population Segment ("DPS") of western Great Lakes wolves which covers Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and parts of six other states.

The substantive issues boiled down to two matters: first, the FWS cannot create a DPS and "simultaneously delist that same DPS." The DPS "operates as a one-way ratchet" to provide protections to a covered species. When a species is not accorded a "taxonomic rank of species", an entity can still receive protection as either threatened or endangered as a DPS. Second, because the entire Great Lakes DPS is part of the gray wolf

species (*Canis lupus*) found throughout the United States, the delisting of smaller, healthy populations of the taxonomic species subverts the purposes of the ESA.

Last, the court found that even if the Final Rule had been properly promulgated, it still would have been invalid due to the FWS failing to adequately explain (1) why territory suitable for the gray wolf population isn't a "significant part of the species' range", (2) the combined impact of mortality factors such as human take and disease, (3) the "adequacy of state regulatory schemes", (4) how an unregulated killing zone in Minnesota doesn't pose a threat to the species.

The court characterized the Services' lack of explanations reference the Final Rule as arbitrary and capricious. State agencies may appeal.

References: "Federal Court Hold U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Violated Endangered Species Act By Delisting Gray Wolf In Nine States" (<http://www.endangeredspecieslawandpolicy.com/>); "Breaking News: Federal Court Restores Protections for Great Lakes Wolves, Ends Trophy Hunting and Commercial Trapping" (<http://blog.humanesociety.org/wayne/2014/12/court-says-wolves-are-protected-under-esa.html>).

**The Southeast Gateway Group Annual Planning Meeting** was held on Saturday, January 17th at Emmaus Lutheran Church in Racine. The treasurer's report and budget were discussed, as were upcoming website updates and improvements, including the ability to accept online donations through Paypal. Fundraising suggestions were discussed, and new ideas are always welcome.

The three county Conservation sub-committees reported on projects and activities, both new and ongoing. Over 350 volunteer hours were logged at Colonial Park battling invasives and planting native species. Bristol Woods applied for and received recognition as a Monarch Way Station. Work at Colonial Park and Bristol Woods will continue on fourth Saturdays beginning in April. Walworth County has been working with local municipalities to circulate petitions asking the DNR to require more stringent safety measures of Enbridge, which is in the process of constructing 5 new pumping stations to increase the amount of oil flowing through its Wisconsin pipeline.

John Berge will continue to coordinate the Highway 38 clean-up crew. Clean-ups were scheduled for the third Saturday of May, July and September. If you are able to assist, please call John at (262) 633-8455 to get your name on the "Call List." Warners will continue to host the post-clean-up potluck lunches.

Program ideas were suggested. Watch for a program on the Warners' trip to the Galapagos. The search for a permanent meeting location is being explored. Locations for the annual May dinner and June picnic were also discussed, and a sign-up sheet was available for those willing to bring refreshments to program meetings.

A snowshoe outing in February at Bristol Woods is in being planned. Sign up for e-News updates to get more information. Email Melissa Warner at [melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net](mailto:melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net) to receive monthly updates.

The meeting ended with a presentation by Jay Warner about the I-94 expansion project in the East/West corridor near Miller Park in Milwaukee County.

# Treasurer's Report

By Jeff Sytsma

We were fortunate to have some years of great financial gains after promoting rain barrel sales with the cooperation of the City of Racine by providing delivery and installation. We funded many great projects and sponsored great programs. Those sales have slowed down considerably as those interested in rain barrels in the City already have them, and as we have helped surrounding Villages provide them for their residents. This is great news for our Group's priorities and our watersheds!

That success also leaves a big hole in our fundraising. Southeast Gateway Group needs at least \$2500 a year to cover expenses that are not reimbursed. Our Green Award for outstanding students doing great work on environmental projects (\$200), some office expenses(\$200) and our portion of the newsletter that is not reimbursed are paid for by our fundraising efforts and donations. Cranberry sales, calendar sales, a recently introduced silent auction at our Holiday pot-luck and donations have helped us continue our local work. Our group's share of your membership dues is 60 cents, as the majority goes to National Sierra Club and the John Muir Chapter, which have paid staff.

We have only asked for donations in the past for specific projects such as recycling containers for use at public events and for Monarch butterfly habitat enhancement. The response was amazing and we have done great work with both of those projects. We also appreciate donations to cover the costs of maintaining a meaningful voice in Southeast Wisconsin to "Explore, Enjoy and Protect" the planet.

**YES! I want to help Southeast Gateway Group "Enjoy, Explore and Protect."**

**Please cut along the dashed line and mail to:**

**Jeff Sytsma  
SEGG Treasurer  
3508 Washington Ave  
Racine WI 53405**

**Gifts to the Sierra Club may support our effective citizen-based advocacy and lobbying programs and are not tax-deductible. Please make your check payable to: Sierra Club-SEGG.**

**For a tax-deductible contribution, supporting education and legal action, make check payable to: Sierra Club Foundation – SEGG. Thank you.**

**My contribution to the Sierra Club Southeast Gateway Group is enclosed:**

**\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_ \$75 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone**   (    )   \_\_\_\_\_

# CARTHAGE COLLEGE STUDENT OUTREACH PROGRAM

## THE SUBJECT OF MARCH PROGRAM

The March 19th program will feature Dr. Patrick Pfaffle, who along with Dr. Matt Zorn, leads the Carthage student outreach field trip to Nicaragua. Join us at 6:30 p.m. in Room 120 of the Bioscience Building, Gateway Technical College Campus, 3520 30th Ave. in Kenosha.

Carthage takes a group of students to Nicaragua twice a year. While in the country the students are active participants in providing ongoing medical services to the locals. Also, work continues on efforts to provide safe and sanitary water in an attempt to prevent the local residents from being re-infected by parasites and other water-borne diseases.

Ometepe, the largest fresh water island in the world, is found near the West coast of Nicaragua. Located on the island is a compound called Finca Esperanza, where students are immersed in cultural, medical, and environmental experiences. Upon arrival at the island, the students are divided into three rotational subgroups, a hands-on medical clinic group, a water project group, and an ecological excursion group investigating local flora and fauna.

Long term goals of the program include improving the nutrition-deficient diets of the local population by introducing a greater variety of vegetables, installing solar panels on all buildings in order to go off-grid and become energy self-sufficient and completing major water projects to provide purified, fresh water to prevent re-infection by parasites.

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Burlington	Dennis Schafer
Delavan	Donald Deichsel, Victor Jackowiak, Dan Osborn
East Troy	Carroll Rands
Franksville	Dan & Nora Grosse
Genoa City	Dan Ortego
Kenosha	Rena Mowry, Susan Virgili, Judith Pulaski, Sara Kahl
Lake Geneva	Sarah Reusch, Glen Guy, Rosemary Granke, Leroy Roberts, Kathy Lange, Sonette Tippens
Mount Pleasant	Cynthia Hopkins, Jan Kutzner, Cheri Tyllo
Pleasant Prairie	Harold & Donna Saalfeld, Jean Aker, Emily Kruger
Racine	Scott Farnsworth, Sharon Mc Donald, Laura Gellot, Marion Lamartina
Silver Lake	Gail Fisher
Trevor	Bozena Pyrzynski
Twin Lakes	Norma J Baxa
Waterford	Judith Beschta



## Explore, Enjoy And Protect The Planet

### SEGG Leadership

#### SEGG Executive Committee

Melissa Warner (Program Chair)...melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net  
 Betsy Georg (Secretary).....bgeorg@hotmail.com  
 LD (Red) Rockwell (Chair).....Ld.jarockwell@elknet.net  
 Tom Rutkowski (Vice Chair).....natom@wi.rr.com  
 Judy Rockwell (Delegate to JMC).....jjrockwell@gmail.com

#### Other Group Leaders

Jeff Sytsma (Treasurer).....Jeff12759@aol.com  
 MaryAnn Ortmyer (Hospitality).....maortmyer@gmail.com  
 Rebecca Eisel (Webmaster).....SeggWebAdmin@gmail.com  
 Kari Olesen (Membership).....(262)995-4455

The newsletter of the Southeast Gateway Group of the Sierra Club is published six times each year by the Group newsletter volunteers. 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  
 APRIL-MAY 2015 ISSUE IS  
 MARCH 1, 2015**

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The New Southeast Gateway Group Executive Committee:  
(Left to right) Melissa Warner, Tom Rutkowski, Judy Rockwell,  
L.D. Rockwell and Betsy Georg.



Mule deer blocked by the new border wall through the San Pedro  
Riparian Conservation Area, Arizona See article on p. 4