



SOUTHEAST SIERRAN

News of the
Southeast Gateway Group
of the Sierra Club

FEB / MAR 2017
VOLUME 36, No. 1

From the Chair
by Tom Rutkowski

Wisconsin's Ministry of Resources

America has always seemed safely removed from the nightmare world depicted in Orwell's 1984. More like the world depicted in *Brave New World*, we would instead be amused and trivialized into submission. Truth wouldn't be censored; we would be too distracted to pay attention. In recent years, we seem to be creeping toward Orwell's dystopia. Orwell's novel still has such currency in our time that even people who have never read it understand references to Big Brother and the Thought Police. It has, for almost 70 years, served as a warning about the abuses of power. At the core of the novel is the idea that truth itself can become merely an extension of power and that language can be used as a form of control as well as a form of communication.

The main character in the novel, Winston Smith, works in the euphemistically titled Ministry of Truth where his job is to eliminate any historical records that contradict the party line of the moment. Without a reliable resource to turn to, the people's grasp of reality would be more easily manipulated. Since the recent elections we've heard much about fake news, the kind, for example, fabricated for profit by teenagers in Moldavia. This is a new use for an older term that has been used to discredit conventional media for long time. It has come to the point where even Charlie Sykes, Wisconsin's own conservative talk radio host, realizes that after years of attacking reputable sources like the New York Times, there really is no place to turn to to find facts and settle disputes. In a recent mea culpa moment Sykes has written in that very newspaper that "...we had succeeded in persuading our audiences to ignore and discount any information from the mainstream media. Over time, we'd succeeded in delegitimizing the media altogether – all the normal guideposts were down, the referees discredited".

Meanwhile, as we try to figure out how to retain our grasp on an objective reality, the Wisconsin DNR quietly scrubs their own web site clean of the term "climate change". There must have been some resistance, but someone with the right password or enough power ordered the removal of specific words from a page on the agency's web site that described the effect of climate change on the Great Lakes and attributed the changes to human activity. The new, revised page states that "As it has done throughout the centuries, the earth is going through a change. The reasons for this change at this particular time in the earth's long history are being debated and researched by academic entities outside the Department of Natural Resources."

It would be too much of a leap to completely deny years of study, so instead the strategy, borrowed from the tobacco industry's own anti-science campaign, is to create the illusion of doubt, that there is still an active and inconclusive debate in progress. It isn't the first time that science and the language used to describe it were censored by a Wisconsin agency; in 2015 employees of the public lands agency were forbidden to discuss climate change. Similar measures have also been taken in Florida's Department of Environmental Protection.

With a few slight keystrokes, years of scientific study and consensus are erased. It might not seem like a bold move, but Orwell would urge us to be vigilant. There are few places in the world where such blatant censorship of scientific fact would be accepted; Wisconsin shouldn't be one of them. On page 5 we are introducing a new Southeast Sierran section, **Get Involved-Start Here**, featuring tangible ways you can help. Together we can be heard.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Saturday, Feb. 4: Winter Hike on the Ice Age Trail, Eagle, WI, 9:00 AM (page 3)

Thursday, Feb. 16: *Oil Trains and Rail Safety*, 6:30 PM at the iMET Center (page 3)

MARCH

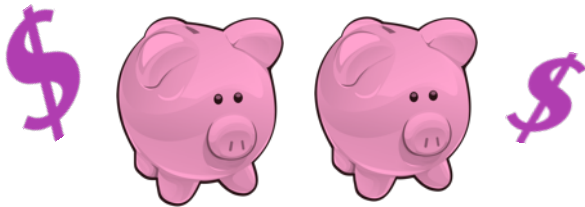
Maple Sugarin' Time at Hawthorn Hollow!
Saturdays March 11, 18 & 25 at 10:00 AM (page 4)

Thursday, March 16: *Root River and Pike River Watershed Restoration Plans*, 6:30 PM at the iMET Center (page 3)

APRIL

Thursday, April 20: *Vision 2050: A Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan*, 6:30 PM at the iMET Center (page 3)

Saturday, April 29: *People's Climate March*, Washington, DC (page 5)



DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!!

A generous donor to SEGG is offering to match any donations up to \$500.

That's right!

Your SEGG donation will be doubled.

Any amount is appreciated.

Your contribution allows us to continue our local work to **Explore, Enjoy and Protect.**

Please mail donations to:

**Sierra Club, SEGG
c/o Jeff Sytsma
3508 Washington Ave
Racine WI 53405**

*Donations to Sierra Club, SEGG are not tax-deductible since we are able to do election advocacy. For a tax-deductible donation, write the check to Sierra Club Foundation and send to the same address. These funds are also used locally for educational programs.



Yes! I want to make a difference.

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

FREE GIFT
with any new membership

New Member or Gift Member Recipient Name(s)

Address

City State Zip

Phone (optional)

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.

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"/> \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,250
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 as they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *SIERRA* magazine plus \$1 for your chapter's newsletter.

PAYMENT METHOD: (Check One)

Check Visa Mastercard Amex

Cardholder Name

Card Number

Expiration

Signature

3-digit Code

GIFT MEMBERSHIP A giftcard will be sent for your use. Enter the name and address of the gift recipient above and your name and address below.

Your Name(s)

Address

City State Zip

Phone / Email (optional)



Enclose payment and mail to:
**Sierra Club
PO Box 42041
Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041**

Thank You!

P94QB 1608 1

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Programs start at
6:30 PM at the
iMET Center,
2320 Renaissance Blvd.
in Sturtevant, unless
otherwise noted.

February 16th Regular Meeting and Program: Oil Trains



Citizens Acting for Rail Safety (CARS) will be talking about their fight to stop oil trains from hauling toxic cargo through their Milwaukee neighborhoods.

March 16th Regular Meeting and Program: Root/Pike Watershed Restoration

Dave Giordano from the Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network will join us on March 16 to give an update on the **Root River and Pike River Watershed Restoration Plans**.

The plan calls for special attention to the portion of the Pike river, south of Highway 11 to KR, targeting erosion and pollution concerns. We'll hear about progress since the plan was finalized in 2013 and next steps in the plan to protect our watershed.

Read more at <http://www.rootpikewin.org/#intro>

April 20th Regular Meeting and Program: VISION 2050

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) is the official metropolitan planning organization and regional planning commission for the seven-county southeastern Wisconsin area.

After much community input, this commission finalized **Vision 2050: A Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan**, providing a roadmap for transportation, land use, parks and open space, housing, and environment.

For our April program, we'll hear about the water plans: the Regional Water Quality Management Plan, the Regional Water Supply Plan, and the Lake and Stream Management Plan.

Read more at <http://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPC/Environment.htm>

Join
Us!

SEGG ICE AGE TRAIL HIKE -EAGLE SEGMENT-

Saturday, February 4 ~ 9:00 AM

This is a 5.5 mile hike taking us through the Scuppernong River Wildlife Habitat. We will see exposed Niagara dolomite and a glacial lake bed. We will pass an area called Brady's Rocks where in the warmer months a unique fern population is visible.

We will start at the parking lot for the Ice Age Trail on Hwy 67, just a few hundred yards south of County Road X in Eagle, WI. We will meet at 9 AM and determine who will drive to the other end to ferry the group back to the cars at the beginning. The end is the IATA parking lot a few hundred yards north of 59, just west of 67.

After the hike we will drive from the parking lot at the end to Paradise Springs, where a 5000 gallon-per-minute spring supports a trout population, and where an old log cabin stands. The only requirement for participation is signing a Sierra Club liability waiver.

**Please contact Allan Sommer for more information:
262-716-6955 or sommerallan4@gmail.com,
to sign up and to make plans for carpooling.**



Please Note:

Not all Sierra Club events and outings are listed in this newsletter due to timing or space restrictions.

To stay up to date on all Group happenings, visit our website at:
www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway

Another great way to stay current is to
Follow Us on Facebook
and receive updates and event reminders in your newsfeed:
www.facebook.com/SierraClubSoutheastGatewayGroup



APPRECIATING WINTER *By John Berge*

Many people like to see data reduced to their individual level, how each one of us contributes to consequences, before they are willing to make lifestyle changes or espouse a position. Dirk Notz, a climate scientist at the Max Planck Institute for Meteorology in Hamburg, Germany, did just that with the loss of Arctic sea ice due to carbon dioxide emissions since 1953. The loss per person for people in the United States is just under 50 square meters per year. Or for that typical family of four, 197 square meters per year. At the current rate of loss, summer ice in the Arctic Ocean could be gone before 2050, probably for the first time in at least 125,000 years!

Most of us will never get that far north to see this historic change, but we may feel it in climate change. I don't pretend to know how the loss of Arctic ice cover in the summer or the later refreeze in the fall affects the famous "Polar Vortex", but all the data indicate that global warming is producing more weather extremes, including drought and floods, cold snaps and stronger winds. The latter two seem to be exacerbated by the TV weather reporters emphasizing the "wind chill factor". They use the phrase "feels like" instead of the more correct phrase "one loses heat as if it were X degrees.

"Wind chill" has an interesting history. The first attempt to quantify the effect of wind on heat loss was back in 1945 by a couple of explorers in Antarctica, Paul Siple and Charles Passle. They stuck bottles of water out in the wind and timed how long the water took to freeze. They reported the heat loss in watts per square meter which would really confuse the modern TV viewer. According to my memory of a conversation with some technicians while I was working at the Army Chemical Center, the US Army tried to determine wind chill by placing milk cans of hot water in a wind tunnel and recording the temperature drop. This must not have worked out very well since I can find no reference to any such work. What the Army Quartermaster Corps then did was to substitute volunteers walking on a treadmill in the wind tunnel for the water-filled milk cans and collected verbal responses on how cold they felt – back to "feels like".

These results came out too cold so modifications were made and a rather complex equation is now the standard:

$$\text{Wind Chill (degrees F)} = 35.74 + 0.6215T - 35.75 (V^{0.16}) + 0.4275T(V^{0.16})$$

where T is the air temperature in degrees F and V is the wind speed (mph). Rather than do this calculation, I presume most TV weather persons just read it off a readily available chart. The chart goes from air temperatures of 40F to -40F and wind speeds from 5 to 60 mph and also includes curvy lines indicating frostbite times. The equation does not take into effect any sunshine, the height of the individual (wind speed assumed a 5-foot individual walking in an area with no buildings or trees), and other factors.

I am writing this column the day after enjoying a pleasant 4.5-mile walk that the TV weather person would probably try to talk me out of. But I will try to talk you *into* an environmentally friendly walk. Enjoy our winter weather before it disappears due to climate change or the turning of the seasons.

It's Maple Sugarin' Time at Hawthorn Hollow!

The Sugar Maple and maple sugaring is an important part of Wisconsin's heritage. Visitors will take a journey back in time and discover the magic of maple sugaring.



Save a tree!

Sign up to receive this newsletter in full-color by writing to Tom Rutkowski at natom@wi.rr.com



Through hands-on activities, participants will experience the arts and traditions of tapping a maple tree. The visit also provides a history of Native American traditions and techniques for the capturing, collecting and cooking of maple syrup.

This 2-hour program takes place outdoors and is enjoyed by children and adults.

Saturdays at 10:00 AM, March 11, 18 & 25

Adult \$10, Children \$5

Please dress for the weather!

Contact 262.552.8196 or Dan@HawthornHollow.org for more information.

Hawthorn Hollow is located approximately 4 miles east of I-94, just west of Petrifying Springs on Green Bay Road (Highway 31) in the town of Somers.

GET INVOLVED START HERE!

Remember when Governor Walker's administration tried to remove the Wisconsin Idea from state law?

It was met by such forceful public opposition that the effort was quickly dropped. Just days ago House Republicans abruptly reversed their plan to destroy the congressional ethics board. When enough people take a stand, politicians take notice.

At this time, when so many of the environmental protections we've come to expect are under attack, we're hoping we can help to focus such efforts with each issue of the newsletter.

This isn't the first time that Wisconsin Republicans have considered splitting the Department of Natural Resources into separate agencies, but now, with the largest majority in decades, it might just happen.

The "hook and bullet" contingent, those who hunt and fish, have always been strong allies of the environmental movement, an alliance that makes sense since the interests of both groups are closely related. In fact the Wisconsin DNR combined such concerns in 1967 to make state government more effective.

In another "divide and conquer" strategy, the proposed split would purposefully weaken such an alliance. The proposed move would split parks, forestry, hunting and fishing, and environmental programs into three existing agencies and add two new ones.



.....
Please write to your state representatives and express your disapproval of the plan to break up the functions of the Wisconsin DNR. While you're at it, you might also register your opposition to the elimination of "climate change" from the DNR's own web site.

When writing letters, remember that unique, handwritten letters are more effective than typed letters or form letters, and mailed letters are far better than emails.

The Ask: Declare your opposition to dividing the DNR into separate agencies and to removing the discussion of climate change from the agency's website.

Who? Write to your state representatives and to Cathy Stepp, Secretary of the Wisconsin DNR, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921. The addresses of your representatives are included on page 7 of this newsletter.

If you take action, please let me know at natom@wi.rr.com.

Thank you!

-Tom Rutkowski

JOIN US!!
Saturday, April 29



The Sierra Club, along with dozens of other social and environmental justice groups, will take part in a **People's Climate Movement** in Washington, DC, on Saturday, April 29.

With new threats to our environment and the plan to dismantle climate action, this march will need to be bigger than the People's Climate March of 2014 was!

Sign up today or learn more on the Sierra Club website:
sierraclub.tfaforms.net/126

WANTED:

Conservation Chair
for Racine or Walworth Counties

SEGG is in need of someone to serve as a contact and coordinator for conservation issues directly affecting Racine and Walworth Counties.

There is no salary, but it will be meaningful work!

For more information, please contact Tom Rutkowski at natom@wi.rr.com

Arrive Together: Building a 21st Century Transportation System for Wisconsin

from Jay Warner, SEGG Member

speakers: Aaron Mair, President of Sierra Club, and Leslie Proll, Director of the Office of Civil Rights in the US Department of Transportation. Ms. Proll reiterated the link between transportation rights and civil rights, from 1896 to today. Mair made the argument that one cannot talk about transportation issues without also including a decent living wage. Otherwise, he said, "people will sacrifice the environment for bread, and a belt to hold their pants up." Mair's full presentation is available on YouTube.

Getting our government to change their priorities and put money into "new" things is even more important in the upcoming administration. From this successful event, it has become abundantly clear that the state must prioritize local needs during this budget cycle. Wisconsinites need better local roads and access to transit services rather than massive highway expansion projects.

On Dec. 3, 2016, Sierra Club–John Muir Chapter with 39 other Wisconsin organizations hosted the Arrive Together conference on transportation systems in our state. Three hundred people from urban and rural areas, able-bodied and with disabilities, cyclists, transit riders and drivers, plus some older folks looking ahead to the day when they won't be able to drive themselves, all showed up.

There were two plenary



State Assemblyman Daniel Riemer, (D Milwaukee) chats with Aaron Mair, President of Sierra Club

The John Muir Chapter lists **five actions we can take now** on their website:
www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/blog/2016/12/arrive-together-transportation-summit

SEGG Outing Recap: Work Day at Lake Lulu Nature Conservancy *from Al Sommer, Outings Chair*

On the pretty Saturday morning of October 15, 2016, three SEGG club members met at the Lulu Lake Nature Conservancy site for a day of prairie stewardship. We were supplied with bags into which we collected seeds from the richly abundant field of prairie plants overlooking the lake. In addition to seed collection, we cut seed heads from mullein, an unwanted plant in the field. The outing was supposed to have been capped off by an afternoon of paddling on the lake, but the winds were too gusty! We settled instead for a hike on the Legacy Trail, then dismissed to a local bar for the debriefing.

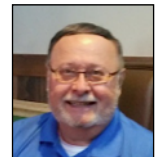
Holiday Potluck & Awards *from Melissa Warner, SEGG Member*

Allan Summer received the Spark Plug trophy at the Holiday Potluck in December. Originated by John Berge in 1987, the intent is to honor a member who has contributed a "spark" that ignites the group. This travelling award is passed from recipient to recipient in irregular intervals. Previous awardee Melissa Warner selected Allan because, "He reinstated the SEGG Outings Program that had lain fallow for several years. Whether by canoe, kayak, bicycle, or on foot, Allan is committed to getting us outside."

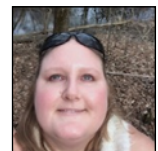


The SEGG Golden Loppers were presented to Jed Haas for his dedication to eradicating honeysuckle and buckthorn from the Colonial Park flood plain. Though he prefers his chain saw, the loppers represent the more than 100 hours of volunteer labor Jed has contributed this year to the restoration of the ten-acre site.

Congratulations to our new ExComm Members!



Joe Dubaniewicz



Laura Feider



Tom Rutkowski

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE

SEGG encourages you to *WRITE* to your legislators on the issues you care about.

Find yours at legis.wisconsin.gov



Senator Stephen L. Nass

Senate District 11 (R - Whitewater)
State Capitol Room 10 South
P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882
(608) 266-2635
Sen.Nass@legis.wisconsin.gov

Senator Van H. Wanggaard

Majority Caucus Vice-Chair
Senate District 21 (R - Racine)
State Capitol Room 319 South
P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882
(608) 266-1832
Sen.Wanggaard@legis.wisconsin.gov

Senator Robert W. Wirsch

Senate District 22 (D - Kenosha)
State Capitol Room 127 South
P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882
(608) 267-8979
Sen.Wirsch@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Amy Loudenberg

Assembly District 31 (R - Clinton)
State Capitol Room 304 East
PO Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-9967
Rep.Loudenberg@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Tyler August

Speaker Pro Tempore
Assembly District 32 (R - Lake Geneva)
State Capitol Room 119 West
PO Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-1190
Rep.August@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Cody Horlacher

Assembly District 33 (R - Mukwonago)
State Capitol Room 214 North
PO Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-5715
Rep.Horlacher@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Samantha Kerkman

Majority Caucus Sergeant At Arms
Assembly District 61 (R - Salem)
State Capitol Room 315 North
PO Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-2530
Rep.Kerkman@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Thomas Weatherston

Assembly District 62 (R - Caledonia)
State Capitol Room 307 North
PO Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-0731
Rep.Weatherston@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Robin Vos

Speaker
Assembly District 63 (R - Rochester)
State Capitol Room 211 West
PO Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-9171
Rep.Vos@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Peter Barca

Minority Leader
Assembly District 64 (D - Kenosha)
State Capitol Room 201 West
PO Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-5504
Rep.Barca@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Tod Ohnstad

Assembly District 65 (D - Kenosha)
State Capitol Room 128 North
PO Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-0455
Rep.Ohnstad@legis.wisconsin.gov

Representative Cory Mason

Assembly District 66 (D - Racine)
State Capitol Room 6 North
PO Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708
(608) 266-0634
Rep.Mason@legis.wisconsin.gov



Explore, Enjoy And Protect The Planet

2017 Southeast Gateway Group Leadership

Executive Committee

Tom Rutkowski (Chair).....natom@wi.rr.com
Judy Rockwell (Vice Chair).....jjrockwell@gmail.com
Laura Feider (Secretary).....lmflowerpower@hotmail.com
Allan Sommer (Outings Chair).....sommerallan4@gmail.com
Joe Dubaniewicz.....joeduban@yahoo.com
Karen Hermansen.....ehermansenjr@wi.rr.com

Other Group Leaders

Jeff Sytsma (Treasurer).....jeff12759@aol.com
Barb Brattin (Program Chair).....bb81435@gmail.com
Mary Schroeder (Hospitality).....ilovedogsandcats2@yahoo.com
Rebecca Eisel (Webmaster).....SeggWebAdmin@gmail.com
Barry Thomas (Conservation, Kenosha, Co.).....bthomas6@wi.rr.com
Melissa Warner (Editor, E-News).....melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net

The newsletter of the Southeast Gateway Group is published six times each year by the Group newsletter staff. Please send any articles, photographs of group activities, letters, calendar submissions, corrections and comments to:

Nicole Reid - nreid23@wi.rr.com
Please use subject line: **SEGG Newsletter**



Deadline for April/May Issue:
March 1, 2017

Southeast Gateway Group
of the Sierra Club
1529 Crabapple Dr.
Racine, WI 53405-1705

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Racine, WI
Permit No. 1261



 Follow us on
Facebook




Events
Articles
Action

Save a tree!
Sign up for
E-news
in full-color.



www.facebook.com/sierraclubsoutheastgatewaygroup

www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway

 Double Your Donation!  In this issue:
Get Involved-A New Feature  Appreciating Winter



John Muir Chapter members at the Arrive Together Conference last December.
Photo courtesy of Veronica King, President, Kenosha Branch NAACP. See page 6 for details.