



# SOUTHEAST SIERRAN

News of the  
Southeast Gateway Group  
of the Sierra Club

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## Erysichthon

From the Chair  
by Tom Rutkowski

I've noticed many words of Greek origin lately in print and in conversations. Words like democracy of course, but also words like oligarchy, plutocracy, and tyranny that represent threats to democracy. I've even learned a new word that seems made for our time—kakistocracy. Though the ancient Greeks would surely be in awe of our technology, they would be all too familiar with the weaknesses of our nature, the problems that frequently arise from our own hubris and our poor understanding of our own drives and desires. To warn us of our unchecked appetites, the Greeks created myths still familiar to many of us. We learn them in grade school where they seem to resonate with young people partly because they're filled with monsters, but also because they offer wisdom that young children recognize.

Here is a myth not as well known though it too seems particularly relevant for our time when self-restraint seems rare and greed is cultivated, when excess of appetite poses problems not just with our environment, but also our health, our culture and our politics. This is the story of Erysichthon, a king whose name means "Earth tearer".

It begins with the forbidden, as such stories often do. There are warnings that go unheeded—don't open that box, don't fly too high, don't kill those cattle. In this particular story the forbidden domain is a sacred grove that belongs to Demeter, the goddess of the harvest and of fertility. Within this forest is a giant oak that towers above the other trees and is often used by forest nymphs for religious rites and celebrations. Blinded to the majesty of this tree by some combination of his own hubris and greed, Erysichthon orders his slaves to cut it down. They refuse to follow his commands; in fact, when Erysichthon starts chopping away, defiling the "ancient woods with man-made iron", one bold slave tries to stop him. Erysichthon beheads this man, then continues chopping down the tree, even when blood starts flowing from the sacred tree itself. The forest nymphs appeal to Demeter for just punishment for such blasphemous behavior. In response, Demeter sends her servant to Scythia, the place where famine resides. There her emissary finds the wasted, shriveled form of famine and passes on Demeter's command—famine should fasten itself to Erysichthon in his sleep and curse him with an insatiable hunger. Even as he sleeps, he dreams of lavish feasts and when he awakes, "reason was overruled by greed of gorge and appetite of maw". The more he consumes, the more he hungers. He devours all that his wealth and property can buy until all he has left is a shape-shifting daughter who he sells again and again to satisfy what can never be satisfied. When, finally, he has exhausted all other means, he turns on his own body and begins to devour his own limbs.



Erysichthon and his insatiable appetite

It seems wrong to wish him a "Good appetite" and too obvious to point out "You are what you eat". What do we say when someone's overindulgence becomes destructive? Is there a way of saying "enough" that doesn't sound rude?

We could borrow a saying from the Japanese—Hara Hachi Bu. Often translated as "eat until you are 80% full", the proverb is "eight parts of a full stomach sustain the man; the other two sustain the doctor". It is a concept that helps the Okinawans live longer than almost anyone and at the same time fosters self discipline and an awareness of limits. It's an idea that seems so foreign in today's America where even limiting the size of a soda serving or requiring less fuel consumption draws opposition. When our own reckless, impulsive president wallows in excess, how do we politely suggest

that we're already surpassing our needs? It's clear we need to need less, to draw our own limits, or like Erysichthon, our boundless appetite will consume us as well. ○

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Public Film Screening of  
**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S**  
**FROM THE ASHES**  
 COAL-MINING DOCUMENTARY

Wed., June 21 ~ 6:30 PM  
**Free & Open to the Public**  
 See page 3 for details

Summer *SEGG/Weed Out! Racine* work days in Colonial Park are on the fourth Saturday of each month from **9:00 AM to Noon**.

## June 24 & July 22

Park at either end and cross the bridge to the Root River pathway. We'll be planting trees and pulling garlic mustard. Dress for the weather with long trousers and closed toed shoes.

### SAVE THE DATE!!

## HIGHWAY 38 CLEANUP

Saturday, July 29, 8:30 AM

Meet in the parking lot of Blessed Hope Church, corner of Hwy 38 and Four Mile Rd for check-in, safety equipment and area assignments. Please wear weather-appropriate clothing with good walking shoes.

Many thanks to those who have participated in the past! Most of our three-mile stretch of Highway 38 was cleaner than in the past due to either better care from the people who drive that highway or the recent strong winds. Let us hope it is the former.

For more info, contact John Berge:  
 262-633-8455 or jberge35@wi.rr.com

Join the **INVASIVE SPECIES WORKDAYS** at the Pringle Nature Center, 9800 160th Avenue, Bristol

### Saturdays: June 24 & July 22, 9:00 AM – Noon

With the help of volunteers, undesirable non-native, invasive plants are removed manually and native plants returned to the habitat. Please bring your own work gloves, tools will be provided.

### Join our New Meetup Group for SEGG Sponsored Outings and Activities!

Meetup makes it easy to find out about and sign up for club events. Start your free account today!  
<https://www.meetup.com/Southeast-Gateway-Group-Sierra-Club-Hikes-and-Activities/>



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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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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.

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**Thank You!**

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# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

No SEGG programs are scheduled for June or July. Please check our website for the most up-to-date information and follow us on Facebook for daily notices and reminders.

[www.facebook.com/sierraclubsoutheastgatewaygroup](http://www.facebook.com/sierraclubsoutheastgatewaygroup) • [www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway](http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway)

## FREE SCREENING!



**WED., JUNE 21 ~ 6:30 PM**  
Northside Kenosha Public Library  
Northside Activities Room-A

Produced by RadicalMedia in partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies, **FROM THE ASHES** goes beyond the rhetoric of the "war on coal" to present compelling and often heartbreaking stories about what's at stake for our economy, health, and climate.

Please join us for a *special preview screening* in advance of the National Geographic global broadcast premiere on June 25. Pre- and post-viewing activities are also planned for the event.

## Garlic Mustard Pickin' Party A Success!

A BIG THANK YOU to the wonderful volunteers and coordinators who helped make this Community Earth Day Event on May 6 such a success.



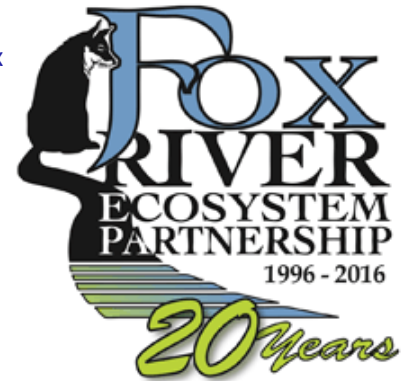
# 2017 Fox River Summit Recap

from Judy Rockwell

Representatives from federal, state, county, and local agencies as well as nonprofit organizations and private businesses in Wisconsin and Illinois attended the 5th annual Fox River Summit in Burlington in March. I attended representing the Sierra Club Southeast Gateway Group.

The Fox River Watershed covers 2700 square miles in Wisconsin and Illinois. The Fox River is a 200 mile long tributary of the Illinois River beginning in Sussex, Wisconsin and ending in Ottawa, Illinois. About 35% of the watershed is in Washington, Ozaukee, Milwaukee, Waukesha, Walworth, Racine, and Kenosha counties in Wisconsin. The remaining 65% is in Illinois.

According to Tom Slawski, President of the Southeast Fox River Partnership, “shared concerns in the Fox River Watershed include water quality, fisheries and wildlife habitat, invasive species management, sediment deposition, storm water and agricultural pollutant runoff, water supply, groundwater recharge, sustainable environmental flows, sustainable recreational flows and safe recreation, stream bank erosion, and flooding.”



The following speakers addressed many of these shared concerns.

**Water Trail Initiative**—Rebecca Ewald & Karen Ann Miller  
[www.foxriverecosystem.org/trail.htm](http://www.foxriverecosystem.org/trail.htm)

Fox River Ecosystem Partnership, the Southeast Wisconsin Fox River Partnership and the Village of Waterford, Wisconsin are working to have all or portions of the Fox River in Wisconsin and Illinois designated as a National Water Trail through the National Park Services' National Water Trail System. They are collecting data on access sites, dams, existing resources and asking for volunteers to help with this collection.

**Fox River Flood Inundation Mapping**—Sarah Marquardt, Meteorologist  
[www.weather.gov/mkx/](http://www.weather.gov/mkx/)

Fox River Inundation Mapping is a project by WI Emergency Management, National Weather Service, WI DNR and FEMA to provide flood forecasts and warnings of where and when flooding may occur to minimize loss



Image from wisconsinwetlands.org

of life or property. Using the above website, click on Rivers and Lakes to access Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Services and select a river gauge.

**Water Quality Standards**—Kristi Minahan, WI DNR <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/SurfaceWater/standards.html>  
The DNR is in process of revising water quality rules. The rules being reviewed are: designated uses, biocriteria and phosphorus response criteria, site-specific criteria for phosphorus, bacteria criteria for recreation, and anti-degradation.

**Engaging Farmers in Cover Cropping**—Nick Baker UW Extension <http://fyi.uwex.edu/covercrop/>  
Cover cropping is becoming more popular as farmers see the benefits such as reduced erosion, soil and water conservation, and suppression of weeds. Some reasons farmers don't use cover crops are cost, unfamiliarity, and not knowing how to manage them.



**Putting Wetlands to Work for Your Community**—  
Kyle Magyera, Wisconsin Wetlands Association  
[www.wisconsinwetlands.org/for-communities](http://www.wisconsinwetlands.org/for-communities)

Wisconsin Wetlands Association has resources for land owners and communities including fact sheets, project management, training, workshops, outreach. A Model Wetland Conservation Ordinance PDF is available at:  
[wisconsinwetlands.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/MWCO.pdf](http://wisconsinwetlands.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/MWCO.pdf)

Additional presentations discussed progress against invasive species and return of native species, shoreline health, Illinois water quality standards, monarch butterflies, and more. 💧



On April 29, over 200,000 people gathered in our nation's capitol for a powerful demonstration of unity for jobs, justice, and climate action during the People's Climate March. SEGG Chair, Tom Rutkowski and Natalie Chulew attended the march in DC. Here are some of their photos:



### Easter Sunday White River Trail Bike Ride Recap *from Allan Sommer*

After most everyone who had signed up to join SEGG on an early spring bicycle ride realized that it was on Easter Sunday, Al Sommer led an expedition of just one other biker. In spite of a substantial rain fall that morning, the packed limestone trail was dry and hard and the biking was ideal except for a fierce headwind coming directly from the west. The return trip provided a tailwind and we practically sailed back!

We saw spring beauties, buttercups by the thousands, and the beginning sprouts of skunk cabbage coming up in the wetter areas beside the trail. Additionally, the lack of foliage let us see farther out into the woods than you could see just one week later. This is such a nice trail that Al plans to schedule another ride before too long. Please check the SEGG website and Facebook page for updates.



# THE BATTLE FOR THE GREAT LAKES

by John Berge

Did you see the recent PBS program, “Making Waves: The Battle for the Great Lakes”? Did you attend the program on water issues at the SC Johnson Golden Rondelle on April 26?

If so, you are probably more aware and knowledgeable than most people about the causes and consequences of alien, invasive, aquatic species that have changed the Great Lakes forever and what is happening, or may happen, to the rivers, streams and other waterways in southeast Wisconsin.

One of the participants in the TV program was Dan Egan. I have read his well researched, well documented and very readable book, “The Death and Life of the Great Lakes”, published by W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. which I highly recommend to anyone wishing to become more knowledgeable about the Great Lakes and related issues.

Not only does Egan give an excellent history of the Great Lakes centered on the effects of opening the Great Lakes to ocean going vessels that has brought in so many of the invasive, alien species, he shows the effects far beyond the watershed.

Are you aware that the quagga mussels have not only spread throughout the Great lakes, but have entered the huge Mississippi River watershed, many semi-isolated lakes in Wisconsin and as far west as Lake Mead and Lake Tahoe?

This spread is generally believed to be due to sport fishing boats going from one lake to another without adequate cleaning. Steam cleaning appears to be the best. Out west, failure to clean your boat properly can result in huge fines, trying to protect the Columbia River watershed.

Egan also points out extensively the effects of draining the Great Black Swamp to the southwest Lake Erie, the dredging of the channel through Lake

used to eat and which have vanished with the invasion of the mussels.

Also, as salmon populations crashed because of the reduced alewife population, some native prey fish, such as Lake Trout, are returning in Lake Huron. This may also happen in Lake Michigan.

In the Great Lakes, there may be little that the individual can do to counteract the changes resulting from governments giving in to the demands of the shipping and sport fishing

industries. On land, which also has lots of invasive, alien species, there are actions we can take.

You wouldn't have much effect going down to the lake shore and chiseling off some of the billions of zebra and quagga mussels. In a recent church newsletter article, I noted that, if Moses split the waters of Lake Michigan as he did the Red Sea, he could almost walk from Racine to Michigan on the quagga mussel shells without getting his sandals muddy!



Photo: Chris McCarrus for Michigan Now

St. Claire and the reversal of the flow of the Chicago River. He refers to the opening of the St. Lawrence River rapids and the Welland Canal as breaching the “front door” to the Great Lakes and the reversal of the Chicago River/Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal as the “back door”, but also as “destroying its continental divide”.

“Scientists have identified 39 invasive species poised to ride the Chicago Canal into or out of the Great Lakes. Chicago’s removal of 2 billion gallons/day with no return of treated effluent, grandfathered into the Great Lakes Compact, is over 280 times the current water usage of Waukesha, whose request is the basis of so much argument, debate, misinformation and conflicting claims.”

Egan, unfortunately, leaves only a little room for optimism. There is evidence of some rapid evolution of whitefish in Lake Michigan which permits this toothless, weak-jawed fish to swallow, digest and grow on zebra and quagga mussels. They swallow them whole and use evolving stomach muscles to crush the shells and digest the meat—a total change of their diet from the shrimp-like food they



Photo: Mike De Sisti for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

But in our parks and in our yards, we can have a noticeable effect on invasive, alien, plant species. The SEGG works every 4th Saturday pulling these invaders and replacing them with native plants; **Please Join Us!**



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE

SEGG encourages you to *WRITE* to your legislators on the issues you care about.  
Find yours at [legis.wisconsin.gov](http://legis.wisconsin.gov)



## Senator Stephen L. Nass

Senate District 11 (R - Whitewater)  
State Capitol Room 10 South  
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## Senator Van H. Wanggaard

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## Explore, Enjoy And Protect The Planet

### 2017 Southeast Gateway Group Leadership

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

**Nicole Reid - [nreid23@wi.rr.com](mailto:nreid23@wi.rr.com)**  
Please use subject line: **SEGG Newsletter**

**Deadline for Aug/Sept Issue:  
July 1, 2017**

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[www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway](http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway)

## Lead Contamination in Wisconsin



Elevated lead levels in our drinking water is the subject of the John Muir Chapter's second white paper released on May 10. Melissa Warner, pictured above, hosted the press event at the Laurel Clark Fountain in downtown Racine. Mike Kosterman of the Racine Water Utility and Sarah Clemons of the Public Health Department spoke about what their agencies are currently doing to address the issue. Visit [www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin](http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin) for a link to the paper.



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People's Climate March Photos



and more ways  
You Can Get Involved!

