



News of the
Southeast Gateway Group
of the Sierra Club

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SOUTHEAST SIERRAN

Now Is The Time for Direct Action

By Contributing Writer, Meryl Fury

On October 20, 2021, published along with the United Kingdom Government's decarbonization, net zero, strategy was a research paper called "Net Zero: Principles for Successful Behaviour Change Initiatives." The document was commissioned by the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy and written by the Behavioral Insights Team. Unfortunately, it was only up for a few short hours before it was taken down and downplayed. The reasons provided for the retraction were: 1) that it is a research paper, not government policy, and 2) they didn't want to tell people what to do.

The good news is that nothing ever lands on the internet completely unnoticed. Even though the research paper was only briefly available as originally published, a few quick hands copied it and shared it elsewhere. The document focuses on suggestions for how the government can encourage average citizens to support the Net Zero effort by advertising, requesting, and incentivizing or rewarding behavior changes. A number of the recommendations relate to food choices.

As founder and CEO of Balance Forward Health and Wellness, LLC, which focuses on playfully supporting people who want to attain vibrant health over their entire lifespan, I have highlighted the net zero principles as related to food choices. If we can implement these recommendations and encourage friends and family to do the same, then we could decrease our individual carbon footprints. If we do that, WE MIGHT POSSIBLY SAVE THE WORLD! OK, that may be overstating it, but heck, it is worth a try!

Here are my Net Zero recommendations with some added information and suggestions for implementation:



1. *Take time to learn about the impacts of our food choices. Animal farming, ruminant products, and all meat and dairy production are higher carbon footprint industries. Estimates of animal farming's contributions to global greenhouse gasses production range from a low 14.5% to a mid 57%, to a high 87%. Because of this impact, regardless of which number you like, the report suggests a 35% reduction in ruminant meat (including cattle, sheep, deer, and goat) consumption. I would encourage everyone to reduce all animal products by 35% or more. That would be all animal product consumption, not just "ruminants."*

2. *By extension, teach your children and grandchildren about the impact of food choices on human, beyond human, and planetary health. Please encourage them to learn to cook and eat healthy plant-based whole foods. Create meals, snacks, and sack lunches that show you are walking the talk.*

3. *Push to get our school districts to decrease the amount of animal products served on campus. Animal proteins can be replaced by delicious dishes featuring beans, lentils, and protein-rich grains and are less environmentally damaging.*

4. *Do what you can to decrease food waste. Buy food in appropriate quantities. Prepare and use what you purchase. Teach children only to take what they will eat, while, at the same time, discouraging over-eating.*

5. *If you are a kitchen or food service manager, or if you are responsible for planning conferences, meetings or parties, do whatever you can to avoid putting animal products on the menu. Start featuring plant-based foods prominently and be proud of it! Make a statement about the menu being designed to support net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.*

6. *Be an informed consumer. Don't just go along with what advertisers promote as healthy, convenient, or fun. Read the ingredients on food packages.*

Con't. on page 4

GET INVOLVED ➡ START HERE!

February Online Program Coral Reef Restoration

February 17, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

Sam Kohlmann will be presenting the current challenges facing Caribbean coral reefs and the efforts to preserve them he witnessed firsthand. Sam spent 11 weeks in the summer of 2021 volunteering with the non-profit Aldeas de Paz in the Dominican Republic doing marine conservation work while scuba diving. He was also a digital marketing volunteer for the organization and the presentation will include underwater photography and movies Sam took using his GoPro.



Request the Zoom link by emailing: natom@wi.rr.com

March Online Program Homegrown National Parks

March 17, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

In his book “Nature’s Best Hope” entomologist Doug Tallamy outlines our planet’s biodiversity crisis. We are losing species at an alarming rate and this loss threatens to disrupt the ecological systems that we as humans depend on. But according to Tallamy there is a solution: collectively planting native species in our own backyards to create a Homegrown National Park. Please join Alex Weyenberg in a discussion about Doug Tallamy, the Homegrown National Park project, gardening with native plants, and the importance of biodiversity. **Request a zoom link from natom@wi.rr.com**



Join the Sierra Club Wisconsin **Book Club!**

Virtual meetings are held via phone or video chat every other month. Get to know fellow Sierra Club members in a less formal setting and engage in discussion about the best environmental or social justice related books.



The March book is *All We Can Save*
by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Katharine K. Wilkinson

Join the discussion on **Tuesday, March 1 at 7:00 PM**

“Provocative and illuminating essays from women at the forefront of the climate movement who are harnessing truth, courage, and solutions to lead humanity forward...”

There is a renaissance blooming in the climate movement: leadership that is more characteristically feminine and more faithfully feminist, rooted in compassion, connection, creativity, and collaboration....

Intermixing essays with poetry and art, this book is both a balm and a guide for knowing and holding what has been done to the world, while bolstering our resolve never to give up on one another or our collective future. We must summon truth, courage, and solutions to turn away from the brink and toward life-giving possibility. Curated by two climate leaders, the book is a collection and celebration of visionaries who are leading us on a path toward all we can save.”

Find our event page by searching “Sierra Club Wisconsin Book Club” on Facebook, or on the Sierra Club Wisconsin website. From there you can sign up to receive the Google Meet Invite or phone number to call in.

Hope you can join our next discussion on March 1st!

Wisconsin Waterfalls Loop

By Outings Co-Leader Al Sommer



I was excited by a recent article (Dec. 30) in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel about a new bicycle route that covers 382 miles and provides the rider with an opportunity to view 28 different waterfalls in northern Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Waterfalls Loop was developed by Dave Schlabowske, retired director of the Wisconsin Bike Fed and current resident of Seeley, WI. This route earned top honors from Bikepacking.com.



The trails are mostly off well-travelled paved roads but include some that, at best, would be mountain bike trails, including old logging roads and rough ATV/snowmobile trails. Schlabowske highlights camping spots, interesting restaurants, bars and, above all, waterfalls in the article. He includes a map and admits that some of the trails are hard to find.

While the route is a loop, he suggests that you start and end in Cable, WI. The complete loop can take 6-8 days with time to enjoy sightseeing. I plan to do a segment at a time and will try to substitute some rural quiet roadways for the parts where fat tires are a necessity.

Scuppernon Springs Nature Trail... Soon?

Once Sierra Club allows outings again, I will also look forward to leading an outing to the Scuppernon Springs Trail. This Nature Area is adjacent to the Scuppernon segment of the Ice Age Trail. This short trail takes you by the remains of an old marl pit. (Marl is a calcium carbonate material and silt that is formed in aquatic environments and apparently at one time had a value that made it worth mining.) It also takes you to about ten different springs that all have mostly different environments and are fun to see.

This nature trail and one of the trailheads for the Scuppernon segment of the Ice Age Trail are both near the intersection of Rte 67 and County Rd ZZ about 5 miles north of Eagle, Wis.

I look forward to sharing these unique and beautiful places with other club members and potential members when Covid-19 becomes an inconvenience rather than a pandemic.

Pringle Nature Center re-opened to the public in June and hosted a series of weekly outdoor concerts through August. Field trips resumed with all activities occurring outdoors. A very successful Fall Fun Fest and International Migratory Bird Celebration was held in September. Most recently, about 90 hikers participated in their Winter Solstice Candlelight Hike. In terms of invasive species, work continued in Bristol Woods every 4th Saturday from April through November. In addition to their usual volunteers, volunteers from Lakeview Academy Environmental Club and Americorps also contributed to the work.



Pringle field trip participants learn about invasive species, help remove them and collect seeds in the prairie. The prairie will be burnt in the spring to remove invasive trees and promote wildflower growth.

Pringle is currently working on a proposal to get an Americorps team to help construct a Nature Play Area. Per their request, Kenosha County has received a permit from the DNR to dredge the pond to remove invasive cattails which have taken over.



Canoe for Sale!

Melissa and Jay Warner have donated a 1988 Wenonah canoe, the 17' Sundowner model, to SEGG. Also included are two adult PFDs, four paddles and a set of LLBean portage trailer wheels. Suggested price is \$700 and all proceeds go to your Southeast Gateway Group Club. Interested parties should contact Amy Macemon at amymacemon@gmail.com.

Sign up to receive our Monthly SEGG E-News filled with upcoming SEGG programs, meetings & other local happenings. Email: [Laura Schulz - schulz@uwp.edu](mailto:schulz@uwp.edu)

Net Zero: Principles for Successful Behaviour Change Initiatives *Continued from page 1*

7. Learn one new plant-based recipe every week. Build your kitchen skills and your recipe file. Share what you learn. Hey! the holidays are coming! (Hint, hint!)
8. Ask your schools, grocery stores, restaurants, coffee shops, workplace cafeterias, hospitals, etc., to carry more plant-based whole food items.
9. If you belong to a faith-based organization that serves meals from time to time, ask them to offer more plant-based options.
10. Support local farmers to decrease the effects of transporting farm products long distances. If you are a farmer or know farmers, see about connecting to local restaurants, schools, and senior centers. Become their source for local plant products like veggies, fruits, and beans.
11. Learn about local, sustainable sources for produce. Support the farmer's markets! Go early and often!

Achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 or 2050 will take conscious effort and considerable policy change from governments and corporations. However, so far, our governments and companies have mostly failed to do what needs to be done.

While we could wait for policy changes, that could take more time than we have. The truth is that we can only control our own behavior, anyway. We could have a massive impact if we take on the suggestions above. Won't you please take direct action where you can? Now is the time!

Meryl Fury is President and CEO of Plant Based Nutrition Movement (PBNM.org)



Your donation helps us continue to "Explore, Enjoy and Protect" SE Wisconsin. Checks can be made out to **Sierra Club SEGG** to be used towards any purpose, or to **Sierra Club Foundation** to be used strictly for educational programs and activities. Mail donations to Jeff Sytsma, 3508 Washington Ave, Racine, WI 53405

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

A Zillion Thank Yous to Jeff Sytsma!

Although it was never intended to be a lifelong position, Jeff Sytsma has been Southeast Gateway Group treasurer for twenty years. Now he is stepping down after providing that invaluable service for so long.



In addition to keeping track of SEGG's finances, Jeff has also been the organizer of our annual cranberry sale, and has even taken on sales of calendars and datebooks for the benefit of the group.

We owe a zillion thank yous and much gratitude to Jeff for helping us through all these years. As a token of our appreciation, we have given Jeff a gift card for REI so that he can buy some equipment to continue enjoying his time outdoors.

If you are fortunate enough to have accounting skills and the time to contribute your services to the group, please let us know. Jeff is willing to help bring a new treasurer on board.

Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network is pleased to announce it has received a grant from SC Johnson to design and install a 1,000 sq. ft. Pollinator Patch at Bose Elementary School in Kenosha.



This patch will be a living outdoor classroom, offering educational opportunities for over 400 Bose students.

SEGG encourages you to WRITE to your legislators on the issues you care about. Find your representative at legis.wisconsin.gov



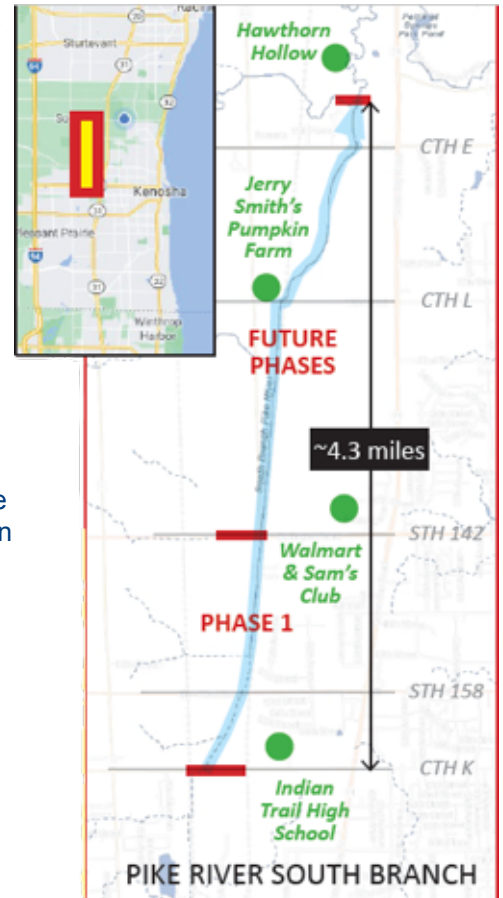
Current and Local Restoration Project: South Branch of the Pike River

As reported by the Wisconsin DNR, the Pike River is one of the most degraded Lake Michigan tributaries in Wisconsin. Kenosha, “The Place of Pike” gets its name from this river, yet its condition doesn’t support a Pike fishery. The South Branch of the Pike River suffers from decades of land management issues and development pressures. Ditched and bermed for more than 100 years, the flooding, pollutant loading, erosion, and poor habitat conditions persist. This area is also prime habitat for the federally endangered Rusty-Patched Bumble Bee, an incredibly important Wisconsin native pollinator.

The Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network is currently working alongside Kenosha County and the US Army Corps of Engineers to take on this iconic area of the Pike River in the largest water quality habitat restoration project in Kenosha County history. The benefits of restoring the South Branch would be enormous. This project will create 300 acres of restored pollinator habitat, as well as 192 acres of restored wetlands for aquatic species like Pike. It will also improve community services such as 500M gallons of additional flood storage, and new recreational amenities, with five miles of new multi-use trails for biking, walking, and outdoor activities. The restoration recommendations are drawn from the EPA/DNR-approved Pike River Nine Key Element Watershed Restoration Plan (2013).

The scope of Phase 1 includes the following:

- 68 acres of Wetland re-construction
- 80 acres of Wet Prairie restoration
- 9 acres of Woodland re-establishment
- 15 acres of Tributary buffer improvements
- 47 acres of Prairie re-creation
- 2,800 ft of stream length increase
- 100% total stream re-meander (8,200 to 11,000 ft)



Phase 1 is moving forward quickly with funding from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kenosha County, and the Fund for Lake Michigan. Root-Pike WIN is currently seeking \$10 million in additional funding as we now set our sights on Phase 2. The Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network is an environmental nonprofit with a mission to restore, protect, and sustain the watersheds of the Root-Pike basin. For more information or to make a donation, please visit: www.rootpikewin.org

SEGG Conservation in Colonial Park by, Melissa Warner



John Berge pulls a flowering burdock stalk.

SEGG has a long and important conservation history in Racine’s Colonial Park. Even before the massive planting of native shrubs and forbs along the then-new Root River Parkway in 2004, SEGG and St. Catherine's HS Environmental Club had been removing honeysuckle and buckthorn. With a grant from Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network, John Berge organized the delivery of more than 2000 native plants, mulch from the City Parks, and a very large number of community volunteers, to create a day-long planting extravaganza. Over the twenty-plus years, many SEGGers have helped on work days, including the Garlic Mustard Pickin' Party in May, 2017, where volunteers pulled more than 90 garbage bags full of the nasty stuff!

Then the emerald ash borer killed the ash trees - about 40% of the canopy. After the dead trees were logged off, we redirected our efforts to replacing the canopy. City Forester Matt Koepnick organized community planting days. SEGG with *Weed Out! Racine* planted smaller trees and shrubs to replace food sources and cover for wildlife. The extra sunlight has encouraged the growth of new and different invasives for us to manage, like bitterdock, hairy willow herb, and lesser celandine.

So what's the situation as we move into 2022? The newly planted trees are growing. It's exciting to see the red maples color up in the fall. The smaller trees and shrubs are also doing nicely; the elderberries are getting big enough to flower and set fruit. The oaks are standing strong, saved from deer by their blue protective sleeves.

We hope more SEGGers will join us in this important work! Work days are usually the fourth Saturday from 9:00 to noon, April through October. **Please contact Melissa at melissa.warner3@a2q.com or 262 639-0918 to get involved.**

We Need a Moonshot, Not a Half Step

by, Tom Rutkowski



In 2002, when We Energies first submitted plans to expand its generating capacity in Oak Creek, no one knew that “natural” gas would soon become more abundant and less expensive or that renewable sources would become the least expensive option of all. We did know, though, that burning coal to make

electricity was harmful to our health and our climate. To We Energies those were externalities, borne by the people who suffered from lung disease or the people whose homes would be burned or flooded some time in the not-so-distant future. Intent on making as much of a profit as possible, We Energies pushed for building the Elm Road plant since state law guaranteed their investments were given a return of 8%. Though it made financial sense to build as big a plant as possible, that sense is hard to find now that we are stuck with an outdated and expensive plant that will surely be retired before its operational lifetime ends. Now, twenty years later, We Energies announced it would convert the Elm Road plant and other coal plants in its fleet to natural gas by 2035. It’s progress in a way, but it is a hesitant half step taken too late, not the full stride that the climate crisis demands. To hit that stride we’ll need bold action and new leaders for our utilities, leaders who have a vision and the commitment to achieve a necessary goal that has been compared to our race to land on the moon.

Since the 60’s, our mission to land on the moon has represented all that America could accomplish with an accelerated effort fueled by technological innovation. Recent examples of such “moonshots”—the rapid development of multiple Covid vaccines, the Perseverance Rover landing on Mars—demonstrate that we are still capable of achieving the bold and miraculous.

In an earnings call almost a year ago, Gale Klappa, CEO of WEC Energy group, referred to President Biden’s goal of decarbonizing utilities by 2035 as a moonshot, not as a call to marshal We Energies’ resources for this crucial objective, but as assurance to investors that this effort is unlikely to succeed without “enormous technological change”. In the eight years between JFK’s announced goal of landing Americans on the moon and the Apollo 11 flight that that achieved that mission, such technological change produced dividends in scientific invention and industry for decades. With fifteen years, almost double that time, to transform the way we produce power, the stakes couldn’t be higher, the goal more worthy.

Recent studies suggest that we already have the technology to supply 90% of our energy through renewable sources. Like the original moonshot, this effort is likely to yield significant dividends. According to the Goldman School of Public Policy this twenty-first century energy grid would inject 1.7 trillion dollars into the economy and avoid 1.2 trillion in environmental health costs. With research, political will, and proper financing, new technologies will likely arise to close the gap that remains by 2035.

What will deliver great benefits to many appears as a threat to those who operate the costly centralized power plants that remain harmful to our health and our environment. At this point a distributed energy grid, in which most homes and businesses can produce and store at least some of their own electricity, appears to WE Energies as competition to business as usual, not as a complement that would add resilience and efficiency to the grid. This regulated monopoly’s obstruction of alternative financing like third-party ownership of solar installations and its repeated attempts to impose a “solar tax” on customer generated power demonstrate its intent to own and control most of the renewable energy future. This zero-sum thinking doesn’t account for the great increase in demand for clean energy that will occur when almost everything will be electrified—our transportation, the heating and cooling of buildings, the internet of things. While some utilities are already leading the way, We Energies lags behind, catching up to where they should have been years ago.

In addition, WE Energies membership in the Edison Electric Institute, an association that represents investor-owned electric utilities, is troubling. This lobbying group has a long history of obscuring the science of climate change and obstructing action to address it. Ironically, WE Energies’ two million dollar membership fees are paid for by its customers, according to the Energy and Policy institute.

Ironically, Mr. Klappa, whose legacy will be one of the last coal plants still operating, spent his earlier career leading the deceptively named Information Council for the Environment, a coal industry group formed to “reposition global warming as a theory” not scientific fact. By spreading disinformation, Klappa tampered with the political will to act and delayed necessary action, wasting the time he now says is lacking and contributing to a general denial of science that has since bred many variants. Clearly this is not the person likely to lead the great transformation of energy infrastructure.

In the moonshot to save this planet, there’s no doubt we’ll need new technology to meet the climate imperative, but more importantly, we’ll need innovative and more determined leadership within our utilities that can recognize both the urgency of the crisis and the opportunities it presents.



The Sierra Club's Southeast Gateway Group of Wisconsin's John Muir Chapter

Executive Committee Ballot

Those receiving this newsletter and ballot electronically are asked to print the ballot and to validate their vote by writing in their membership number below. Find your membership number on your membership card or on the Sierra magazine label. Those receiving a paper newsletter need only cut out the ballot. You may black out your name and address for anonymity. Ballots without a valid number will not be counted.

Please mail your ballot to:

Nancy Hennessy, 5216 Wind Point Rd., Racine, WI 53402

Deadline for voting is Feb. 25, 2022

Vote for up to 4 candidates. Second box is for joint members only.

Membership No. _____

- Ballot options for Zach Albert, Gloria Randall-Hewitt, Keith Kohlmann, and Alex Weyenberg.



Zach Albert

A lifelong resident of Southeastern Wisconsin, Zach grew up along the shorelines of Lake Michigan in Kenosha. Zach has a BS in Geosciences from UW-Parkside and works as a surveyor at the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District. In his spare time, Zach enjoys biking, hiking, camping, and brewing beer (and drinking it, too!). He is excited to join the SEGG Excomm board and assist with future outings and events.



Keith Kohlmann

I became involved with the Sierra Club after giving a presentation about the History of Coal and the Oak Creek Power Plant. As a career Technical Educator and researcher, my focus has been on helping people learn more about the impacts of the industrial and environmental landscape of Southeast Wisconsin. I want to preserve public spaces and speed up the transition to a carbon-free energy system.



Gloria Randall-Hewitt

My parents were both raised on small family farms in Wisconsin. As a result, I grew up with an awareness of our interconnectivity with nature and a deep respect for growing things. It seems apparent that our climate crisis is the most critical problem we face, touching on aspects of all the other issues facing the world today. I have a BA in Business and an MBA from Loyola University in Chicago. I've spent the last 20+ years in business and retired in 2021

as VP of Finance/ CFO of Active USA, a transportation company located in Pleasant Prairie, WI.



Alex Weyenberg

A horticulture student at Gateway Technical College, Alex works as a greenhouse technician on campus. He's a lifelong outdoor enthusiast who enjoys hiking, canoeing, camping, and ice fishing. He has a passion for gardening and enjoys working with native perennials to support pollinators

2022 Southeast Gateway Group Leadership

Executive Committee

- Leadership list including Laura Schulz, Tom Rutkowski, Allan Sommer, Amy Macemon, and Kelsey Saari.

Other Group Leaders

- Leadership list including Jeff Systma, Laura Feider, Barry Thomas, Mary Schroeder, and Jessica True.

The newsletter of the Southeast Gateway Group is published quarterly by Group members. Please send articles, event submissions, photographs, corrections and/or comments to: Nicole Reid - nreid23@wi.rr.com

Deadline for May-Jul Issue: April 10, 2022

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



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Thanks to our friends at *Weed Out!* Racine and SEWISC (Southeast WI Invasive Species Consortium) we now have two shoe scrapers in Colonial Park! Using these greatly reduces the spread of invasive species.



An eagle scout project this summer resulted in seven wood duck boxes in Colonial Park. We hope they'll have occupants this spring!

Save a Tree & See in Color! Email natom@wi.rr.com to receive a full-color, digital newsletter instead of a paper copy.

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