

Tallgrass Sierran

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THE HEART OF ILLINOIS GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB ♦ P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614 ☎ (309) 637-1393

HOI GROUP MEETINGS

WED
MAY 16

Global Warming
Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Jennifer Johnson from the National Sierra Club will give a presentation on global warming. Jennifer works out of the Illinois Chapter office in Chicago and specializes in global warming issues. *All are welcome! Refreshments served after the meeting.*

WED
JUNE 20

Annual Potluck Picnic & White Elephant Auction
Detweiller Park – Moose Shelter, 6:30 p.m.



Join us for our annual summer potluck picnic, presentation of the **Conservationist of the Year Award**, and fundraising auction of unusual, useful, and tasty items donated by our members. Bring a main dish or other food to share, plus your own table service. Iced tea and lemonade will be provided.

This year's picnic will be held at the **Moose Shelter at the south end of Detweiller Park, Peoria**. Enter the park from Rt. 29 and follow Detweiller Drive toward the bluff. Turn left before ascending the bluff and follow the park road to the far south end of the park. Turn right at the Moose shelter sign. Or, from Knoxville Ave. (Rt. 40) take Detweiller Drive east, turn right at the park entrance sign, and then turn right twice immediately after descending the bluff. If you'd like, don't forget an item to donate to the auction. *And bring a friend! Everyone is welcome!*



The HOI Executive Committee is seeking nominations for the **Heart of Illinois Conservationist of the Year**. The nominee does not have to be a Sierra Club member. This individual's conservation efforts should have been pursued on a volunteer basis, not for pay. Your nomination should include a brief explanation of why you feel this person should be considered. The deadline for nominations is June 6. The winner will be announced at our annual potluck picnic on June 20. Send nominations to **Joyce Blumenshine, c/o HOI Sierra Club, 120 W. Arcadia Ave., Peoria, IL 61604; or call 688-0950.**

WILL INWOOD DAIRY WAKE-UP LAWMAKERS?

BY RALPH GINN

If you haven't read or heard about the mess Inwood Dairy has perpetrated on its neighbors and the Peoria County town of Elmwood the past two years, then you haven't been paying attention. Hardly a week has gone by recently, without a government agency or court order condemning Inwood. At the heart of Inwood's troubles is the manure from 1250 cows and an 8 acre waste lagoon. Add colossally bad management and faulty lagoon design and you have Inwood Dairy in trouble with the courts, IEPA (Illinois Environmental Protection Agency) and the Attorney General. You also have the occasional overflow, the one time dump of 2 million gallons of manure, dead fish and huge coliform bacteria counts downstream, and the frequent stench that sickens neighbors for miles around.

Although the Inwood scenario changes weekly, a consultant has been hired to oversee the 2 million gallon clean-up and Inwood is up for sale.

If you are really paying attention, you noticed that one government agency was not mentioned above. That would be the Illinois Department of Agriculture. The agency that is supposed to inspect and regulate these mega-animal operations. As in almost all of these problem CAFO's (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations) the Ag Department is extremely shy about discharging

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its duty. It's not easy maintaining a warm and cuddly relationship with Big Agriculture (Farm Bureau, Pork Producers, Smithfield, Cargill, et al.) and ask that profit gobbling construction standards be met.

So, what lesson can we take from the Inwood wreck? First, it is crystal clear that the Livestock Management Facilities Act that was upgraded from worthless to ineffective by the Illinois Legislature in 1999, is not working. The Act needs a serious shakeup. Let's start by giving jurisdiction for regulation and inspection of CAFO's to the IEPA. The Department of Agriculture has failed miserably to protect the public. At the core of CAFO problems is the open waste lagoon. Prohibit them. New technologies are available that eliminate most odors and the risk of spills. Also, operators should be required to post an emergency clean-up fund before construction begins, and penalties for violation of laws and regulations must be raised.

Will Inwood wake-up lawmakers? That depends on you and me. Its the same old solution... write, call, confront your legislators and governor.



Recycling in Illinois: How are we doing?

BY MEREDITH CURREN

Did you know that:

- The statewide recycling rate was 28% in 1998. This is up 4% from 1996.
- Illinois residents recycled 4.7 million tons of material in 1998, or 816 pounds per person.
- In 1998, there were 436 curbside recycling programs in 38 counties, serving 2.7 million households.
- In 1998, 67 municipalities and 3 counties required recycling in multi-family residences, serving at least 600,000 people.
- There are more than 200 places to drop off recyclables in Illinois.
- At least 45,000 businesses in Illinois are recycling.
- 1.5 million children in 3,000 schools across the state are recycling.
- 64 composting sites processed more than 300,000 tons of landscape wastes in 1998.
- More than 164,000 Illinois residents have brought household hazardous wastes to the 189 collections held by the Illinois EPA in 73 counties. 33,700 drums of hazardous material have been kept out of Illinois landfills.
- In 1996, 1,861,200 tons of paper, 2,763,200,000 aluminum cans, and 840,000,000 steel cans were recycled **BUT** 1,474,000 tons of paper, 1,554,000,000 aluminum cans, and 608,000,000 steel cans were still landfilled in Illinois.

In summary, recycling in Illinois annually saves enough energy to provide the energy needs of 400 000 households. Imagine what can be accomplished with the participation of more individuals, communities, and employers. So, please, continue the good work and support or initiate private, municipal, and workplace recycling programs.

This and more information on recycling in Illinois can be obtained from the Illinois Recycling Association at <http://www.ilrecyclingassn.org>.

Keeping an Eye on the Illinois



BY JOSEPH LASZLO

This spring, volunteers with the Heart of Illinois Sierra Club will begin a yearlong program of monitoring the Illinois River for chemical pollutants. Samples from the river will be analyzed using equipment supplied by the state Chapter. This data will be used to help convince the Illinois EPA to include the Illinois River in its list of rivers needing clean up plans (TMDL guidelines). Other groups have found this approach very effective in getting regulatory action to safeguard the Fox River.

Action Alert!

State Legislative Issues Need Your Calls & Letters

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

House Bill 1154: Make Illinois water polluters pay for cleaning up rivers, lakes, and streams! Ask your Legislators to support House Bill 1154, as amended. This bill will establish the Illinois Clean Water Fund with water pollution permit fees. Each year, the Illinois Environmental Protection agency issues approximately 800 permits to discharge industrial wastewater, treated sewage, and other forms of pollution into Illinois' rivers, lakes, and streams. Issuing these licenses to pollute uses taxpayer dollars that could be spent cleaning up pollution. Amazingly, there is currently no charge to polluters for the licenses. At least 39 other states charge a fee for water pollution permits. You pay for your driver's license, license plates, and campsites in state parks. Polluters should pay for water pollution permits. The fees are structured so that small polluters pay a modest fee while larger dischargers pay more. Funds collected for the permits will go towards developing restoration plans for polluted waters, may provide an incentive to reduce pollution, and to help municipal sewage plants comply with clean water standards.

House Bill 604: You can help protect water quality and respect local planning through the Facility Planning Area Process, House Bill 604. This bill will improve the process for reviewing applications to the state for the extension of sewer service into undeveloped areas. The review process will make sure high quality streams are not overwhelmed by wastewater discharges and will help achieve local land use goals, such as farmland protection or open space preservation. Currently the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency reviews a request to extend sewer service, they only check if the applicant has a big enough sewer treatment plant to handle the waste. House Bill 604 will improve the review by taking into consideration area waterways and what the sewage discharge will effect, along with consideration of local land use plans.


House Bill 670: Help support energy-responsible transportation for Illinois! House Bill 670 is "Build Illinois Transit." This bill will increase and expand public transit systems throughout the state. Well-planned public transit can cut down on pollution, reduce traffic congestion and sprawl, and make our communities better places to live. The facts on global warming point to taking action now to curb greenhouse gases. House Bill 670 will be an important step for Illinois in looking to a better and less polluting transportation future. Funds from "Build Illinois Transit" will aid in the purchase of buses and rail cars for expanded services statewide to help link communities. The bill will also provide start-up funds for new services.

Call today and write and short letters to your state Representative and Senator. Illinois needs these pro-environment efforts to pass!

Phone the Springfield Capitol Switchboard at 217-782-2000 and ask for your Representative or Senator's office. Write to them at ...State House, Springfield, IL 62706. Call your local public library or 688-0950 if you need to know who your State Representative and Senator are.


Frogs, Eagles, Prairie ... Local Environmental News

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE




If you like frogs, or even if you don't, please write and call the Illinois Department of Conservation to help save the habitat of the Chorus Frogs along the Illinois river area near Beardstown. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans to dump dredged material from the Illinois River on two sites known to have Chorus Frogs. Chorus Frogs are rare. They are the only known burrowing frog in America, and are just about one and a half inches long. They currently exist on the eastern side of the Illinois River in about four different counties, and in a few locations in Missouri and Arkansas. The tiny frogs have a high-pitched call, which gives them their name. While the Army Corps said the dredged sand will give them more places to burrow, research scientists say the dredge will be their death. Chemicals and other pollution in the river dredge and the destruction from the dumping on their habitat could kill the entire colonies of frogs.

PLEASE WRITE TO THE: Illinois Department of Conservation ATTN: Glen Kruse, 524 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62701-1787 or call 217-782-6302.



Prime eagle habitat and a beautiful view from Starved Rock, in Starved Rock State Park will be destroyed if plans for an island resort are completed. A private developer intends to build a hotel complex and the island you see as you gaze down from Starved Rock. Write to Brent Manning, Director, Illinois Department of Conservation, at the address above to state your concerns about this insult to the environment, the river, the eagles, and to Starved Rock State Park.



In spite of thousands of hours of volunteer time, over one hundred acres of prairie planted or restored, the Prairie Dawgs have been denied any funding for herbicide for their prairie restoration work at Jubilee College State Park. You may want to phone Jubilee College State Park site superintendent Bill Kapitko at 309-446-3758 to ask why as director of the park he cannot provide any support for all the work the volunteer prairie restoration crew is doing.

Expanded Horse/Vehicle Campground Planned at Jubilee College State Park

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

New facilities for horse campers and their vehicles are planned for Jubilee College State Park. A new campground, complete with concrete vehicle pads will be built at the northwest side of the park along Thousand Dollar Road, south of the Brimfield-Jubilee Road. Significant trail damage and erosion has already been done by horseback riders at the park, and expanding horse camping facilities will make the condition of trails worse unless money and effort is invested into rail maintenance. The old horse camp off of Brimfield-Jubilee Road will continue in use as a day camp for horse riders and their vehicles and horses. Please write your concerns for attending to trail conditions and preventing off-trail horseback riding at Jubilee College State Park to Brent Manning, Director, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, 524 S. Second Street, Springfield, IL 62701-1787 and send a copy to Bill Kapitko, Site Superintendent, Jubilee College State Park, 13921 W. Rt. 150, Brimfield IL 61517. Point out that trail erosion and upkeep problems must be addressed and adequately funded if the park is adding a new horse campground.



HOI Sierra Hikers enjoyed a cold but sunny outing to Jubilee College State Park on March 24. Pictured are Bruce Dien, Al Harkrader, Mary Harkrader, and Mary Bodell. An Eastern Blue Bird was spotted in the lower park. Photo: Joyce Blumenshine



Membership

Yes. I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

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