

Election 2006

Sierra Club Endorses Candidates in State and Federal Races

Sierra Club is a non-partisan organization. The Club's endorsement process is one where larger strategic considerations come into play. Our conservation efforts depend, in part, upon our ability to pass strong state and federal legislation to protect our natural resources and to stop bad legislation from passing. This requires bi-partisan authorship and support on critical environmental bills.

Two entities (levels) of the Sierra Club must approve all endorsements. The endorsement guidelines of the Sierra Club are clear on the preference that is to be given to good environmental incumbents and that preference for incumbents was developed for a very good reason. Our ability to achieve bi-partisan support for our agenda is strengthened by demonstrated support for members in any party who support our efforts.

In this issue of the Iowa Sierran state and federal candidates who have been endorsed by Sierra Club are listed. After consideration of voting records and questionnaires, Club leaders have selected candidates that we feel will protect the environment and have a reasonable chance of winning. Sierra Club's endorsed candidates have been successful 80% of the time in past elections. We wish these candidates success in their campaigns and trust that they will continue to dedicate themselves to protecting America's natural environment, for our families and for our future.

Sierra Club Endorses Congressman Jim Leach

Sierra Club recently endorsed Congressman Jim Leach for the House of Representatives from Iowa's 2nd District. Two of his most significant efforts were an original co-sponsorship of the National Forest Protection and Restoration Act (NFPRA) and the Clean Water Authority Restoration Act (CWARA) this past year. Both issues have been priorities for Sierra Club.

Leach has been the lead champion of the NFPRA that ceases the harmful Forest Service logging program and shifts subsidies for commercial logging into restoring damaged areas in our National Forests.

The CWARA would codify the original scope of federal protections that have been in place since the mid-1970s. This legislation is particularly important in the wake of recent Supreme Court decisions weakening federal protections. This bill is vital to protect wetlands and intermittent streams from pollution and development. This spring, Leach also led a successful effort in the House to oppose funding for the Environmental Protection Agency/Army Corps of Engineers policy directive on Clean Water Act jurisdiction, which has left many of our waters, especially wetlands and intermittent streams, at risk.

Congressman Leach opposed the Republican leadership by voting in the 109th Congress against destructive bills that would destroy the Endangered Species Act, open the Arctic Refuge to oil drilling, and remove environmental laws that maintain protections for National Forests. Last year, he opposed the EPA's proposed policy to allow dumping of barely treated sewage into our waters.

Leach is a Republican in the sense that he understands the importance - and the legacy -- of conservation. In Congress, Leach consistently votes against anti-environmental bills and often takes the lead in proposing positive amendments to otherwise harmful bills. Leach has an excellent voting record and League of Conservation Voters score. He is an environmental leader through his words and actions but also has the best pro-environmental record of the Iowa Congressional delegation.

Iowa Chapter Endorses Denise O'Brien for Secretary of Agriculture

The Iowa Chapter of Sierra Club endorsed Secretary of Agriculture candidate Denise O'Brien for the state's top agriculture position.

An organic farmer for 30 years, O'Brien said that she would support new family farms by creating a New Farmers Division that assists new farmers with business planning, marketing and revolving loan funds. She will also advocate for organic farming, which provides high immediate income while preserving resource productivity.

When asked how she would address excess sediment in Iowa's lakes, rivers and streams, O'Brien responded that she would address this problem mainly at the source, including promoting proper conservation techniques to farmers, providing additional incentives for farmers to do the "right thing," through cost-sharing at a high level for filter strips, grassed waterways and terracing. She said that for those farmers committed to conventional agriculture, "...we must do more to promote no-till farming, which greatly reduces soil erosion."

Regarding concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), O'Brien said she would like to see air and water quality standards that directly apply to CAFOs with a greater level of local input than the current system allows. She would like to set a statewide standard for CAFO siting, such as the current system, but grant local control to counties so that they can place further requirements in their jurisdiction. O'Brien believes the best way to address the factory farm issue is by supporting local control.

More endorsements on page 5, Iowa Sierran

Iowa Chapter Endorses Chet Culver for Governor

The Iowa Chapter of Sierra Club has endorsed Chet Culver in the Iowa race for Governor, based on review of his responses to our questionnaire and after the Chapter Executive Committee met with him in July.

Culver said that while spending summers growing up on the Mississippi River he learned the importance of our Iowa waterways—he has always believed we should protect Iowa's land, lakes, rivers and streams for future generations. He believes that protection of our waterways is "more than an environmental issue, it is an important economic development issue."

Culver supports the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) 2006 water quality standards. He also stated, "It is important for Iowa to deal with both point and non-point source water pollution. The issue is the same whether the source is chemicals and manure being applied to farmland or our municipal wastewater treatment plants."

When asked about the regulation of confinement livestock, he replied, "The siting of facilities should be done using an improved matrix with increased local input, especially on the issue of water quality, which should be given greater weight in the siting process. When it comes to regulation of existing facilities, I support statewide regulations for manure management plans, disposal of manure, construction, separation distances, and other similar issues. Statewide standards are necessary so that everyone is operating on the same playing field."

He continued, "Improving Iowa's air quality must be a priority. We should continue to research best practices and provide producers with information on current technologies available to reduce air emissions from livestock operations."

Regarding protection of farmland and natural areas from urban sprawl, Culver replied that he favors comprehensive land-use planning in Iowa.

When asked about funding for REAP and protection of remaining wild areas in Iowa, he stated that "We do need to work toward full funding of REAP and soil conservation programs." He also expressed interest in protection of wildlife and the "state's Wildlife Diversity (nongame) Program." "It is a critically important program that must be funded. Current funding is provided through direct donations to the program or through state tax forms in a voluntary contribution known as the 'Chickadee Checkoff.' With an appropriate and stable funding source, this program can assist us in maintaining the rich diversity of wildlife we enjoy in Iowa." He also expressed support for efforts to protect the Loess Hills region.

Regarding campaign finance reform, he believes we need greater transparency, with improved reporting, including additional resources for the Ethics Board for enforcement. He also favors contribution limits.

Annual Celebration and Awards Presentation

Sunday, October 15, 2006

Make plans now to join Iowa Sierrans for our Annual Celebration, Awards Presentation and silent auction on Sunday, October 15. This event will be held at Crown Point in Johnston, conveniently located north of Interstate 35/80.

Directions: Take the I-35/80 Johnston exit (#131) to Merle Hay Road. Go north about ½ mile on Merle Hay Road and then turn left (west) at Pioneer Parkway (a stoplight) for about 1/3 mile to the Crown Point drive.

Speaker and Special Guest

"Grizzly Dave" Readinger will share experiences of his Appalachian Trail adventure. A former state legislator, Dave began his Appalachian Trail adventure in March 2004 and completed the 2,174-mile hike in the summer of 2006. Dave's PowerPoint presentation will allow us to join him on his Georgia-to-Maine journey with memories of the scenery and people along the trail.

There are trails on the grounds around Crown Point and Saylorville Lake. Parks are nearby, including Jester Park—with some wonderful trails for a fall walk—and camping is also available at Saylorville Lake (Corps of Engineers) and at Jester Park (Polk County). Hotels are available in Johnston, Grimes and along Merle Hay Road in Des Moines.

Tickets are \$35.00 per person.

To donate items for the silent auction or for questions about the event, please contact Jane Clark at jrclark@radiks.net or 515-223-5047.

Tentative Schedule:

- 2:30 p.m. Social hour and silent auction
- 3 p.m. Food is served
- 4 p.m. Dave Readinger speaks
- 5 p.m. Awards presentations

RESERVATION

Annual Gathering and Awards Celebration
Crown Point in Johnston, October, 15, 2006

Deadline – October 6

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Number Attending ____ X \$35.00 = \$ _____

*Make checks payable to Sierra Club, Iowa Chapter

Mail check and reservation **before October 6** to:
Jane Clark, 9871 Lincoln Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50325
For questions, jrclark@radiks.net or 515-223-5047

Sierra Club Iowa Chapter
3839 Merle Hay Road, Suite 280
Des Moines, IA 50310

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From the Director: Updates & News

VOLUNTEER INTEREST UPDATES

The Chapter is in the process of updating its database of volunteer interest. We currently are working on projects related to air and water quality; rules for concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs); Loess Hills and prairie preservation; renewable energy, efficiency, conservation and corporate average fuel economy (CAFÉ) standards; fundraising and political endorsements. We will soon be looking at environmental legislation. As you can see, we have several projects occurring at once and we need strong committees to be better effective.

Please take the time to complete the Volunteer Interest Form found on page 5, Iowa Sierran. Once completed, please send it to the chapter office at 3839 Merle Hay Road, Suite 280, Des Moines, IA, 50310. You can also download the form at <http://iowa.sierraclub.org/VolunteerInterest-Form.pdf>.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to help us strengthen our volunteer base. If you have any questions, please contact Neila Seaman, director, at 515-277-8868.

CONSERVATION PROJECTS AND THE LOCAL SIERRA GROUPS

The Iowa Chapter embarked on strategic planning in August of 2006 and will be revisiting its goals for 2007. One of the Chapter's objectives is for each group in the state to complete at least one conservation project. We realize that groups are taking on projects across the state, but we don't know about them unless you tell us. We also realize that there are conservation projects occurring in areas of the state not represented by an organized group.

Please take the time at one of your meetings to discuss what conservation projects you have completed in 2006 or will complete yet this year. A project can be simple such as cleaning up a stream or river or more technical such as water monitoring. Other ideas include prairie seed planting, picking up and recycling trash along roadways or pulling garlic mustard in a local park. Then, report your successes back to the Chapter office at 3839 Merle Hay Road, Suite 280, Des Moines, Iowa, 50310 or by e-mailing your accomplishments to me at Neila.Seaman@sierraclub.org. I also want to hear about the projects being undertaken by those of you not affiliated with an officially recognized group.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR STATE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

State boards and commissions impact our environment with rulemaking and policy decisions they influence. The Chapter is interested in becoming involved in more of these boards and commissions and we need your help.

Volunteers are needed to attend the occasional board and commission meetings when they're scheduled outside of Des Moines. For example, the Natural Resources Commission has scheduled its September meeting in western Iowa and its October meeting in eastern Iowa. The Iowa Transportation Commission generally meets in Ames.

One of the Chapter's goals is to encourage Sierra Club members to become a part of state boards and commissions in order to encourage decisions that have positive consequences for the environment. The governor makes the appointments and the appointees serve staggered terms.

Below is information about the boards and commissions that affect the environment. Please contact me at the chapter office, by phone at 515-277-8868 or by e-mail at Neila.Seaman@sierraclub.org if you're interested in attending the

meetings on behalf of the chapter. If you're interested in being appointed to one of the following boards or commissions, application forms are available by contacting me.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION Department of Natural Resources

The Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) is a panel of nine citizens who provide policy oversight over Iowa's environmental protection efforts. EPC members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by vote of the Senate for four-year terms.

The commission meets monthly, generally in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Air Quality Bureau in Urbandale. However, in the past year, the commission met in Fairfield and in Rathbun.

Some issues considered by the EPC include rules for air quality and water quality standards, underground storage tanks, waste management and concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). The commission considers referrals to the Attorney General's office by the DNR for non-compliance.

For more information go to <http://www.iowadnr.com/epc/index.html>.

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION Department of Natural Resources

The Natural Resource Commission (NRC) consists of seven citizens who set policy, adopts administrative rules and hears appeals in contested cases related to fish, wildlife, conservation law enforcement, park and forestry programs. The commission also approves or disapproves the acquisition or disposal of state lands and waters relating to state parks, recreational facilities and wildlife programs. NRC members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate to staggered six-year terms.

The commission meets monthly, generally on the second Thursday of each month. The meetings are held throughout the state. A time is scheduled at each meeting for members of the public to address the commission about any topic related to natural resource management. The meeting agenda will be published about a week before the meeting. For further information about meetings, you may contact Karyn Stone at 515/281-8650.

September 14 – Loess Hills
October 12 – Mines of Spain, Dubuque
November 9 – Des Moines
December 14 – Des Moines

For more information go to <http://www.iowadnr.com/nrc/index.html>.

STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD Department of Natural Resources

The State Preserves Advisory includes seven members, six appointed by the governor plus the director of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Board advises the DNR on acquisition, dedication and management of state preserves.

September 8, 2006 -- Boone County
For more information, go to <http://www.iowadnr.com/spab/index.html>.

IOWA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION Department of Transportation Commission

The seven transportation commissioners set policy for the department and are appointed by the governor, with no more than four from one political party. Membership on the commission is gender-balanced. Commissioners are confirmed by the Iowa Senate and serve on staggered, four-year terms. Commission meetings are usually held monthly in Ames and are open to the public.

September 12 -- Ames
October 9/10 * -- Sioux City
November 14 -- Ames
December 12 -- Ames

*Tour/public input meeting

For more information, go to <http://www.dot.state.ia.us/about.htm>.

STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

The Division of Soil Conservation is administered in accordance with policies established by the State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC). Primary authorities of the State Soil Conservation Committee are to:

- Establish policy for the administration of Division of Soil Conservation programs
- Approve rules of the Division prior to adoption
- Recommend annually, to the Secretary of Agriculture, a budget for the Division
- Call upon agencies and education institutions of the state for reports, surveys, or studies necessary to carry out its functions
- Perform acts and hold public hearings as necessary for the execution of its functions
- Appoint commissioners to fill vacancies in soil and water conservation districts
- Provide a forum for the discussion of soil and water conservation issues and the development of policy and program initiatives
- Review district soil loss limits every five years

The SSCC as authorized in Iowa Code Section 161A.4 consists of nine voting members appointed by the Governor. Of these voting members, six are farmers geographically distributed across the state, and the remaining three represent the constituencies of cities, the mining industry, and tree farming. Ex officio, non-voting members of the committee include representatives of the Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa State University Cooperative Extension Service. Non-voting advisory members of the committee include representatives of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and Iowa County Engineers Association. For more information, go to <http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/sscommittee.htm>.

IOWA SIERRAN

Editor: Jane R. Clark Associate Editor: Jo Hudson

The Iowa Sierran is dedicated to informing members and other friends about environmental issues that affect Iowa. It is a forum for the expression of ideas on topics of environmental concern, as well as the voice of the Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club. Articles with a by-line represent the research and opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the Sierra Club.

We invite submissions of letters, articles, photographs and illustrations. Letters and articles must be complete, accurate and identified with your name, address and phone number(s). **Deadlines are February 5 for the Spring issue; May 5 for the Summer issue; August 5 for the Autumn issue; and November 5 for the Winter issue.** Preference will be given to articles 400-1,000 words in length that relate to Iowa. Longer articles will be considered. The editor reserves the right to edit for clarity, space and libel reasons. Copy should be typed or clearly handwritten, or copy may be submitted in text by e-mail. Other word processing formats may be acceptable--please call before sending. Articles sent by e-mail should be included in the body of the message, not sent as an attachment. If you must attach a file, use a Word document and send to iowa.chapter@sierraclub.org.

Photos may be submitted. Your name, address and phone number(s), as well as all significant information describing the photo(s) must be included. Photos will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Display advertising may be accepted. Please contact the editor or executive committee (see Directory of this newsletter) before submitting an ad. Ad rates are: \$450 for full page; \$250 for half-page; \$125 for quarter page (11 x 17 page size); or \$16 per column-inch for camera-ready copy. Receive a 10% discount for the same ad with an annual contract (4 times/year); payment in advance is required. Column width is 3.2 inches, gutter (column spacing) is 0.3 inch. Placement of any ad is contingent upon availability of space, and ads must meet Sierra Club guidelines.

Classified ads are five cents per character, including punctuation. Enclose payment with order. Personal checks are acceptable, payable to Sierra Club Iowa Chapter. The editor reserves the right to reject any ad deemed inappropriate. Send classified ad information to: Sierra Club, 3839 Merle Hay Road, Suite 280, Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

A subscription to the Iowa Sierran is included in the cost of Sierra Club membership. For non-members, a subscription is \$5 per year.

New Sierra Group Organizing in Prairie Lakes

Members interested in organizing a new Sierra Club Group in the prairie lakes region of northern Iowa held organizational meetings in May and June at the Spencer Library. Members living in Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto and Pocahontas counties were invited to attend the meeting. The newly forming group also hosted a picnic at the Kindlespire Little Sioux River Access in August for members in the eight-county area.

Some of the issues of interest to members attending the first meeting include water quality, watershed management, smart growth, hog factories and large livestock facilities, research on geothermal heating/cooling, ethanol and soy

diesel manufacturing plants, fuel efficiency for cars and conservation of public land.

The new Prairie Lakes Group currently is working on developing its bylaws and plans to present them to the general membership of the eight counties. The Group's timeline calls for having everything completed and approved so it can function as a viable Iowa Chapter Sierra Group by January 1, 2007.

For more information about becoming involved in organizing this new Sierra Group and participating in selecting its leaders, please contact Donna Buell at 712-336-2103 or donnab@buelloffice.com.

See events on Calendar page 7.

You're Invited

Cedar Falls/Waterloo and Surrounding Area

The Cedar Prairie Group of the Iowa Chapter of Sierra Club is reorganizing. Sierra Club members from Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Grundy, Chickasaw and Hardin Counties are invited to come and learn about new possibilities and opportunities to engage your community in environmental and conservation issues.

We are also seeking members interested in serving on the Group's Executive Committee. There are opportunities

for every type of skill and level of interest. Please contact Bruce Stiles at 319-235-9907 if you're interested in serving in a group leadership position.

When? Tuesday, September 12, 2006, 6 p.m.

Where? Cedar Falls Public Library, 524 Main St., Cedar Falls

For more information, contact Mark Kresowik at 319-621-7393 or Mark.Kresowik@sierraclub.org

From Our Members

Say Good-bye to LS Power

By Bruce Stiles, Chair, Cedar Prairie Group

LS Power is proposing construction of a traditional coal-fired electricity generator just east of Waterloo, Iowa, near the town of Dewar. Construction would begin in 2007. It is estimated that the plant could be completed in four years.

LS Power states that their proposed plant would be ten to fifteen per cent more energy efficient than the old coal-fired electricity generators that former President Clinton had wanted to close down, but that The Bush Administration has allowed to continue operating. This means that LS Power's proposed plant would certainly not be high tech and would not be much better than other coal-fired electricity generators already in operation. The proposed plant would not utilize the cleanest coal technology, including carbon sequestration and integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC). LS Power promises to meet government clean air standards but plan to do no better than required.

Many local government officials favor the proposed generator. Up to 1200 construction workers might be employed during the construction phase, providing many opportunities for local contractors. An estimated 100 full-time operation and maintenance workers would be employed once the plant was operational. Additionally, local government units, including local schools, would benefit from tax monies.

The local government officials are ignoring important environmental concerns. Burning coal releases large amounts of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas. The more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the more heat the earth holds onto. Once built the proposed LS Power Plant would pump carbon dioxide into the atmosphere for 40 years, adding to the earth's heat. For those 40 years, LS Power would also emit chemical pollution, including mercury, from its proposed 450-foot smokestack. LS Power promises to put only 100-200 pounds of mercury into the air each year, which would fall on local land and water. (This could be increased since LS Power has promised only to meet clean air standards and the Bush administration has been working hard to allow coal-fired electricity generators to put more mercury into the air than currently allowed.)

The railroad would bring in 120 cars of coal every other day for 40 years. Coal dust would blow into the air from the railcars and the big coal pile. The 120-car trains would probably block city streets and cause traffic to back up.

Sixty cars of coal burned daily would also produce lots of ash to blow about. Then LS Power would "help" our community by filling abandoned quarry operations with their ash. This is help that is not needed. One abandoned quarry now owned by Black Hawk County is used for recreation. Other old quarries are used for geological classes. Waterloo has a privately owned quarry that is used for scuba diving and raising trumpeter swans. If LS Power would fill such quarries with their waste, there is also a risk of polluting ground water.

Local needs for additional power are not the motivation for LS Power to build a plant in the Waterloo area. MidAmerican Energy, the company that already provides the Waterloo community with electricity, has said it will not buy and will not need to buy power from the proposed LS Power Plant.

Because local air can absorb the pollution of this proposed power plant without exceeding the Clean Air Act's allowable pollution levels, LS Power could build in the Waterloo area, pollute there, but sell the electricity far away for the next 40 years, selling power to areas whose air could not absorb the levels of pollution that this plant would produce.

This proposed plant is one of 140 similar traditional coal-fired power plants currently proposed or under construction across the United States. Each of these plants would be a factor in increasing the earth's chemical pollution and temperature. The earth's rising temperature would then cause a greater need for energy to make more electricity for keeping cool with air conditioners. Additionally, LS Power's way of burning coal would make people in local communities less healthy due to breathing the dirty air produced by their method.

LS Power is not proposing a new way of getting energy from coal. It is not intending to utilize the cleanest coal technology. It just wants to burn coal ten to fifteen percent more efficiently than old coal-fired power plants, then sell it wholesale somewhere else far away from Iowa for a big profit. If more electricity were needed in the Waterloo area, windmills could be used. MidAmerican is already generating 350 megawatts from wind in Iowa, with plans to build more windmills to meet Iowa electrical needs. We should let MidAmerican provide needed electricity and tell LS Power good-bye! To voice opposition and stop construction of this plant, contact the following:

Mayor of Waterloo: mayor@waterloo-ia.org 319-291-4302

Black Hawk County Supervisors: supervisors@co.black-hawk.ia.us 319-833-3003

Department of Natural Resources: jeff.vonk@dnr.state.ia.us 515-281-5918

Iowa Utilities Board: iubcustomer@iub.state.ia.us 877-565-4450

The High Price of Materialism, By Tim Kasser A Book Review, By Gordon LaBedz

The High Price of Materialism is a book about consumption. It is not a book about the environment; it is a scientific review of the research on the relationship between "wealth" and happiness. The question you are probably asking is why is there a review of this book in an environmental publication?

The answer is simple, if you trace back just about any environmental issue, you will, most likely, find that its root cause is either human or domestic animal overpopulation and/or Western over-consumption. After all, we Americans use about 20% of the world's resources. If the whole world lived like us, we would need about five more Planets. The Sierra Club has taken a strong stand on sustainable consumption. We presently have sustainable consumption committees in Groups and Chapters all over the United States. Our goal is to educate our members and the public on how their everyday buying habits impact the environment.

Tim Kasser has done an excellent job laying out the case, that, no matter how you measure happiness, wealth beyond the basics of food, clothing, housing and transportation, don't seem to make you happier or more fulfilled. This is important knowledge for those of us who are trying to pro-

tect the environment. It turns out that the old slogan, "I'd rather be shopping," comes from emptiness and lack of belonging, rather than the pursuit of any sort of inner peace. What Kasser and his colleagues did discover is that social and community involvement and family and friends are what make most people "happy."

This is very important because economists are always saying that the U.S. economy is "consumer-driven." This means that if consumers stop spending, our economy will go into a recession/depression. That's why Bush told us all to go shopping after the attack on the New York Twin Towers.

In poor third world countries, abject poverty is very harmful to the environment. Poor people have many children who will support them in their old age. Poor people will destroy forests for firewood, wetlands are filled for agriculture and there is no affordable technology for pollution prevention. In Western countries, however, an eco-

(Not) Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Depends on YOU!

By Phyllis Mains, Arctic Activist

On May 25, 2006, the House approved by a narrow margin (225-201) to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. While this was the strongest pro-Refuge showing in recent years it was little more than a stunt to give the impression Congress was actually doing something about high-energy costs.

Congress already insulted us by a proposal to give everyone \$100 to open the Arctic Refuge to drilling. How will Americans really feel to learn Congress has wasted precious time calling for provisions to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge that according to the Department of Energy, will save us only about a penny per gallon at the pump in 20 years! Are you willing to allow this priceless wilderness to be destroyed for a penny a gallon over 20 years? Oil leases on the North Slope are only \$50 an acre while taxpayers pay for all roads on public lands. Another sweet deal for **BIG OIL COMPANIES!**

Iowa Sierra Club members have many opportunities to preserve the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We can cut gas consumption by driving 55 mph and organizing more productive vehicle trips. We can make energy conservation a centerpiece of our lives. Reducing energy consumption would lessen the demand for oil and eliminate the excuse to drill in our last remaining wild places.

But we need to do more than conserve our own energy use. While oil companies are earning record high profits, the majority in Congress is working to give them even more profits by drilling in the Arctic Refuge instead of promoting new, renewable, sustainable energy sources. To become informed about Arctic drilling and related energy issues contact neila.seaman@sierraclub.org to sign up for the Iowa Topics discussion listserve.

The Sierra Club is a partner with the Alaska Coalition. To receive the latest developments on Arctic Refuge drilling proposals contact Lois Norrgard, Regional Organizer, Alaska Coalition at phone/fax: 952-881-7282 or e-mail lois@alaskacoalition.org.

To educate others about the controversy surrounding drilling in the Arctic Refuge you can borrow a DVD of "Oil on Ice" or "Being Caribou" from the Sierra Club office in Des Moines. Contact Neila Seaman, Director, Sierra Club, Iowa Chapter at 515-277-8868 or neila.seaman@sierraclub.org.

Become an Alaska Wilderness leader and join wilderness activists from around the country at the Alaska Wilderness Week, a 4-day training and advocacy conference held in Washington, DC. This event is hosted by leading conservation organizations including the Sierra Club. The next Alaska Wilderness Week is scheduled for Saturday, September 9 to Wednesday, September 13, 2006. To apply, complete the Alaska Wilderness Week application at: http://www.alaskawild.org/takeaction_wildernessweek.html. Space is limited so apply now.

Make those calls, write those letters, educate yourself and others and become involved. It is certain what will happen if you do nothing.

From Sierra Club's National Sustainable Consumption Committee

Conserving Gas

The price of gas has caused us all to rethink our needless driving. Combining trips is one of the most obvious ways to keep our fuel costs down, but besides moving closer to work and buying a more fuel efficient auto, there are a number of things you can do to save energy and impact global climate change in a positive way.

Here are a few things to think about:

~Lighten your load. Two hundred pounds of extra junk in your car can add as much as one mile per gallon in fuel consumption. Empty your trunk for the environment.

~Accelerate gently and advance through your gears as quickly as your gears allow to save fuel. Sudden stops and starts cost fuel.

~Put your luggage inside your vehicle. Luggage bins on top of your car cause wind drag and consume more fuel.

~Tire Pressure- Under inflated tires cut fuel efficiency by 2% per pound! The correct tire pressure is written on the side of your tires. If your tires have 27 psi and they are supposed to have 32 psi, you are wasting 10% of your fuel.

~Air filter. A dirty air filter can waste as much as 10% of your fuel. It is easy to change yourself.

~Drive slower. The faster your drive, the more fuel you waste.

~Avoid traffic jams. Driving too slow also wastes gas. Drive when others don't drive.

~Public transportation. Have you ever tried it? Maybe you could get rid of one of your cars?

~Short trips waste gas. Drive your bike or walk. It is good for you!

Fuel consumption in the U.S. will be a problem for many years because of our suburban lifestyle and our gas guzzling cars, but the times are changing. Inexpensive suburban houses are not seen as such a bargain any more. Time spent in traffic jams and the high cost of driving are now part of the decision on where to buy a house. In the meantime, these are simple steps you can try that will ease the pain.

conomic slow down means people buy fewer cars, houses and other resource-consuming articles. In a wealthy country, a booming economy hurts the environment. In a poor country a booming economy can help the environment. One great exception is China which wants to have our life style immediately.

The question tackled by this book is whether all the "wealth" of Western culture will bring more happiness. The answer apparently is no. There is now scientific research to combat the "shop until you drop" movement. Our slogan can be, "work less, spend less and spend more time with your family, friends and your community."

By Gordon LaBedz GLaBedzMD@aol.com
National Sustainable Consumption Committee

Sierra Club Steps Up as the Dirty Coal Rush Invades Iowa

New Jersey's LS Power recently announced plans to build a 750 MW pulverized coal-burning power northeast of downtown Waterloo, and thus brought home the reality of the coal rush to Iowa. The proposed construction of this merchant power plant, which plans to sell most of its power out of Iowa, throws us into a debate about the future of energy generation in the Midwest and across the country. More than 150 coal-fired power plants are proposed or under construction in the United States today.

We know what coal plants are like. Even while operating in full compliance with the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, the plant will emit particulates, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and more than 100 lbs of mercury a year into the air, not to mention groundwater contamination, increasing risk of asthma, autism, cancer, and other illnesses. Carbon dioxide emissions from this single plant, equivalent to 700,000 cars a year, will exacerbate global warming. In conjunction with the other 150+ plants, big coal interests are trying to ensure our dependency on their filthy product for years to come, regardless of the effects. Knowing that carbon regulation is coming into effect soon, coal companies are building these plants as fast as they can, a veritable rush. Big Coal knows that the cost of coal will increase and consumers will be stuck paying the bills. And it will be too late for us.

We have the technology to do better. Iowa has become a leader in wind, and with our abundant natural resources biomass is a real option. There are even far cleaner methods of burning coal (Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle) that make carbon sequestration possible. Perhaps most promising, we have sustainable building techniques and energy efficient technology to curb growth in demand

and the justification for these new plants. The American Institute of Architects and the U.S. Conference of Mayors have committed to reducing the carbon impact of all new and renovated building by 50% of the national average for that building type. It is time to create an energy system for the 21st century. John Holdren, a Harvard professor and prominent thinker on energy issues, was recently quoted in the New York Times: "If you want a different energy system in 2050, you really have to start changing it now." We have to stop the coal rush or we'll be dependent on dirty coal for the next 50 years, instead of the clean, reliable, and secure energy system we all want.

To that end the Sierra Club has stepped up. The Sierra Club's Midwest Clean Energy Campaign has supported the local organized opposition to the Waterloo plant by hiring a full-time organizer for six months. But that position is just the first step. If we want a new energy system we have to speak up. Current forces in the industry are pushing strongly for coal. One of the ways to overcome that pressure is through organized communities and states – the City of Waterloo, Iowa Utilities Board, Department of Natural Resources, and State Legislature can act to hinder or stop the coal rush in Iowa altogether – but that leadership won't happen until we, as consumers, demand it.

This issue is especially pressing for a community like East Waterloo, which has one of the highest poverty rates in the state. This predominantly African-American community already now faces skyrocketing health care costs with the rest of the country, and now increased risks of asthma, autism, and infant mortality due to the proposed plant. Waterloo needs the assistance of all of Iowa at this

crucial time. If the coal industry's plans continue, all of our efforts on global warming, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water quality will mean little. Pollution from more than 150 coal-fired power plants will see to that.

To help stop the coal rush and protect Eastern Iowa, contact Community Energy Solutions at cleanairwaterloo@gmail.com. You can also write directly to the Iowa Utilities Board, Department of Natural Resources, and your local elected officials about the future of the U.S. energy system. We must have a system that is clean, reliable, secure, and renewable. We can invest in efficiency, wind, and biomass. Or we can follow the coal industry blindly and entrench ourselves on a dirty fuel that has brought our climate to the brink of disaster for the next 50 years. You decide:

Department of Natural Resources: jeff.vonk@dnr.state.ia.us, 515-281-5918

Iowa Utilities Board: iubcustomer@iub.state.ia.us, 877-565-4450

State Legislature: <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/asp/Legislators/LegislatorInfo.aspx>

For information or to volunteer contact:

Mark Kresowik

Regional Conservation Organizer

Midwest Clean Energy Campaign

501 Sycamore St. Suite 625

Waterloo, IA 50703

Mark.kresowik@sierraclub.org

319-621-7393

<http://cleanairwaterloo.com>

COOL CITIES CAMPAIGN COMES TO IOWA

The Sierra Club's national campaign— *Cool Cities: Solving Global Warming One City at a Time* — was developed to provide Club members, volunteers and staff with concrete ways to work for positive, visionary solutions in their communities. Citizens can engage their mayors and get their cities to take real action to reduce energy waste and heat-trapping global warming pollution in their communities.

At a time when the federal government is failing to take action to solve global warming, Cool Cities offers an opportunity and a road map by which to work toward realizing our shared vision of a safe and clean energy future in the cities where we live.

"Solving global warming one city at a time" is more than just a slogan. Right now cities are where the action is and where real solutions are being put to work. One of the brightest lights of this exciting movement is the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which is the inspiration for the Sierra Club's Cool City campaign.

Initiated by Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels in February 2005, the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement has been signed by 274 mayors – including Des Moines Mayor Frank Cownie. These mayors have pledged to reduce global warming carbon dioxide pollution in their cities to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012 (the same reductions and target date called for under the Kyoto Protocol Global Warming Treaty). See event listed on page 7, Iowa Sierran.

Many of these Cool City leaders are moving forward with innovative energy solutions that cut our dependence on oil, benefit public health, and save taxpayer dollars. Most of these cities, however, do not yet have a real action plan to meet their reduction targets by 2012.

That's where you come in. The Cool Cities campaign is about getting mayors around the country to sign the US Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement and then put real policies in place that will cut heat-trapping greenhouse gases.

More information on the Mayors' agreement, including an updated list of the cities whose mayors have signed, is available online at <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/climate/>. The Sierra Club's Cool Cities Solutions Guide (available online at <http://www.coolcities.us>) also has a map listing these cities.

For more information about how your city can become involved in the Cool Cities campaign, call the Chapter office at 515-277-8868 or contact Neila Seaman, Director, at Neila.Seaman@sierraclub.org.

From *SIERRA CLUB COOL CITIES CAMPAIGN: Solving Global Warming One City at a Time, Activist Toolkit*, April 2006.

ENDORING THE U.S. MAYORS CLIMATE PROTECTION AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the U.S. Conference of Mayors has previously adopted strong policy resolutions calling for cities, communities and the federal government to take actions to reduce global warming pollution; and

WHEREAS, the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the international community's most respected assemblage of scientists, has found that climate disruption is a reality and that human activities are largely

responsible for increasing concentrations of global warming pollution; and

WHEREAS, recent, well-documented impacts of climate disruption include average global sea level increases of four to eight inches during the 20th century; a 40 percent decline in Arctic sea-ice thickness; and nine of the ten hottest years on record occurring in the past decade; and

WHEREAS, climate disruption of the magnitude now predicted by the scientific community will cause extremely costly disruption of human and natural systems throughout the world including: increased risk of floods or droughts; sea-level rises that interact with coastal storms to erode beaches, inundate land, and damage structures; more frequent and extreme heat waves; more frequent and greater concentrations of smog; and

WHEREAS, on February 16, 2005, the Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement to address climate disruption, went into effect in the 141 countries that have ratified it to date; 38 of those countries are now legally required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on average 5.2 percent below 1990 levels by 2012; and

WHEREAS, the United States of America, with less than five percent of the world's population, is responsible for producing approximately 25 percent of the world's global warming pollutants; and

WHEREAS, the Kyoto Protocol emissions reduction target for the U.S. would have been 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012; and

WHEREAS, many leading US companies that have adopted greenhouse gas reduction programs to demonstrate corporate social responsibility have also publicly expressed preference for the US to adopt precise and mandatory emissions targets and timetables as a means by which to remain competitive in the international marketplace, to mitigate financial risk and to promote sound investment decisions; and

WHEREAS, state and local governments throughout the United States are adopting emission reduction targets and programs and that this leadership is bipartisan, coming from Republican and Democratic governors and mayors alike; and

WHEREAS, many cities throughout the nation, both large and small, are reducing global warming pollutants through programs that provide economic and quality of life benefits such as reduced energy bills, green space preservation, air quality improvements, reduced traffic congestion, improved transportation choices, and economic development and job creation through energy conservation and new energy technologies; and

WHEREAS, mayors from around the nation have signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement which, as amended at the 73rd Annual U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting, reads:

The U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement

A. We urge the federal government and state governments to enact policies and programs to meet or beat the target of reducing global warming pollution levels to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012, including efforts to: reduce the United States' dependence on fossil fuels and accelerate the development of clean, economical energy resources and

fuel-efficient technologies such as conservation, methane recovery for energy generation, waste to energy, wind and solar energy, fuel cells, efficient motor vehicles, and bio-fuels;

B. We urge the U.S. Congress to pass bipartisan greenhouse gas reduction legislation that includes 1) clear timetables and emissions limits and 2) a flexible, market-based system of tradable allowances among emitting industries; and

C. We will strive to meet or exceed Kyoto Protocol targets for reducing global warming pollution by taking actions in our own operations and communities such as:

1. Inventory global warming emissions in City operations and in the community, set reduction targets and create an action plan.

2. Adopt and enforce land-use policies that reduce sprawl, preserve open space, and create compact, walkable urban communities;

3. Promote transportation options such as bicycle trails, commute trip reduction programs, incentives for car pooling and public transit;

4. Increase the use of clean, alternative energy by, for example, investing in "green tags", advocating for the development of renewable energy resources, recovering landfill methane for energy production, and supporting the use of waste to energy technology;

5. Make energy efficiency a priority through building code improvements, retrofitting city facilities with energy efficient lighting and urging employees to conserve energy and save money;

6. Purchase only Energy Star equipment and appliances for City use;

7. Practice and promote sustainable building practices using the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED program or a similar system;

8. Increase the average fuel efficiency of municipal fleet vehicles; reduce the number of vehicles; launch an employee education program including anti-idling messages; convert diesel vehicles to bio-diesel;

9. Evaluate opportunities to increase pump efficiency in water and wastewater systems; recover wastewater treatment methane for energy production;

10. Increase recycling rates in City operations and in the community;

11. Maintain healthy urban forests; promote tree planting to increase shading and to absorb CO₂; and

12. Help educate the public, schools, other jurisdictions, professional associations, business and industry about reducing global warming pollution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that The U.S. Conference of Mayors endorses the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement as amended by the 73rd annual U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting and urges mayors from around the nation to join this effort.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The U.S. Conference of Mayors will work in conjunction with ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability and other appropriate organizations to track progress and implementation of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement as amended by the 73rd annual U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting.

Sierra Endorsements

Cont. from page 1, Iowa Sierran

Regarding genetically modified organisms, she said she would "...fight for fairness to organic operations that are endangered by nearby GMO crops and for consumer labeling so that consumers can be informed about what they are eating."

O'Brien wants to see legislation enacted that requires government institutions, such as schools, to purchase a certain amount of their food locally. She would also continue to push and to expand the Buy Fresh Buy Local advertising campaign.

Iowa House and Senate Endorsements

The Iowa Chapter may endorse candidates who are running for the state legislature. The Chapter's Political Committee assembles information on candidates through review of legislative records, questionnaires, past Sierra Club contact and other information that might be available. Below is a list of candidates who are running for seats in Iowa's House of Representatives and in the Senate who have been endorsed by the Iowa Chapter.

Iowa House of Representatives—District and Name

1 Wesley Whitead	45 Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
2 Roger Wendt	46 Lisa Heddens
7 Marcy Frevert	48 Donovan Olson
14 Mark Kuhn	61 Jo Oldson
19 Bob Kressig	62 Bruce Hunter
21 Don Shultz	63 Janet Petersen
22 Deborah Berry	68 Rick Olson
25 Thomas Schueller	74 Mark Davitt
26 Polly Bukta	77 Mary Masher
27 Pam Jochum	78 Vicki Lensing
28 Pat Murphy	79 Clara Oleson
29 Ro Foege	86 Cindy Winckler
30 Dave Jacoby	90 John Whitaker
33 Dick Taylor	93 Mary Gaskill
34 Todd Taylor	94 Kurt Swaim
43 Mark Smith	98 Sally Vitamvas

Senate - District and Name

1 Steve Warnstadt
7 Amanda Ragan
11 Bill Dotzler
15 Robert Dvorsky
19 Robert Hogg
23 Herman Quirnbach
25 Daryl Beall
33 Jack Hatch
39 Joe Bolcom
43 Joe Seng

Call for Nominations to Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Iowa Chapter of Sierra Club is looking for members to accept nomination for election to the ExCom of 2007. The Executive Committee is made up of eleven members and is elected by the chapter membership in December. Members elected begin their term at the first meeting in January and serve a three-year term. The ExCom meets about six times a year for a half-day at locations throughout the state. Offices of chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, and committee chairs are selected from the ExCom. Committee work such as political activity and personnel help to carry out the functions of the ExCom and the chapter. If you are interested in helping make decisions about the priorities, activities and political endorsements of the Sierra Club in Iowa, and you have the time, please nominate yourself. Candidate statements will be in the December newsletter on the ballot and should consist of a statement of 100-150 words or less. Contact Jane Clark, editor, at jrclark@radiks.net or mail statements to 9871 Lincoln Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50325.

Senate Votes to Authorize Upper Mississippi Locks and Ecosystem Restoration

By Mark Beorkrem

Finally, after a five year battle over provisions for reforming the Corps of Engineers had held up the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), which authorizes Corps projects and changes to their programs, the Senate in mid-July voted out the WRDA, sending it to a conference committee to work out differences with a House bill passed in 2005.

The bill, over Sierra Club objections, includes authorization for \$2.1 Billion new 1200 foot lock construction program for locks 20-25 located just below Keokuk, Iowa and for the two lowest locks on the Illinois River at Peoria and La Grange. The Sierra Club has been engaged fighting these lock expansions since the early 90's, with members attending training sessions, writing and calling Congress, and contributing Letters to local papers and calling talk show hosts. Members from the five upper river states as well as across the country helped to try and block the lock program during the 12-year battle. Through it all, Senators Grassley and Harkin, steadfastly supported the lock work, saying Iowa's farmers need modern transportation infrastructure to support their grain exports. This despite a Sierra Club report produced in 2000 by Mark Beorkrem (Eagle View Group) and Dean Rebuffoni (North Star Chapter) showing that the Corps and the federal government had already upgraded the 70 year old locks with a major rehabilitation program that had cost over \$1 Billion since its inception in 1986. The fact is, the lock program is major pork barrel politics—providing ten to fifteen years of construction work primarily in the Illinois and Missouri reaches of the river. And the Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Corngrowers, and Iowa Soybean Association all lobbied heavily for the program.

The bone for environmentalists, and it may be just that, is a preliminary 15 year authorization for \$1.85 Billion for river ecosystem restoration. The Club fought hard for this authorization, seeking a permanent authorization for the program, but the Administration (Bush) was unwilling to accept a proposal for that kind of program at this

time. Primarily the program, if funded, would provide for backwater and side channel restorations, dredging of silted in areas, island construction, fish bypasses at some dams, and continuation of the pool drawdown program that has provided somewhat successful at restoring weedy habitat in some pools.

In addition, if it survives the conference committee (controlled by hostile Republican forces), there are several Corps reform provisions in the Senate bill. The Corps would have to revise its mitigation practices, including mitigation work up front in projects it builds and would have to provide similar mitigation levels to that it requires of private projects where habitat is destroyed or damaged. In addition, the Corps would undertake a revision of its Principles and Guidelines, which is the instruction book all Corps planners work from, to better account for environmental principles in the workbook, and update it accounting practices, which in the past have allowed really bad projects to slip through with shady accounting of costs and benefits. It won't stop cheating, but will make it harder to do. The legislation also requires the establishment of an Independent Review panel for major or controversial projects.

So, some major wins, and potentially a major loss on the lock expansion. However the stage is set now for an annual battle over who gets the money—lock expansion or ecosystem restoration. In the past, locks have won out, but this time, the states asked for equal monetary treatment of appropriations for lock work and ecosystem restoration. The Club and our allies will have to ramp up to engage over this fiscal battle in the years to come and continue to fight the wasteful and unjustified new lock construction.

Mark Beorkrem

217-526-4480

mbeorkrem@hotmail.com

Mississippi River Protection Project

Sierra Club, Midwest Region

Sierra National Rivers Committee

Sierra Corps Reform Task Force



SIERRA
CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club Volunteer Interest Form

Grassroots action made the Sierra Club what it is today — the premier national organization working for, and winning, environmental reforms in our communities, our states, our nation and our world. Let us know how you would like to be involved. Please fill out the form below and return it to *Membership, Iowa Chapter Sierra Club, 3839 Merle Hay Road, Suite 280, Des Moines, IA, 50310*, or fax to *515-251-4811*.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Date: _____

Phone: () _____ (h) () _____ (w)

Fax: () _____ Other: () _____

Membership # (if known): _____

Occupation: _____

I want to contribute financially

I'd like to spend _____ hours/month volunteering

Conservation Issues

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Lands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy/Global Warming | <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Legislation | <input type="checkbox"/> Road Related Issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Sprawl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loess Hills | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mississippi River Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nuclear Waste | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) | |

Skills/Knowledge/Abilities

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing/Editing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Web Design/Maintenance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Event Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Literacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research/Fact Finding | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Services | |
| Please specify _____ | |

Volunteer Activities

- Attend community or governmental meetings
- Make comments at public meetings
- Write letters to decision makers and newspapers
- Make phone calls
- Legal or accounting services
- Serve on a committee
- Work at a Sierra Club booth at fairs and events
- Water quality monitoring
- Habitat projects
- Host a Sierra Club event in your neighborhood
- Participate in activist nights for volunteers
- Assist with mailings
- Other _____

Committee Interest

- Agriculture/Food Safety
- CAFOs
- Conservation
- Energy/Global Warming
- Fundraising
- Legislative
- Membership
- Newsletter
- Outings
- Political
- Publicity
- Sprawl/Transportation
- Website
- Wilderness/Wildlands

Outings Interest

- Backpacking
- Camping
- Canoeing/
- Cross-Country Skiing
- Hiking
- Biking
- Field Trips
- Birding
- Geology
- Plants
- Wildlife
- Other _____

Please send me information about how to subscribe to the Iowa Sierra Club's discussion listserv, called Iowa Topics, an e-mail list of action alerts, updates on environmental issues and announcements. E-mail your request to iowa.chapter@sierraclub.org.

Your Voice is Needed to Protect America's Arctic!

"While the battle over drilling the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge raged in Congress, the Bush Administration leased vast tracts of land to the west and offshore waters to the highest bidder."

... Joel K. Bourne, Jr., writing for the May 2006 issue of National Geographic magazine in the cover story, "Selling Alaska's Frontier"

In September 2006, the Bush Administration could auction off the first oil and gas leases to oil companies in the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area of the Western Arctic.

Ignoring vocal opposition from Alaska Natives, scientists, and sportsmen, the Bush administration recently opened for leasing 100 percent of the internationally significant Teshekpuk Lake Special Area in the Northeast Planning Area of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR). This decision eliminates long-established wildlife and environmental protections first put in place by Reagan Administration Interior Secretary James Watt.

The National Petroleum Reserve is the giant, 23 million-acre area (equal to nearly one quarter of the state of California!) in Alaska's western arctic (west of Prudhoe Bay and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge) that was set aside in the 1920s by President Warren Harding as an emergency source of oil for the Navy. Later, this, the nation's largest chunk of public land, was transferred to the Bureau of Land Management.

The tremendous wildlife and wilderness resources of its "Special Areas" are second to none, not even the more-publicized Arctic Refuge.

Besides being one of the most important and sensitive arctic wetland complexes in the Northern Hemisphere, the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area is home to the 45,000-head Teshekpuk Lake Caribou Herd, 60,000 molting geese a year, and the entire breeding population of Steller's eiders. Hundreds of species of birds migrate from six different continents in order to spend part of the year in Teshekpuk Lake.

In 1977, Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus established the fragile wetlands surrounding Teshekpuk Lake as the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area. This designation meant that the wildlife, subsistence and cultural values must receive maximum protection under any future development scenario. Until recently, it was enough to protect this pristine place.

The Bush administration has made clear its intention to turn the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area into a giant network of drilling platforms, gravel roads, airstrips and pipelines. Further, thanks to the 2005 Energy Policy Act, oil companies can be assured they will be heftily subsidized by taxpayer dollars to drill in places like the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area.

In response to a request for comments on whether to weaken the Teshekpuk Lake area protections, more than 215,000 citizens spoke out in opposition to opening more of the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area to oil leasing. The mayor of the North Slope Borough – the largest municipal government entity on Alaska's North Slope – spoke openly about the threat to Alaska Na-

tive communities' subsistence resources and cultural values – which are protected under the 1976 Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act. National sportsmen's groups, ornithologists and even members of Congress have voiced opposition to opening this part of Teshekpuk Lake.

Yet the Department of Interior dismissed these diverse voices and opened 100 percent of the area to oil and gas leasing.

The Bush Administration still has a chance to cancel its plans to offer the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area for oil leasing.

Over 95% of Alaska's North Slope is already open for oil and gas exploration and development. With what little undisturbed territory is left, it is the federal government's duty to honor the concerns of its citizens and past leaders by keeping this area left untouched.

The first lease sale in the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area is scheduled to occur on September 27, 2006. Please take a minute today to send a letter to the Department of the Interior, asking that the lease sale be cancelled. You can use the following addresses to send an e-mail.

<http://www.savetlake.org/sendalletter>

or Sierra Club's webpage: www.sierraclub.org/arctic and click on the 'bird' link there

or <http://www.savetlake.org/?r=6> (Sierra Club gets credit for directing our activists to this website.)

For more information on what you can do to protect the Arctic, contact: betsy@sierraclubalaska.org or call 907-276-4044.

Sierra Club Statement on the Senate Offshore Drilling Vote

Carl Pope, Sierra Club Executive Director
August 1, 2006

"The US Senate voted today (August 1) to open eight million acres off the shores of Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi and Alabama to oil and gas drilling – a move that will only add to the billions in profits already being made by Big Oil, do nothing to lower gas prices for American families or energy costs for American businesses, and will keep our nation dangerously dependent on oil.

"There's no denying that America faces an urgent energy challenge. We can continue the current, expensive and unsustainable energy practices and policies that have left us addicted to oil. Or we can make the changes and take the actions that will put us on the path to a smarter, cheaper, and cleaner energy future.

"Instead of committing to destructive drilling off our beaches, Congress could be adopting smart energy solutions that will help wean Americans off oil and save money at the pump. Instead of increasing oil drilling, Congress could be raising the fuel economy of our cars, encouraging the use of renewable energy like wind and solar power, and adopting other, existing energy-saving technologies that cut pollution, curb global warming and create good jobs.

"For example, if our cars, trucks and SUVs together averaged 40 miles per gallon -- something that is achievable with technology gathering dust on the shelves -- we would save as much oil as the U.S. currently imports from the Persian Gulf, with another million barrels to spare. And the average driver would save nearly \$600 a year at the pump. Americans deserve a better deal from Congress that allows them to keep more of their hard-earned money. But Senate Majority Leader Frist refused to allow a vote on a bipartisan amendment by Senators Lugar (R-IN) and Obama (D-IL) that would have raised fuel economy of cars and trucks. Today's vote illustrates the Congress' failure to envision an energy future for us that's not dictated by Big Oil.

"Drilling offshore in previously protected areas is not what will bring down -- and keep down -- energy prices. There is four times more natural gas available in areas already open to drilling than in waters protected by the moratorium -- and industry is only using a fraction of what they already have access to. They should use what they have first, before going after the last protected places.

"We know there is no single magic solution to our energy problems. But if we want to leave our children and grandchildren a healthy planet, we must decrease our dependence on polluting, global-warming causing petroleum and other finite fossil fuels. We know our nation can do it - our history shows that there are few challenges we have not overcome with American ingenuity. We understand that we all have a role to play. Now we just need the political will and courage - something that today's vote proves is in short supply these days in Washington, D.C..

"Senate passage does not make offshore drilling legislation a done deal, and conference negotiations with the more expansive House version will prove difficult. Sierra Club will be fighting every step of the way to encourage Congress to embrace smart energy solutions, not just a drilling agenda."

*Final vote in the Senate was 71-25

For information about this Sierra Club news release, contact: Annie Strickler, (415) 977-5619.

EPA Report Shows Automakers Stuck in Reverse on Fuel Economy

Statement of Dan Becker, Director, Sierra Club Global Warming Program
July 17, 2006

"Today's Fuel Economy Trend" report from the EPA shows both why America is addicted to oil and why the Big 3 are in such deep financial trouble. The best news the report could muster is that despite our vehicles being "the fastest and heaviest since 1975," the automakers somehow managed to keep them from the slipping below the paltry average of 21 miles per gallon--the same as last year.*

Though their ingenuity may have allowed the automakers to remain in neutral on fuel economy compared to last year, they have nevertheless been steadily going in reverse on fuel economy for the past two decades. The automakers can claim the dubious distinction of turning out a fleet this year that is less efficient than the one they sold in 1987-88.

"Indeed, perhaps the worst news in the report is that the Japanese automakers--the industry leaders on fuel economy--have seen significant decreases in the efficiency of their fleets over the past twenty years. Toyota has gone from approximately 26 miles per gallon in 1987 to around 24 miles per gallon today; Honda saw an even larger decrease--going from an average of around 28 miles per gallon in 1987 to 24 today.

Troubled Ford can be somewhat heartened that DaimlerChrysler has usurped its position as the manufacturer of the least fuel efficient fleet of the Big 6. The report documents that rather than devoting the last 25 years to using their significant resources and technological know-how to improving fuel efficiency, the automakers have instead chosen to add 1,000 pounds of weight and double the horsepower of the average vehicle.

"This report makes it crystal clear that the automakers, if left to their own devices, will not use existing technologies to improve the fuel economy of the vehicles American families depend on each and every day. Raising fuel economy (CAFE) standards is the biggest single step we can take toward saving consumers money at the pump, curbing global warming, and reducing our dangerous dependence on oil. Using existing technology, our vehicles could average 40 miles per gallon within ten year--a move that would save us more oil than we currently import from the Persian Gulf or could ever get from the Arctic Refuge, combined.

This report underscores that it is essential for President Bush and Congress take meaningful action to significantly raise CAFE standards as soon as possible.

*The numbers in the report refer to the official CAFE numbers, which differ from the numbers reported on the EPA window stickers found on new vehicles.

The EPA report can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/fetrends.htm>

For information about this news release from Sierra Club, contact: Josh Dorner, 202.675.2384 (w)

IF YOU ARE MOVING,
please send your old and new addresses to:
Sierra Club Member Services, P.O. BOX 52968,
Boulder, CO 80322-2968
Include the mailing label from Sierra Magazine.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(See inserts for calendars of events for Central Iowa Group and Leopold Group.)

**Eagle View Group
(Quad-Cities Area)**

The Eagle View Group meetings are held at the **Bettendorf Public Library** the 3rd Monday of the month except June, July and August. Our EXCOM meets the 2nd Monday of EVERY month at the Butterworth Center in Moline, Illinois. All of our meetings begin at 7 p.m. and the public is welcome to attend. **For more information about meetings, contact Jerry Neff at gmn14r@aol.com or 563-332-5373.**

Eagle View Meetings

• **September 18**—PowerPoint presentation by Marilyn Andress of US Fish and Wildlife Service. The topic is "History of Illinois Prairies".

• **October 16**—PowerPoint presentation, "An American Icon: The Zion / Mojave Wilderness", by Clayton Daughenbaugh, Field Organizer for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, and a member of Sierra Club's Wildlands Committee. The program will address land issues just west of Zion National Park and the beautiful Zion-Mojave wilderness.

• **November 20**—Beth Carvey Stewart, Museum Director at the Blackhawk Historic Site has a slide show on the Civilian Conservation Corps and the work they did building infrastructure in our State and National parks throughout the country during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

• **December 18**—Our annual Holiday Social Event where members bring their favorite slides and snacks. This is an informal get together and lots of fun—held at the Bettendorf Public Library, 7 p.m.

• **January 15, 2007**—Professor Tim Kasser, of Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois will discuss "Simplicity Living" and how having less is really more.

Eagle View Outings

• **October 21-22**—"Are You Living It Series", Iowa City, IA Service Beginner-1 309-912-8110

Are You Living It? Come learn how a Community Sustainable Farm works and visit the Iowa City Co-op. On Saturday, we will meet Susan Jutz, learn about Community Supported Agriculture while performing some cleanup duties. Spend the night camping on the Jutz farm. Sunday we will tour the Iowa City Co-op, learning how the whole business runs, then have lunch. Please bring food and camping gear. Please call for reservations, time and meeting place. Contact Holly Johnson, hollajean@yahoo.com or cell 309-912-8110.

• **November 18**—Black Hawk Park, Rock Island, IL
We need helping hands to pick up trash at the Black Hawk Park Historical Sight. View the Park's foliage and the Rock River, in its splendor, as we walk the trails on the south side removing trash ending at the museum for a tour of the natural history of the area. A cash donation is required at the museum. Time 10 a.m. until 12 noon. Please wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, jackets, hiking boots and work gloves. Trash bags provided. Please contact Holly Johnson, hollajean@yahoo.com or cell 309-912-8110 for meeting place.

**Northwest Iowa Group
(Woodbury and Surrounding
Counties)**

All events except the Cider Fest are referenced to Karen Juhl at 712-276-6965 or email at ajxot@longlines.com

• **September 21—7 p.m.**, Monona County Arboretum, 318 E. Iowa Ave., Onawa: Loess Hills Alliance Stewardship report of ongoing efforts to "Love the Loess Hills".

• **September 23**—Autumnal Equinox Cider Fest begins at 9 a.m. at Country Homestead B&B, 2213 Larpenteur Rd, Turin, IA. (People may come any time in the morning.) The day will begin with processing apples for cider and

apple butter, horseradish root for sauce, and whole grains for flour. It will conclude with a potluck lunch. Grass-fed beef burgers, condiments and drink will be provided. Participants are asked to bring a side dish or dessert. David Zahrt needs an RSVP by September 4 at 712-353-6772 or ch.bnb@longlines.com

• **October 19—7 p.m.**, Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. Local political candidates are invited to present their campaigns.

• **November 18—6 p.m.**, Annual Chili Feed & Auction at Morningside Presbyterian Church, 4327 Morningside Avenue in Sioux City. Variety of chilies and soups, snacks and beverages provided. Participants need to bring a hearty appetite, snacks or dessert, desire to have fun and something to sell. Homemade items sell best and are the most fun.

• **December 9—5:30 p.m.**, Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. "Singing Through the Trees". We will sing Christmas carols along the trail to the outdoor Amphitheater where a fire will keep us toasty warm. Dress for outdoors and bring snacks to share; beverages provided. Enjoy the beauty and serenity of a winter evening under the stars.

**Prairie Lakes Group—New!
(Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson,
Emmet, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo
Alto and Pocahontas Counties)**

Contact Donna at (712) 336-2103 or prairielakessierra@hotmail.com for more details about these events.

• **September 23**—Field Trip to Autumnal Equinox Cider Fest at Country Homestead B&B in the Loess Hills. Sponsored by the NW Iowa Group of the Sierra Club. Drive down the evening before to enjoy the full day.

• **October 28**—Prairie Seed Gathering, Dickinson County Nature Center, Okoboji.

• **November 13, 7:00 p.m.**—Prairie Lakes Group Meeting with Presentation, Spencer Public Library

• **December**—No Meeting

• **January 20, 11:00 a.m.**—Lobbying for Environmental Issues, Spencer Public Library. Potluck lunch.

**Cedar-Wapsi Group
(Cedar Rapids Area)**

• **Saturday, October 21, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**—Outdoor Gear Silent Auction and Chili Luncheon: Lunch: Adults \$6, Children \$3.50. The Cedar-Wapsi Group of the Sierra Club and Indian Creek Nature Center invite you to seek great bargains on a collection of used outdoor gear while you enjoy an incredible lunch of homemade gourmet chili. Items will go to the highest bidders at 1 p.m. (bidding closes at 12:30 p.m.). Join the fun, eat well, and go home with your new buys! Proceeds will go to support the two host organizations. Donations of gear are welcomed. Call 362-0664 or e-mail k.syrah@mchsi.com for details.

<http://iowa.sierraclub.org/cwg/>
<http://www.indiancreeknaturecenter.org/>

**White Pine Group
(Dubuque Area)**

• **Saturday, October 28**—Annual Turkey Dinner, First Congregational Church, Dubuque. Call Jane Worm at 563-582-2583 for details.

Endangered Species Workshop

A workshop on wildlife and the Endangered Species Act will be given at the downtown Des Moines Public Library, 1000 Grand Avenue, Saturday, October 21 at 10 a.m. Contact Debbie at debbieneu@earthlink.net or call the office at 277-8868 for details.

ALSO OF INTEREST

The following events are not sponsored by the Sierra Club but are listed because they might be of interest to members. The conduct of these events is the sole responsibility of the other organizations sponsoring them.

**Reenergize America Town Hall Meeting
Thursday, September 7, 7 p.m.
Des Moines**

Mayor Frank Cownie of Des Moines will host a town hall meeting at Plymouth Congregational Church, Waveland Hall, 41st and Ingersoll Avenue, on Thursday, September 7th at 7 p.m.. Featured speakers to include Vice Admiral Dennis McGinn, USN (Ret.), Bishop Alan Scarfe, Episcopal Diocese of Iowa, Norm Olson, Biomass Energy Conversion Facility, Iowa Energy Center, and Dale Bryk, Natural Resources Defense Council. It's time to address the challenges of oil dependency and global warming with solutions that begin right here in Iowa. It's time to Re-energize America.

**National Trails Symposium
October 19-22
Quad Cities**

The Quad Cities are hosting the 18th National Trails Symposium in 2006. The symposium will take place October 19-22 providing an opportunity for greenways and trail advocates, managers, planners, users, and outdoor product providers, as well as conservationists, private landowners, and tourism and business interests to come together to communicate and participate in an educational conference. It addresses both non-motorized and motorized trails issues. Featured will be educational sessions, workshops, mobile workshops, events, field trips, exhibits, recreational opportunities and more.

This symposium is held every other year and is sponsored by the American Trails organization, which is a national, nonprofit organization working on behalf of all trail interests. Outings will showcase many of the best trails and natural lands in the region. The design of the trails is a wonderful example of how trails and greenways provide economic development.

The theme chosen for the 2006 event is *Trails for America: Every Where, Every Way, Every Day.*

For more information on the National Trails Symposium, visit www.americantrails.org. Contact: Joe Taylor—Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau, 800-747-7800, Ext. 116— Email: jtaylor@visitquadcities.com



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EPA Proposes Revised CAFO Rule

by Neila Seaman and Wally Taylor

In the United States, approximately 18,800 concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) contribute up to 60 percent of all manure generated by operations that confine animals. Poorly managed CAFO operations can threaten water quality and public health by releasing pollutants into the environment through spills, overflows or runoff.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to revise the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting requirements and Effluent Limitations Guidelines for CAFOs in response to an opinion issued by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in *Waterkeeper Alliance et al. v. EPA*.^{*} According to EPA documents, this proposal would revise several aspects of EPA's current regulations governing discharges from CAFOs. EPA's proposed rule would:

- Require only CAFOs that discharge or propose to discharge to apply for a permit. However, CAFOs that land apply manure, litter or processed wastewater would not need NPDES permits if the only discharge from those facilities is agricultural stormwater.

- Require greater public participation in the issuance of an NPDES permit by requiring CAFOs seeking coverage under a permit to submit a facility-specific nutrient management plan (NMP) with their permit application or notice of intent. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) would be required to review the plan and allow the public meaningful review and comment on it. The DNR would also be required to incorporate terms of the NMP into the permits as enforceable elements. The proposed rule lays out a process for including these facility-specific provisions in general permits. The EPA would not require an NMP if the CAFO is not required to apply for a NPDES permit.

- Remove the NPDES permit exemption for CAFOs that discharge only in the event of a 24 hour storm that occurs once every 25 years. There will now be a zero discharge requirement.

- Facilities newly defined as CAFOs will have until July 31, 2007, to seek NPDES permit coverage. All CAFOs will have until that date to implement nutrient management plans (NMPs).

Sierra Club's position is that this proposed rule weakens the goal of restoring and maintaining the nation's water quality and ensuring that CAFOs properly manage manure generated by their operations. CAFO operators would

not be required to apply for a permit, but could *choose* to apply if they currently discharge or "propose to discharge" manure. In other words, **the CAFO operator will decide if the facility discharges or proposes to discharge and therefore will need a permit.**

According to the EPA, "Because all discharges are prohibited from unpermitted CAFOs, NPDES permit coverage reduces CAFO operator risk and provides certainty to CAFO operators regarding activities and actions that are necessary to comply with the Clean Water Act. Compliance with the permit is deemed compliance with CWA, and thus *acts as a shield* [emphasis added]. For example, NPDES permits for large CAFOs incorporate effluent guidelines provisions, which include in certain cases an allowance for discharge during rainfall events. This allowance is not available to unpermitted CAFOs.

"The CAFO must still comply with relevant requirements of the Clean Water Act. If a CAFO does not have a permit, any discharge of manure, litter or process wastewater from the 'production area' of a CAFO to a water of the United States is illegal.** A discharge from the production areas includes (among other types of discharge) overflow from any containment structure under any climatic condition (either dry or wet), including chronic or catastrophic rainfall events.

"As before the 2nd Circuit Court decision, any discharge of manure, litter or process wastewater not related to

precipitation from a CAFO land application area to a water of the United States is illegal in the absence of an NPDES permit. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Discharge of litter, manure, or process wastewater directly to a water of the United States (e.g., application of liquid manure directly to a surface water)

- Dry-weather discharge due to the application of manure (e.g., gravity-induced discharge)

- Discharge of liquid manure from subsurface drains during dry-weather."

EPA held a public meeting on the proposed rule in Ames in July. Public comments were not accepted; however, Chapter leaders did offer questions about the rule. The Chapter, along with its partners Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Environmental Integrity Project and National Rural Catholic Life, submitted written comments to the EPA in August.

Find out more about the proposed rule at <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/af/aforule.cfm>.

* 399 F.3d 486 (2nd Cir. 2005). Other petitioners/intervenors in the lawsuit include Sierra Club, American Farm Bureau Federation, National Chicken 10 Council, National Pork Producers Council, American Littoral Society, 11 Inc., and Natural Resources Defense Council.

**EPA does not define a water of the United States in this rule.


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Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during their lifetime, but you can preserve the environment for generations to come by remembering the Sierra Club in your will.

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