



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group
AUGUST 2016

"There are very strange things going on with jet streams that guide our weather patterns.... This is a climate emergency." - Paul Beckwith

GET INVOLVED! Join these state and national Sierra Club efforts

Several state and national Sierra Club initiatives need our attention and help. Learn more about these issues, talk about them with others, and take action! And not that there are several important primary races on the August 9 ballot!

We must stop the TPP to keep fossil fuels in the ground. The climate movement has achieved critical wins recently. Protecting the Atlantic coast from offshore drilling, stopping fracking in New York, and defeating the Keystone XL pipeline to name a few. Yet, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), if approved by Congress, could undermine these and other climate victories. And the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) isn't looking much better. We can't let corporate trade deals hamper climate progress; we must defeat the TPP. Learn more about this issue (tinyurl.com/scnotpp) and contact your congressional representative to stop this dangerous agreement (Coulee Region group members should be aware that our group's current Congressional representatives - Ron Kind and Sean Duffy - have both voted in favor of TPP fast track legislation and Kind has been one of the key advocates of TPP in Congress).

We Need The EPA To Step In And Protect Wisconsin's Clean Water! The Wisconsin Legislature has tried to limit the DNR's ability to appropriately manage our groundwater to ensure there is enough for everyone and that one person's actions don't harm their neighbors. In particular, there has been a lot of push back on a Wisconsin Supreme Court ruling that said the DNR has to consider the cumulative impacts of high-capacity wells, or the impacts on a water source that has multiple wells taking water from it. And this week we learned that Governor Walker worked with ag industry lobbyists to make sure the DNR would scale back new regulations on manure handling by large farms. (tinyurl.com/walkermanure) In addition, water wells in Perrot State Park now warn of high nitrate levels because of contamination from a nearby farm. (tinyurl.com/perrotnitrate) The Sierra Club is supporting a suit by Midwest Environmental Advocates (www.midwestadvocates.org) requesting the US Environmental Protection Agency step in to ensure Wisconsin's water is protected from development and pollution. Sign to support at tinyurl.com/wiscepawater.

More actions and issues are noted at sierraclub.org and sierraclub.org/wisconsin including moving from fossil fuels to renewables, protecting our National Parks, supporting and electing pro-environment leaders, and working globally with other organizations for a sustainable future.

Most area legislators score well on conservation scorecard

The Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters recently issued its **2015-2016 Conservation Scorecard** (conservationvoters.org/scorecard/scorecard-2015-2016/) for the Wisconsin Legislature. We can be proud that most area legislators scored well based on their votes on nine priority conservation bills that received a recorded vote by the full Assembly and/or Senate.

Three Assembly members and one Senate member representing portions of the Coulee Region Group area received 100% on the Scorecard - Chris Danou, AD 92; Steve Doyle, AD 94; Jill Billings, AD 95; and Kathleen

Vinehout, SD 31. Jennifer Shilling, SD 32, received an 89% score. Julie Lassa, SD 24, received a 78% score. Please thank these legislators for supporting a clean, healthy environment in Wisconsin.

Unfortunately, five legislators representing portions of the Coulee Region Group area received a low score of 11% on the scorecard - Travis Tranel, AD 49; Ed Brooks, AD 50; Nancy VanderMeer, AD 70; Lee Nerison, AD 96; and Howard Marklein, SD 17. We need to continue to encourage these legislators to see the long term benefits of a clean, healthy environment

DATES TO REMEMBER!

August 9 - Primary voting in Wisconsin (learn more at myvote.wi.gov)

September 2-5 - La Crosse Bike Fest (www.explorelacrosse.com/bikefest) including 9/3 bike commute wrkshp

Tuesday, Sept 27 - Sierra Club Meeting, 7 p.m. Ho-Chunk Three Rivers House, RENEW Wisconsin speaker

October 7-9 - State Sierra Club Autumn Assembly in Dodgeville *Building a Strong Club* (tinyurl.com/wisc1079)

AUTUMN ASSEMBLY



A SIERRA CLUB EVENT

The John Muir Chapter invites you to attend the 2016 Autumn Assembly, October 7-9. This weekend of trainings and sessions on environmental activism will be held at the Bethel Horizons Camp and Retreat Center near Dodgeville, WI. Nestled in the wooded hills of the driftless area and located next to Governor Dodge state park Bethel offers an idyllic setting to remind us of what we work to protect. In addition to workshops, there will be optional outings, the Chapter awards banquet, and networking opportunities during meals and the Saturday evening reception. Visit sierraclub.org/wisconsin/2016-autumn-assembly for more details.

Share your transit story

The state Sierra Club is preparing a report on transportation equity in our state. Lack of adequate funding for transit leaves many non-drivers out of jobs, shopping, and everyday life. Car pollution is a top driver of climate change. Current policies favor road building over public transit. We need to change current unsustainable, unequal transportation policies. **Please share your own transit story** here: tinyurl.com/WITransitStories

If you would be interested in helping set up a public forum on transportation equity issues in late September as part of this Sierra Club initiative please email Cathy at cathyvanmaren@yahoo.com.

Better By Bike workshop set

This year's La Crosse Bike Fest (September 2-5) will include a "Better By Bike" workshop for those interested in doing more everyday trips using their bikes. Panelists will share bike commuting gear and tips and answer question in a discussion circle session on Friday, September 3 at 6 p.m. at Cameron Park. To participate as a rider or volunteer, visit www.explorelacrosse.com/bikefest/ and scroll to the bottom of the page.

If you use your bike for everyday trips - to work or school, shopping, appointments, visits, etc. - and you'd be willing to share your experiences and encourage others to "go by bike," please email Cathy at cathyvanmaren@yahoo.com.

Nature with friends

The Perseid meteor showers are one of the most delightful and dependable natural WOWS of summer and a great chance for families and friends to set



aside the digital, virtual, commercial world for a few hours. This year's natural light show will peak on August 12. According to a July 29 article in the online edition of Sierra magazine, "Some astronomers are predicting that 2016 will be an especially good year, with a possible outburst in the hours prior to the usual peak of activity." Read more about the meteors and how to watch at tinyurl.com/sierraperseids

La Crosse Car Share is a GO!

Enterprise Car Rental which runs the UWL car share program will welcome **ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS 21 and older** into the program this fall! We hope to have updated information later this month. Car share participants (even those who have or had private vehicles) drive fewer miles than private vehicle users. Car share services reduce costs or car ownership, increase transit ridership, lower car-specific infrastructure demand (parking spaces/ramps), and reduce congestion and pollution. Read more about car share benefits at tinyurl.com/carshben