



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group
FEBRUARY 2018

"I like it when a flower or a little tuft of grass grows through a crack in the concrete. It's so ... heroic." - George Carlin

Clean Cars Campaign in La Crosse

The **Clean Cars Campaign** will hold a press event in La Crosse this February to bring attention to the Trump administration's plan to roll back CAFE (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) standards. We will post information about the event (date, time, location) when details are finalized. If you can attend and show support for maintaining tough meaningful standards, please do. Organizers will discuss the benefits of clean car standards and recognize those groups and politicians who have helped forward higher standards. Several local leaders will attend along with environmentalists and citizens interested in sustainability.

Current targets for light duty vehicles, established in 2011, require 2021 models to average at least 41 miles per gallon and 2025 models to average 49.7 mpg. Not only do these standards help reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions (which now make up the majority of emissions produced in the United States) but higher efficiency standards mean cost savings for drivers. The Union of Concerned Scientists has a fact sheet on environmental and economic benefits of strong fuel efficiency standards at www.ucsusa.org/state-mpg-benefits.

The Clean Cars Campaign is co-sponsored by several national organizations including the Sierra Club. For more information please visit cleancarscampaign.org.

February 3 Progresstival

The Coulee Region Sierra Club will join dozens of other organizations working on issues of sustainability, equity, fairness, and future vision at the 2018 Progresstival.

The event at the Concordia Ballroom, 1129 La Crosse Street, will begin at 2 p.m. with an "activist fair," where organizations will share their programs, initiatives, and needs. Learn how to join, help, and push a variety of issues. New this year, mini-workshops will help attendees learn about the organizing volunteers, local issues, and reasons to get involved.

Keynote speaker, **Paul Cienfuegos**, will talk about the importance of People Power. As a national leader and in the Community Rights movement, Cienfuegos believes "we the people" must exercise our right to pass laws to protect our communities' health and welfare. (Cienfuegos will also present an **Intro to Community Rights workshop** on Sunday, Feb. 4 - see tinyurl.com/crwkshp02042018)

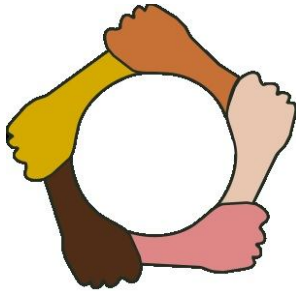
The event is open to all. Donations at the door will help pay for the event. After 5 p.m. those wishing to keep networking will meet at The Brickhouse (pub food available). See <https://tinyurl.com/Progresstival2018>



2018 Grant Recipients!

Congratulations to our two Environmental Education grant recipients for the 2018 school year - St. Rose Catholic School in Cuba City and Sparta Area School District School Forest program! We look forward to hearing about your projects this summer and fall. These Coulee Region Sierra Club environmental education grants are made possible by a grant from the Paul E. Stry Foundation. Thanks to that organization for allowing the Coulee Region Sierra Club to help spread knowledge and love of nature.

Help us include everyone



We are still seeking Coulee Region Sierra Club members who can help keep our club informed about actions, events, issues, and opportunities around the region. Can you email a report about an upcoming program in your area? Could you send some photos of an event?

Would you like to write a column about environmental issues in your community? We are also looking for opportunities to connect members from all around the region.

If you can help, please email crsierraclub@gmail.com.

Next meeting, Tuesday, Mar. 27

Our next Coulee Region Sierra Club meeting will feature a talk on **From Copper to Conservation in Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias National Park** by Margot



Higgins. Margot has lived and conducted research in Wrangell-St. Elias Park for the last decade. Having graduated from the Environmental Science, Policy, and Management Program at UC Berkeley in 2015, she is currently a lecturer in the Environmental Studies Program at UWL. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us!

Climate Action Fair - March 3

Now more than ever, every individual needs to take action for a healthy climate future. At the March 3 Climate Action Fair, hosted by the Coulee Region Climate Alliance, information will be available about ways individuals can make positive changes in their own lives and homes and in their work places and communities. The event will take place at the First Congregational Church, Losey Blvd and Main Street in La Crosse from 1 to 4 p.m.

More than 200 attend Industrial Ag conference

The Coulee Region Sierra Club was happy to join with many other state and regional organizations to sponsor an important conference on the increasing industrialization of rural Wisconsin. The January 20 event in Boscobel was attended by more than 200 people. As keynote speaker, Dr. John Ikerd pointed out, replacing family farms and small businesses with poorly regulated industries that handle toxic waste brings the problems previously associated with inner cities to rural CAFO communities.

Many perspectives and ideas were offered by speakers and conference attendees in hopes that people educating themselves, their neighbors, and their elected officials can defend against the negative impact of this rural colonization by multinational industries.

The John Muir Chapter Sierra Club Water Team will include CAFOs in their work for 2018. Last year's JMC Sierra Club white paper on CAFOs is available online at tinyurl.com/jmsc-cafos.

If you missed the conference or would like to learn more about the issues, you can find links to video of the event, speakers' contact information and event organizers at the event page (<https://tinyurl.com/Jan20-DriftlessAg>).



DATES TO REMEMBER! (more events posted at cr-sierra.blogspot.com)

Saturday, February 3 - PROGRESSTIVAL 2 pm Concordia Ballroom, La Crosse

Saturday, February 3 - 6th Annual LOVE THE LAND 7 pm Gays Mills (crawfordstewardship.org)

Sunday, February 4 - Intro to Community Rights workshop 2 pm People's Food Co-op, 315 5th Ave South

M-F, February 5-9 - Vote absentee in person in most municipalities - check with your clerk for location & hours

M-F, February 12-16 - Vote absentee in person in most municipalities - check with clerk for location & hours

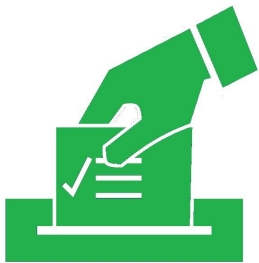
Tuesday, February 20 - Wisconsin primary elections - see myvote.wi.gov for what's on your ballot

Wednesday, February 21 Critters, Crawlers, and Plants of the Blufflan 10:30 am Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife & Fish Refuge Visitor Center www.fws.gov/refuge/Upper_Mississippi_River/LaCrosse_District.html

Saturday, March 3 - Climate Action Fair 1 pm First Congregational Church, Losey & Main

Tuesday, March 27 - Coulee Region Sierra Club meeting 7 pm Ho-Chunk House, 8th & Main

Vote starting February 5



The first statewide elections of 2018 will be held on Tuesday, February 20. On the ballot will be three contenders for a seat on the state's Supreme Court. The top two vote getters in this primary will advance to the April 3 general election. In addition, county, municipal, and other local

primaries will be decided.

It is now possible for many Wisconsin voters to register or begin or change their voter registration online. And, in most municipalities, voters may cast "absentee in person" ballots at their clerk's office starting on Monday, February 5 where they can also register if needed. Absentee in person voting is available in most La Crosse municipalities Monday through Friday until Friday, February 16. Hours vary - contact your clerk for details.

Full information about voting including how to and where to register, where to vote, and what's on your ballot is available online at <http://myvote.wi.gov>. This site will also tell you what documents you need to provide when registering to vote. If you don't use the internet, please call your municipal clerk.

Voters will need to provide some form of approved ID when they vote absentee in person or at the polls on February 20. For most, that's a Wisconsin driver's license or Wisconsin ID card, but there are several other approved documents. For a full list, visit bringit.wi.gov. Note - if you do not have a driver's license, you may get a FREE state photo ID card for voting at the Department of Motor Vehicles. [Bringit.wi.gov](http://bringit.wi.gov) tells how.



Sierra Club actions

Courts Deny Federal Agency's Hail Mary on Fracked Gas Pipeline - Sabal Trail Pipeline May be Shut Down On January 31, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit rejected a request from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to revisit a case that established greenhouse gas emissions as a crucial component of analyzing the impacts of gas pipelines. The landmark decision from last year forced FERC to consider the future environmental effects of burning gas when deciding whether or not to approve the construction of gas pipelines. This ruling could mean that the Sabal Trail Pipeline must cease operations until a thorough and complete review of its overall impact is completed.

Sierra Club joins suit against Trump's plan to shrink national monuments In December, the Sierra Club joined several other environmental groups to sue Donald Trump claiming that he does not have the authority to reduce the size of national monuments. A separate suit was filed by five Native American tribes. However, the Trump proclamation takes effect on February 2 and at 6 a.m. on that date, private citizens and companies will be allowed to stake claims for hard rock mining. Many outlets report that the move to shrink the monuments came after lobbying by uranium mining companies. A new ANTIQUITIES Act was introduced in the US Senate on January 30 to re-protect these unique treasures.

