



# Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group  
JUNE 2018

"We won't have a society if we destroy the environment." - Margaret Mead

**NEXT MEETING:  
POTLUCK! 6 pm  
Tuesday, June 26  
ROWE PARK  
SHELTER #1  
Onalaska**

Join Sierra Club friends for food and fun at **6 p.m. on June 26 at ONALASKA'S ROWE PARK, Shelter #1**. From La Crosse, drive north on Rose Street (Hwy 35) to Onalaska. Turn right onto Oak Forest Drive (by the Kwik Trip). At the second intersection, turn left onto Hilltopper Drive and then stay right onto Park Drive. The first shelter you come to (on the right) is Shelter #1. The park is easily accessible from the interstate (La Crosse Exit 3 north to Onalaska) and from the north as well.

Please bring a dish to pass. Some beverages will be provided along with plates and utensils and some outdoor games. Please bring a guest! Contact us at [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com) or call 608 315-2693 with questions. (For a map of the park, visit <https://tinyurl.com/RowePk-One>)

## Your summer VOTE can make a difference!

On **Tuesday, August 14**, Wisconsin voters will choose a candidate to run against Scott Walker in the November 6 gubernatorial election. There are currently 14 individuals running in the Democratic primary. The Democratic candidate will be chosen in the middle of school vacation/fishing/camping/canoeing/summer cottage season.

August partisan primary turnout has been notoriously low - below 15% in 2014 and 2016 - highlighting the need for members to be alert and help others understand how important this election is. A recent San Francisco Chronicle article ([www.sfchronicle.com/news/article/In-Wisconsin-do-too-many-Democrats-want-to-be-12947282.php](http://www.sfchronicle.com/news/article/In-Wisconsin-do-too-many-Democrats-want-to-be-12947282.php)) noted that, "Walker continues to dominate the airwaves and stockpile resources as he seeks a third term. He had \$4.2 million cash on hand in January." Foxconn, destructive mining bills, lax CWD strategies, removal of environmental protections, deteriorating air and water quality standards, destruction of wetlands, politicizing the DNR, terrible roads, and allowing polluters to monitor themselves are part of the current governor's legacy.

The upcoming gubernatorial primary and November 6 general election are critically important for the future of our state's environment, natural areas, wildlife, climate future, public health and more. Now is the time to start preparing.

Make sure you are properly registered. Ask friends, neighbors, relatives, and co-workers if they are registered. Registration and updates, if needed, can be made online or in the municipal clerk's office. Those without driver's licenses can get a FREE Wisconsin ID for voting purposes at DMV offices.

If you will be out of town on August 14, plan to vote absentee in person during the two weeks before (check with your clerk for dates and hours) or request an absentee ballot. Visit [myvote.wi.gov](http://myvote.wi.gov) for details about registration, voting, absentee ballots and more. Another good site is [www.866ourvote.org](http://www.866ourvote.org).

Learn more about candidates at their web pages, by researching their records and speeches online, attending events, and checking with trusted online sources. Be aware that at least one popular voter info site has links to the Koch brothers (see [www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Ballotpedia](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Ballotpedia))

Check these sites for useful information about issues and candidates:

- \* [wisconsinvote.org](http://wisconsinvote.org) - a service of Wisconsin Public TV and Radio
- \* [wisdc.org/follow\\_the\\_money.html](http://wisdc.org/follow_the_money.html) - from The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, a database of political donors
- \* [conservationvoters.org/elections/voter-resources](http://conservationvoters.org/elections/voter-resources) - maintained by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters

## Ready for 100 Team Update

The Coulee Region Sierra Club Ready for 100 team plans to help encourage La Crosse to become a Ready for 100 community (see [www.sierraclub.org/ready-for-100/commitments](http://www.sierraclub.org/ready-for-100/commitments)) and to encourage and support CRSC members in other communities to approach and work with their municipalities to join the Ready for 100 movement.

Ready for 100 information was available at the CRSC table at the La Crosse Earth Fair on April 29. Dozens of visitors signed on to encourage our communities to make the 100% clean energy commitment as early as possible.

In May, some team members met with Mayor Kabat and city planners to learn what is already underway and what our next steps can be. Based on that meeting, we feel hopeful that City Council action can occur by the end of the year. Toward that goal, our team (please JOIN US!) will work to inform and educate community and neighborhood groups about this important initiative.

If you would like to help educate by presenting information at your school, club, neighborhood association or other community group OR if you have an idea for program venue, please contact us at [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com). If you would like to join the team - any CRSC member is welcome including those who live outside of the City of La Crosse! - please let us know.

## Communications update

This is one of four newsletters that we mail annually to members who don't receive electronic communication. Some people do not "do" online and for them, the paper newsletter is the only way to learn what the Coulee Region Group is doing.

But, if you do use a computer and have an email address, consider that paper newsletters cost money, time and resources. If you can switch to online only, we will send you one email per month telling how to access the latest online newsletter. If you require a paper copy, you can print it yourself.

If you currently receive a mailed paper newsletter but could help out by switching to online only, email us at [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com) OR call Pat at 608 788-8831.

Online resources include our web page at [www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee](http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee) and our blog at [cr-sierra.blogspot.com](http://cr-sierra.blogspot.com). Subscribe to the blog to get new posts automatically emailed to you. Our newsletter is published online every month at the blog site. (Contact us if you'd like to blog there!)

## Thank you new program chair!

Thank you Coulee Region group board member, Kathy Allen for stepping in to fill the vacant Program Chair position. Kathy will help set up club meetings and events in the area starting with our June potluck at Rowe Park in Onalaska (see p. 1). Thanks to Dr. Carol Miller who has set up several great events over the past few years including the upcoming talk (in September 2018) by Anders Olson on the most recent assessment of the City/County of La Crosse Sustainability Indicators. If you have meeting or activity suggestions, please email us at [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com).

## Help wanted!



The Coulee Region group stretches from Black River Falls to Sparta/Tomah and all the way down to Platteville! If you know of or hear of something that other Coulee Region group members would be interested in, please email [crsierraclub@gmail.com](mailto:crsierraclub@gmail.com).

If you would like to submit a blog post and/or an article about an environmental or outdoor activity happening in your area of the Coulee Region Group, please do! We can set you up as a regional correspondent on our blog site. Please email!

New and continuing members are also encouraged to email to learn how you can serve on an important Sierra Club committee or work group!

## Family-Friendly Black River Canoe Camping Trip July 14-15



This favorite **kid-friendly paddling trip** is offered to encourage young families, families with kids and the young-at-heart to join us on the water. We'll take it

slow, stop to play/explore as frequently as desired, cook-out and sleep in tents on a sandbar and engage in creative outdoor play. All camping gear/food must fit in your boat. Contact: Kevin or Carol Olson at 608 963-2678, 608 356-8992, or [olsonfam44@centurytel.net](mailto:olsonfam44@centurytel.net) or Pat or Bobbie Wilson at 608-788-8831, 608 397-2531 or [pbwilson@centurytel.net](mailto:pbwilson@centurytel.net). Online details at <https://sierraclub.org/wisconsin/river-touring-section/trips>



## Reminder: Go Solar partnership

The John Muir Chapter Sierra Club has partnered with **SunVest Solar, Inc.** of Pewaukee to offer a group buy for Sierra Club members and friends to help shift Wisconsin from fossil fuels toward clean, renewable energy. Group buy benefits include the reduction in upfront costs and a simplified installation process. Also, for each unit installed through the program, SunVest will make a donation to the Sierra Club - John Muir Chapter to support their conservation work in Wisconsin. Homeowners, businesses, and non profits are encouraged to contact SunVest for a free no-obligation assessment and quote. Find more details and the application link at [sunvest.com/programs/sierraclub](http://sunvest.com/programs/sierraclub).

---

---

## The Energy Fair - June 15-17

The **29th annual Midwest Renewable Energy Fair** will be held in Custer, Wisconsin (near Stevens Point) from **June 15 through June 17**. More than 250 workshops will be offered covering everything from do it yourself renewable energy systems to food growing and preserving, renewable energy transportation, renewables and government, energy efficient buildings and systems, and much more. This year's special programming will include a screening of the documentary, Solar Roots - The Pioneers of PV and speakers, Jeremy Scahill, Mihael Perry, and Lily Raff McCaulou and Jonahan Reinbold. Vendors, activities, solar tours, tiny homes, demonstration vehicles, and more round out the full weekend of renewable education and motivation. At program, info about tickets, and a schedule of workshops is available at [www.theenergyfair.org](http://www.theenergyfair.org).

**TRANSPORTATION:** Xcel Energy is sponsoring a free bus on Saturday from Eau Claire with a stop in Osseo at 7:15 A.M. (returns to Osseo at 9:30 p.m.) Sign up online at [www.theenergyfair.org/ec-bus-registration/](http://www.theenergyfair.org/ec-bus-registration/) In addition, the Energy Fair is hosting an online ride share tool to help connect those driving to the fair with those who need a ride ([share.TheEnergyFair.org](http://share.TheEnergyFair.org)) and there is a shuttle that runs regularly from lots in Stevens Point to the fair grounds.

---

---

## June 2 - 9: Wisconsin Bike Week

The Wisconsin Bike Fed, in cooperation with dozens of state and local organizations and businesses, is sponsoring **Wisconsin Bike Week from June 2 through June 9**. ([bikeweek.wisconsinbikefed.org](http://bikeweek.wisconsinbikefed.org)) Many communities will host special rides, promotions and events to celebrate the wonderful bicycle - an efficient and clean method of transportation, a family friendly recreation vector, a health improving, fun, amazing way to spend time.

La Crosse is a hub for many activities which will kick off on June 2 with a Caledonia Street Block Party and continue with group rides, ride promotions, ride workshops, games and activities (see link for full schedule).

Of particular note is the **Tuesday, June 5 Ride with the Mayor**. This annual event gives participants a chance to see what new infrastructure is in place and being planned, lobby for improvements with elected leaders and planners, and meet up with other bicycle advocates in our area. This year's ride begins at Logan Middle School (1450 Avon Street) at 9:30 a.m. and will highlight some of the new projects on the north side of La Crosse. Everyone is welcome. 🚲



---

---

## Friends of the Blufflands

Friends of the Blufflands ([facebook.com/friendsoftheblufflands](https://facebook.com/friendsoftheblufflands)) is a relatively new group formed to support and advocate for preservation and conservation of unique and sensitive area blufflands for their natural and scenic values. The group is hosting its **Annual Membership Meeting on Tuesday, June 12** at 7 p.m. at the Myrick Park Center. This event is free and open to everyone.



Coulee Region Sierra Club  
Maureen Kinney  
620 South 23rd Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
La Crosse, WI  
Permit #814

### DATES TO REMEMBER!

**June 2-9: Wisconsin Bike Week** ([bikeweek.wisconsinbikefed.org/](http://bikeweek.wisconsinbikefed.org/))

**June 5: Bike with La Crosse Leaders** (Mayor Kabat & Bike Fed Executive Director)

**June 12: Friends of the Blufflands annual meeting** ([facebook.com/friendsoftheblufflands](https://facebook.com/friendsoftheblufflands))

**June 15-17: Midwest Renewable Energy Association Energy Fair**, Custer, WI ([www.theenergyfair.org](http://www.theenergyfair.org))

**June 26: CR Sierra Club summer picnic**, 6 p.m., Shelter #1, Rowe Park, Onalaska

**July 10: CR Sierra Club Highway Clean Up** meet at 6 p.m. at the pumping station near Gillette and River Vly Dr

**July 14-15: Sierra Club Canoe Outing** on the Black River ([tinyurl.com/wiscwater](http://tinyurl.com/wiscwater))

## Landfill Tour

On Tuesday, May 15, more than a dozen members and friends of the Coulee Region Sierra Club joined La Crosse County's Sustainability Coordinator, Nick Nichols, on a tour of the award-winning La Crosse County Landfill. Nichols discussed the many sustainability features of the operation including their partnership with the Habitat ReStore; the methane recovery system that supplies fuel to heat a local hospital; the "waste to energy" partnership with a local utility; a program that recycles asphalt, concrete and blacktop into new roadbuilding materials; a program that helps recycle clean wood waste; and the hazardous waste program that recycles and properly disposes of potentially dangerous materials. Completed cells (full and capped) have been transformed, with the help of area Eagle Scouts, into nature trails with picnic

and recreation facilities. A small lake supports waterfowl and other wildlife and there are plans to build trails in the surrounding forested hills. In all, it was a fascinating and very educational program and we thank Nick Nichols for volunteering to show us around. He has offered to lead a hike through the forest this fall if members are interested. Read more about this unique facility at [lacrossecounty.org/solidwaste](http://lacrossecounty.org/solidwaste).

## Highway Clean Up

Our summer clean up of River Valley Drive will be on **Tuesday, July 10 beginning at 6:00 p.m.** Meet at the pumping station just northwest of the Gillette Street intersection. Vests, gloves, and bags will be provided. Consider donning bug and sun protection. For more info, contact Pat or Bobbie at 608 788-8831 or [pbwilson@centurytel.net](mailto:pbwilson@centurytel.net). **MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!** ♥



**Sierra #1806**

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group, John Muir Chapter, Sierra Club is published four times per year.  
Coulee Region Sierra Club, 620 S 23rd Street,  
La Crosse, WI 54601