



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group

JANUARY 2015

JANUARY MEETING

**Tuesday,
January 27**

7pm at the
**HoChunk
Three Rivers House
at 8th & Main**

Family farming in the Coulee Region: Old Oak Family Farm's perspective as a diversified, organic CSA farm

Speaker: Kyle Zens, CSA Manager, Old Oak Farm

CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) is a term and concept that is gaining recognition and popularity. Old Oak Family Farm turned to this way of farming 8 years ago as a creative way to sustain the family farm. The farm has always been diversified, growing a large assortment of vegetables, fruit and flowers while also raising beef cattle and chicken. Old Oak Family Farm's produce has been a staple in the La Crosse Farmer's Market scene since 1982. Learn more about the motivation behind operating an organic CSA farm and participate in a discussion focused on the CSA farming model and the organic farming movement.

Kyle (Niedfeldt) Zenz is the CSA manager for Old Oak Family Farm which she operates with her parents, Jerry & Connie Niedfeldt. Prior to farming full time, Kyle worked as an Environmental Educator for 6 years with the US Forest Service, Wisconsin DNR and UW-Extension. Kyle's primary motivation as a farmer is to grow healthy food while encouraging people to prepare more homemade meals and incorporate a larger variety of fruits and vegetables into their diets.



Stay Tuned for DNR Ruling on Train Track Expansion Environmental Impact Statement

On January 7, over 175 citizens attended a public DNR hearing in La Crosse on a proposed 2nd BNSF railroad track between Gillette and Farnham streets. Many of those attending urged the DNR to conduct an environmental impact statement for the project, as 7.28 acres of the La Crosse River Marsh will be filled in. The La Crosse Marsh is an irreplaceable part of La Crosse's identity and a huge draw to locals and tourists alike.

Adding a second rail and service road could bring over 100 trains per day, carrying explosive Bakken oil through the marsh and city. Speeds would increase to 45 mph in both directions in the city and higher elsewhere in the region. Of concern; spills

are over 3 times more likely per mile by rail than by pipeline. There have been 396 reported spills from rail cars this year in the US! And, a spill into the marsh would be nearly impossible to clean up or contain.

U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, Sen. Tammy Baldwin, and La Crosse-area state lawmakers are also requesting an EIS. The DNR will make the final decision, and wants your input by January 17.

For audio of the January 7 hearing, and details on how to submit your comments visit <http://saferails.org>.

Story excerpted from WPR and Citizens for Rail Safety' website.



Coulee Region Sierra Club

Maureen Kinney
620 South 23rd Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

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