

SIERRASCAPE

Eastern Missouri Group - Missouri Chapter

Volume 38, Number 2 - Fall 2021



Backpackers on the Upper Current Section of the Ozark Trail. Photo by Louise Bullock.

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**SIERRA
CLUB**

Enjoy, Explore & Protect the Planet

Statewide Redistricting Hearings begin in November

BY ASHTON KUEHNEL

Grassroots Organizer

The Sierra Club - Missouri Chapter has been engaged around redistricting since 2017 with the Clean Missouri campaign. From there we have continued to work with multi-issue, multi-racial coalition members to advocate for fair redistricting and representation of all Missourians. Our 2021-2022 priorities are to ensure Missourians are aware and participate in our state's upcoming redistricting process.

If done without participation and input from Missouri residents across the state, the redistricting process can split up communities and prevent communities from receiving the resources for public services such as schools, parks, and hospitals and fair representation at the local and state level. Sierra Club

Democracy Committee members and leaders have been making phone calls and writing letters to the editor to let our members know about redistricting and to urge them to submit public comments about their communities.

After attending St. Louis' first redistricting hearing, Nikki Pearl and I ran into Congresswoman Cori Bush and talked about the importance of having fair maps and its impact on environmental justice issues.

What You Can Do

Learn more & join the effort!
sierraclub.org/mo-democracy



Photo: Ashton Kuehnel, Democracy Committee Chair Nikki Pearl and Congresswoman Cori Bush.

Campfire

Did you know that Campfire has all kinds of resources & tools for Sierra Club volunteers and leaders? Check out learning modules on equity, justice and inclusion, community forums, and more.

Visit campfire.sierraclub.org to sign up for an account.

SIERRASCAPE A biannual publication of the Eastern Missouri Group

EMG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chapter Chair: Ken Schechtman
Vice Chair: Caitlin Zera
Secretary: Caroline Pufalt*
Treasurer: Robert Roberson
Tim Elwell
John Feldmann
Glenn May
Diana Oleskevich

*non-Executive Committee member

For a full directory of committee leaders, please visit www.sierraclub.org/missouri

MISSOURI STAFF

Michael Berg
Leah Clyburn
Billy Davies
Sara Edgar
Marisa Frazier
Britt Harris
Andy Heaslet
Andy Knott
Ashton Kuehnel
Kane Sheek
Ed Smith
Gretchen Waddell Barwick



Getting to Know Outings Co-Chair George Behrens

BY CAITLIN ZERA

EMG Vice Chair

A long-time Sierra Club member and volunteer, George Behrens has recently taken on the role of Outings Co-Chair alongside Louise Bullock.

How did you become involved in the Sierra club?

In 1983 the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* had an article about groups that do outdoor activities. They were American Youth Hostels, The Nature Conservancy and the Sierra Club. My first Sierra Club hike was the fall of 1983.

What role do you think outings play in bringing Sierra club members together?

Outings are the best way for Sierrans to bond with one another. Outings are the launchpad to encourage new people to be more involved in the Club.

What are your favorite places to hike in Missouri and beyond?

Hawn State Park is my favorite place to hike in Missouri. The people who visit Hawn treat it well. My favorite place outside Missouri is Yellowstone National Park. I have made 3 trips there and would like to do one more.



Photo: George Behrens Trail Week 2021 in Current River State Park.

Find Latest Outings



View upcoming outings on the online calendar!

sierraclub.org/missouri/eastern-missouri

Celebrating the History and Future of the MO Chapter

BY CAROLINE PUFALT

Conservation Chair

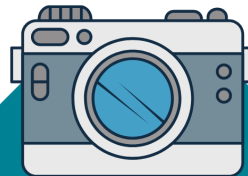
Our Missouri Chapter is approaching its 50th anniversary. In 1972 we were passionate about the issues of the day. And thank goodness we were, or else the Meramec, Big, Bourbeuse and Huzzah Rivers would be part of a multi-dammed river basin today! In 1972 Congress had appropriated funds, land had been acquired and soon concrete poured. Yet intrepid Club volunteers and our allies drove a campaign and finally a 1978 referendum to stop the dams. What a victory!

The Sierra club has always taken on big challenges and changes. As we learned about climate change and its impacts on almost all we value, we rose to the occasion and incorporated climate impacts and solutions in our existing programs. And we added new ones, such as Beyond Coal.

More recently we have been challenged by the recognition that the twin tasks of protecting our democracy and increasing equity within our society are necessary for a healthy and just society. Only a fair and functional society can tackle climate issues

and environmental protections.

We will be sharing more of our chapter's inspiring history over the next year. Look for our social media posts, webinar opportunities, newsletters, interviews, photos, and stories of our past. Hear about adventures from issue campaigns and outings. Also, we'll be exploring how and why we respond to new issues, while still staying true to our values.



HELP US TELL THE STORY OF THE MISSOURI CHAPTER.

We'd love to include your memories and photos in upcoming celebrations of the Chapter's history.

To contribute: contact Caitlin Zera at caitlinzera@gmail.com or 314-324-2417

[SIERRACLUB.ORG/MISSOURI](https://sierraclub.org/missouri)

Reducing Light Pollution through the Dark-Sky Places Program

BY CAITLIN ZERA
EMG Vice Chair

The International Dark Sky Association - Missouri Chapter (IDA) held its Annual Conference in October 2021. Themed "Seeking the Dark: Nighttime Beauty, Biology and Tourism", the conference included more than a dozen presenters on topics about light pollution and its affect on wildlife and communities.

EMG member Stephanie Todd and Thomas Hart Benton Group member DeAnn Gregory represented the Missouri Sierra Club.

Todd delivered a presentation on the International Dark-Sky Places program in collaboration with Dr. Vayu Gokhale of Truman State University. They shared information about the program and how parks can become internationally certified and recognized as an IDA "Dark Sky Place." The first Missouri park designated as an Urban Dark Sky Place, Stacy Park in Olivette, was announced at the conference.

"The benefits of an Urban Dark Sky Place is that it helps educate the community on the detrimental effects of light pollution. More specifically, it contributes to a healthier community and ecosystem, along with energy savings," says Todd.



Photo: Stephanie Todd



Photo: Henrik Kam

New State Energy Plan Seeks Input from Stakeholders

BY HENRY ROBERTSON
Energy Conservation Chair

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources-Division of Energy produced a Comprehensive State Energy Plan in 2015. Now they're doing another one and are holding virtual meetings to take public input, dividing the state into six regions to account for geographic differences in issues, interests and resources.

The Missouri Chapter, including voices from EMG, has been monitoring these calls and speaking our minds. For the St. Louis region, we brought up the need to support local governments like St. Louis City and County and county municipalities that have clean energy goals, especially to make financing mechanism available. We also stressed the need to address the problems of communities with high energy burdens (a high percentage of income going to utility bills) and difficulty taking advantage of efficiency and renewable energy opportunities.

Fortunately, the fossil fuel interests have so far stayed away, and the tone has been mostly good for the environment. Whether the plan will accomplish anything or sit idly on hard drives is another question.

Enjoying & Exploring

EMG's avid hikers share their favorite hikes and memories of getting outside in Missouri & beyond.



Hawn State Park

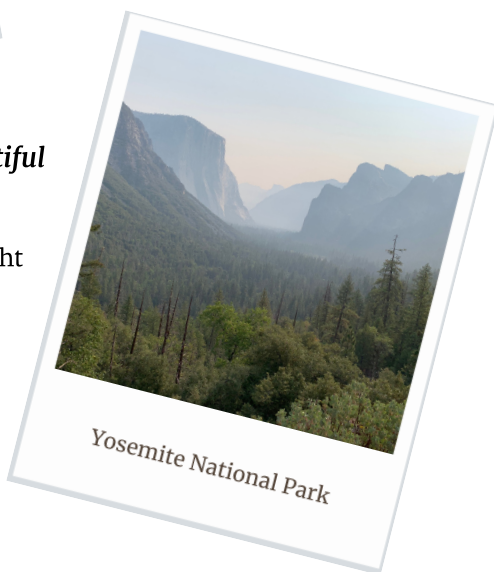
"This is my favorite photo from 2020. We had just got done clearing a large tree that was blocking a trail at Hawn State Park. It was a team effort, and I remember the good feeling I had for a job well done."

-Paul Ohlendorf pictured with Louise Bullock, Robbie Roberson, and John Feldmann



"Yosemite, as beautiful as ever!"

-Ann Eggebrecht



Yosemite National Park

"I took some friends from Chicago camping and hiking in Onondaga Cave State Park, their first visit and they loved it. Missouri has so many awesome state parks and this is one of my favorites."

-Tim Pekarek



Onondaga Cave State Park

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATE STATEMENTS



Robert Roberson As a candidate for re-election to the EMG Executive Committee, I believe the Sierra Club and similar organizations are critical to protect the Earth's climate and limited natural resources. The Executive Committee is an opportunity for me to continue to support the club's mission by serving as treasurer. By background, I am a retired certified public accountant with a 45-year career in public practice and banking. As a bank executive I managed most facets of a community bank. Prior to retiring my volunteer activities included: Earth City Trustee, St. Louis Equity Fund Finance Committee member and SSM Hospital Advisory Board Member. After retirement I volunteer at the Sierra Club Lemonade Stand, attend the meetings, preform trail work and wrote 2020 election letters. I also volunteer at St. Louis Food Bank and prepare income taxes for the AATP/IRS VITA program. In the late 80's I converted 7 acres of residential zoned land to conservation and planted over 3,000 tree seedlings. Today the results are a dense wood containing many species of trees. My hobbies include hiking and biking on the Katy Trail, photography, fishing and rebuilding old cars. I believe the future can only be saved by aggressive actions today.



Ken Schechtman I am a lifelong activist committed to the notion that change does not happen unless ordinary people join together and demand it. Environmentalists have been doing so for decades, and anyone who considers the clean air bill, the spate of regulations implemented by the Obama administration, and the Build Back Better proposals of the Biden administration must marvel at what has been and can be accomplished. But because those successes are uniquely imperiled by reactionary leadership in both Washington and Jefferson City, the efforts of groups like the Sierra Club have never been more important. I have been a member of the Executive Committee for more than a decade and am the long-time chair of the Committee. I am also a Washington University Professor who brings to the Club a dedication to environmentalist ideals, a scientist's measured analysis of issues, a willingness to challenge conventional Club perspectives when necessary and, most importantly, an abiding commitment to an effective results-oriented Club that lets no one forget that we did not stand by and watch. As a hiker with a reverence for nature, I have an obligation to Missouri's forests and to our wild and special places. As a citizen, I have been a long-time activist in support of numerous progressive causes. As a writer, I have supported those causes through periodic op-ed articles in the *Post-Dispatch*. And as a parent, I can do nothing less than fight for the planet I will one day leave behind.



Stephanie Todd I have been a member of the Sierra Club for over twenty years because I have always enjoyed being outdoors and support the Sierra Club's mission. Recently, I retired as an engineer and project manager and working for the environment has become my top priority. I have volunteered for several of the Sierra Club Political Action Committee efforts, including going door-to-door and phone banking. I have also taken on several issues where I felt I could make an impact. One initiative I have been working on is trying to persuade cities in St. Louis County to stop fogging or spraying for mosquitos. As part of that effort, I have been informing people how to put their house on the no-fog list and wrote a press release on the best ways to keep mosquitoes away that is in the latest issue of *SierraScape*. Another issue I have been working on is to reduce light pollution. Specially, I am trying to get businesses/buildings to turn-off lights during peak bird migration periods for Lights Out Heartland and I am working with the Missouri Chapter of International Dark Sky to certify parks as Urban Night Sky Places. I would like to be on the Eastern Missouri Sierra Club Executive Committee so I can make a greater impact for our environment. Our environment is in critical condition and as an engineer I hope to apply my basic problem-solving skills. As a project manager, I can help structure and organize tasks so we can work more effectively. Thank you for your consideration.

EMG Executive Committee Ballot Instructions

Carefully read ALL instructions before completing or mailing your ballot. Ballots must be received by 5pm on December 3, 2021 in order to be counted. Deliver ballots via mail only.

1. **You must use this ballot with your electronic address label on the back.** The ballot portion will be detached from the label portion before counting ballots. Ballots without addresses cannot be counted.
2. **Vote for up to three (3) candidates.** Indicate your choices by marking an x or check mark in the space to the left of each name. If yours is a joint membership, two members may vote, each in their own column.
3. **Put the ballot in an envelope and mail it to: Ballot - EMG Elections committee Sierra Club 2818 Sutton Blvd St Louis MO 63143. DO NOT HAND DELIVER BALLOT TO THE EMG OFFICE.**
4. For questions, including the date, time and place of ballot counting, please contact the EMG Secretary, Caroline Pufalt at 314-721-7207 or cpufalt@sbcglobal.net

EMG Executive Committee Ballot

HOUSEHOLD VOTER 1

Individual Membership, use this column.
Joint Membership, **voter 1** use this column.
Vote for up to THREE (3). One voter per household, per side.

- Robert Roberson
 Ken Schechtman
 Stephanie Todd
 Caitlin Zera
 _____ write in candidate

HOUSEHOLD VOTER 2

Individual Membership, use this column.
Joint Membership, **voter 1** use this column.
Vote for up to THREE (3). One voter per household, per side.

- Robert Roberson
 Ken Schechtman
 Stephanie Todd
 Caitlin Zera
 _____ write in candidate



Caitlin Zera I have been passionate about environmental issues my whole life, and I deeply appreciate the way the Sierra Club as an organization is working to engage volunteers and community members in intersectional environmental advocacy to advance change on local and national issues. I have currently served two terms with the EMG Executive Committee and have worked on numerous Sierra Club initiatives, including serving as the Missouri Chapter Delegate to the National Sierra Club's Council of Club Leaders meeting for the past three years and helping put together the *SierraScope* and *Sierran* newsletters. As a Committee Member, I love collaborating with other volunteers to create meaningful and lasting change in our community. I would love the opportunity to serve another term on the Executive

Committee and further connect with Sierra Club members and supporters. I believe environmental justice education is integral to the success of environmental activism in our region and beyond. As a member of the Executive Committee, I would look forward to empowering local constituencies and engaging members in Sierra Club programs to improve the environmental health of our region for all community members.

SIERRASCAPE

**EASTERN MISSOURI GROUP
MISSOURI CHAPTER-SIERRA CLUB
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