



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group

JULY 2020

"We're here to take care of everything because everything was made before us." - David Greendeer

Support Bold and Equitable Climate Action in Our State

Wisconsinites can show their support and push for bold climate action at any of the upcoming virtual Climate Change Task Force meetings in July.

Governor Evers created the task force last October with an executive order and more than 30 leaders from a variety of state organizations and groups were chosen to collaborate on drafting measures that will reduce Wisconsin's carbon footprint and help communities statewide handle the effects of the climate crisis. The task force's plans will play a vital role in determining Wisconsin's climate future. Their actions could help us create green jobs, invest in public transit, and close coal plants statewide! But to achieve those goals, we have to lay the groundwork now, as the task force's deadline is quickly approaching.

The task force is due to present its policy recommendations by August 31. Let's push the task force towards effective, dynamic measures by showing up and voicing our support in virtual hearings and public comments! **All hearings will be held ONLINE from 6 to 8 p.m.**

Tuesday, July 7 - tiny.cc/CTF-0707

Thursday, July 9 - tiny.cc/CTF-0709

Wednesday, July 15 - tiny.cc/CTF-0715

Read the Sierra Club guide on SIX MAJOR ISSUE AREAS where we can push for policies that will make a climate difference. www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/blog/2020/06/support-bold-and-equitable-climate-action

July 8 Town Hall on Green Jobs with Senator Tammy Baldwin

On Tuesday July 8th at 11 a.m., Citizen Action of Wisconsin will host a major statewide ONLINE Town Hall, (via Zoom) with Senator Tammy Baldwin. Participants will learn about the new program Baldwin is proposing that would enable states and local organizations to scale up or establish subsidized employment programs that meet the needs of their communities, such as directly employing subsidized workers in public service and infrastructure jobs. Please RSVP for this event at tiny.cc/BaldwinTownHall The Zoom link will be sent to your email after you RSVP.

*AMERICAN DEMOCRACY was inspired by Indigenous example. By the time the first Europeans appeared in the hardwood forests along the Hudson River (Muh-he-kun-ne-tuk in Mohican), the Haudenosaunee peoples had already been organized into a self-governing commonwealth for some 15 generations. This living model of democratic decision-making made a lasting impression on the English colonists. "For all their government is by the Council or advice of the sages," Benjamin Franklin wrote. "Hence they generally study oratory; the best speaker having the most influence." - from **The Fundamental Law** by Jacqueline Keeler*
[\[www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2020-3-may-june/feature/native-americans-helped-invent-american-democracy-are-often-prevented-from-practicing-it\]](https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2020-3-may-june/feature/native-americans-helped-invent-american-democracy-are-often-prevented-from-practicing-it)



July 30: The Story of Plastic

THE STORY OF PLASTIC takes a sweeping look at the man-made crisis of plastic pollution and the worldwide effect it has on the health of our planet and the people who inhabit it. Spanning three continents, the film illustrates the ongoing catastrophe: fields full of garbage, veritable mountains of trash, rivers and seas clogged with waste, and skies choked with the poisonous emissions from plastic production and processing. Featuring interviews with experts and activists on the front lines of the fight, the film reveals the disastrous consequences of the flood of plastic smothering ecosystems and poisoning communities around the world, and the global movement that is rising up in response.

The Coulee Region Sierra Club is hosting a screening of this film in July with an online discussion (via Zoom) on Tuesday, July 30 at 7 p.m. Those who sign up for the screening will receive an emailed link to view. They will have until 5 p.m. on July 28 to watch the film on their own schedule in their own homes. A link to attend the July 30 discussion will be emailed by July 28. Sign up for the screening at tiny.cc/CRSC-PlasticFilm and view the film trailer at: <https://youtu.be/37PDwW0c1so>

Public Hearing Enbridge Line 5

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will host a **virtual public hearing on July 1** relating to Enbridge Energy's application for a waterway and wetland permit for the proposed reroute of the Line 5 pipeline in Ashland, Bayfield, and Iron counties. The hearing will also cover the proposed scope of the Environmental Impact Statement that will be prepared for the overall project.

The current Line 5 pipeline runs through northern Wisconsin, bisecting the reservation of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. In 2017, the Band chose not to renew the pipeline's easements, citing the increasing risk of an oil spill and the severe environmental pollution that would occur as a result. This has resulted in an ongoing legal battle.

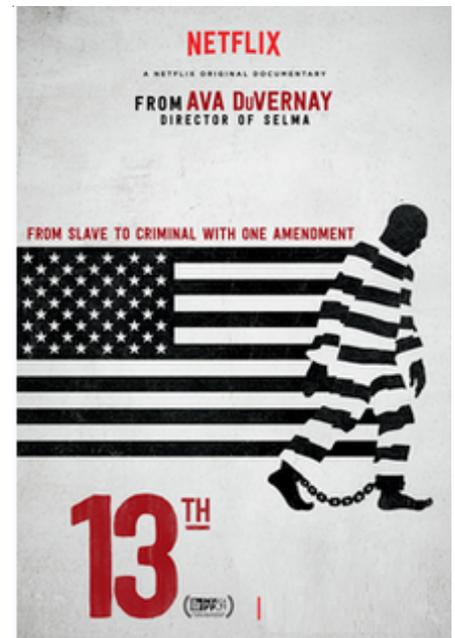
With the knowledge that the company will likely lose in court, Enbridge is seeking state approval for a new segment of the pipeline that skirts the edge of the Bad River Reservation. Any spill could still contaminate the watershed that feeds into the area's many rivers. The health and prosperity of tribal members, the region's wildlife and wetlands, and Lake Superior's coastline are all at risk as long as Line 5 is allowed to continue its operation in the area.

Please attend if you can and tell the DNR this project should NOT be allowed to proceed! [zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0tdOGprzsjHtVQOmLtxH3yisr8-h15i2-u](https://zoom.us/join/joinMeeting/register/tJ0tdOGprzsjHtVQOmLtxH3yisr8-h15i2-u)

July 7 Film Screening - 13th

Sierra Club's Ready for 100 team is hosting a special screening of the documentary, 13th on Tuesday, July 7 at 6:30 p.m.

Combining archival footage with testimony from activists and scholars, director Ava DuVernay's examination of the U.S. prison system looks at how the country's history of racial inequality drives the high rate of incarceration in America. This piercing, Oscar-nominated film won Best Documentary at the Emmys, the BAFTAs and the NAACP Image Awards.



RSVP to view the film's trailer and share with others! addup.sierraclub.org/events/rf100-film-screening-13th

Locally Grown, Nationally Known

Celebrating Wisconsin food, drink & grassroots activism

Join us for an online, social event! Connect with others from the comfort of your home during this fun-filled, interactive event highlighting locally grown Wisconsin food and the grassroots work of the John Muir Chapter. Sierra Club members across the state will be settling in with their favorite snack and beverage to:

- Enjoy a cooking demonstration by our guest chef
- Follow along as Marty the bartender mixes up a signature cocktail
- Learn about the chapter's work and how it connects to the ingredients being used
- Interact with staff, leaders, and other guests
- Play chapter trivia
- Leave with fresh insights and some favorite recipes from past events
- Support the work of the chapter by making a free-will donation

Registration is required! Prior to the start of the event you will be sent an email confirmation containing a link for the zoom event.

Attendance is free of charge. Signup here: tiny.cc/JMCFundraiser

La Crosse County opportunities

The Coulee Region Sierra Club Ready for 100 team is teaming up with Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Citizen Action Driftless Rural-Urban Co-op, and NextGen Wisconsin to encourage the La Crosse County board to pass a resolution pledging the county to 100% renewable energy use community-wide by 2050 or sooner. If you live in La Crosse County, please consider signing the petition (tiny.cc/LaXCounty100) and contacting your County Board representative.

Grow Solar La Crosse continues to offer online information sessions (Solar Power Hours) for La Crosse County residents and business owners wishing to explore adding solar to their properties. After the information session, people may sign up to receive a free site assessment and estimate of costs and benefits. Those who choose to go solar will have their systems installed by the end of the year if they sign up by September 30. The more who sign up, the less the cost of panels. Learn more at [GrowSolar.org/La Crosse](https://GrowSolar.org/LaCrosse). **The Coulee Region Sierra Club will co-host the July 20 Solar Power Hour at 5:30 p.m. ONLINE. Sign up at tiny.cc/CRSC-GrowSolar720**



Wisconsin Loves Parks 2020

Hiking. Exploring a new park. Playing BINGO to identify the nature around you, to win prizes and to advocate for increased accessibility in our state parks. Wisconsin Loves Parks 2020 is a family-friendly adventure that can be done any time between **July 3-12**.

We encourage you to enjoy this event with the people in your household. maintaining a six foot distance from others and wearing a mask if needed. Event details will be provided on July 3 via email. You can participate in any state park near you! Register at tiny.cc/WILovesParks20

State campgrounds have reopened with special conditions to ensure the safety of staff and visitors. Some of the changes that campers and park visitors will experience include automatic touchless check-in and new signs to educate visitors on recreating responsibly. Park offices will remain closed to the public.

Visitors should practice social distancing, refrain from congregating in large groups, travel only within their home communities, and follow all existing state park rules and guidelines. Visitors are also encouraged to wear masks in situations where social distancing is difficult. Please see dnr.wi.gov/covid-19/ for additional details regarding reservations, restrooms, firewood, and more.

*“... for many Indigenous peoples in North America, we are already living in what our ancestors would have understood as dystopian or post-apocalyptic times. In a cataclysmically short period, the capitalist-colonialist partnership has destroyed our relationships with thousands of species and ecosystems.” - from **White Allies, Let's Be Honest About Decolonization** by Dr. Kyle Powys Whyte [www.yesmagazine.org/issue/decolonize/2018/04/03/white-allies-lets-be-honest-about-decolonization]*

Around the Region

The **Crawford Stewardship Project** has made its May webinar on karst geology and water quality monitoring available online at youtu.be/6IX0s04pi7I

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The **Mississippi Valley Conservancy** is hosting a virtual tour of the Kickapoo Caverns on Saturday, July 11. Check the event page for more details and a link to view the online tour: www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org/events/kickapoo-caverns-virtual-tour-part-1

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The **Coalition for More Responsible Transportation (CMRT)** is hosting a webinar at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9 on the topic [Transportation and Racial Justice](#). Transportation, racial, social, and environmental justice all collide in ways that are imperative to address if we ever hope to see an equitable, accessible and clean transportation system in Wisconsin's future. Register at tinyurl.com/CMRT-RacialJustice.

Elections

Fellow Sierra Club members - we have been called to action. A federal appeals court recently upheld Republican voter restrictions which will make it harder for many to vote. A recent Journal-Sentinel article reports, "Wisconsin Republicans look to flip 6 seats for veto-proof legislative majority." (tiny.cc/WIElections) November elections will determine the future of mining and pipelines, CAFOs, fair maps, habitat protection, education priorities, carbon emissions, renewable energy, redistricting for the next ten years, clean water, transportation funding, and much more.

State elections are critical. The 32nd Senate District, the 94th Assembly District are both in our Coulee Region. Please get active now. Request an absentee ballot at myvote.wi.gov, donate to strong environmental candidates, volunteer for get out the vote and campaign efforts, talk to every person you know and encourage them to vote. We'll have more information in our August newsletter, but please don't wait to get involved.

If you click a link and it does not work, please try copying the link text and pasting it into your browser's address bar. Check for and remove any spaces in the address.

CSP: Extend the Monroe County CAFO Moratorium

From Crawford Stewardship Project Crawford County's Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) Study Committee work has been seriously delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is time for us to call for our county to utilize the CAFO Moratorium ordinance's built-in option for a one year moratorium extension. This is the legal and responsible action to take at this time. The reason for enacting the moratorium and to take a pause on permitting CAFO's was to give us time to use rational thought, scientific investigation, and collaboration to better understand and protect the health, safety, and welfare of our rural community.

Now is no time to rush the process and ignore the will of the people. The moratorium was passed so we could participate in the Driftless Area Water Study, which is delayed, with meaningful results not coming until 2021.

The CAFO Study Committee was supposed to listen to experts, examine evidence and then make policy and ordinance recommendations to the Crawford County Board. This task is next to impossible to complete in the current timeline, with the study committee report due in October 2020, and the moratorium expiring two months later.

Please Join Crawford Stewardship Project (crawfordstewardship.org) in this campaign!

- Write a letter to the editor! (we are happy to provide newspaper contacts and support)
- Contact Crawford County Conservationist Dave Troester: (608-326-0270) or dtroester@crawfordcountywi.org.
- Contact CAFO Committee and Land Conservation Chair Dave Olson: 608-648-3676 or 63824 Marigaard Road, De Soto, WI 54624.