



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group
DECEMBER 2024

We will be a force of nature and use every tool at our disposal to defend our democracy and critical environmental protections, and continue to build toward the clean energy economy and future we need." - Ben Jealous, Sierra Club Executive Director

Sierra Club Mission: *To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.*

Coulee Region Sierra Club Winter Holiday Potluck

* * * * for CRSC members and friends! * * *

Sunday, December 15 from 4 to 6 p.m.

1925 Main Street, La Crosse

Home of CRSC Board Member Dorothy Lenard

>>> PLEASE RSVP at <https://tinyurl.com/24CRSCWinterPotluck> <<<

Bring some food to share and/or a holiday dessert! Beverages provided.

If you wish, bring your own foodware.

Carpool at <https://tinyurl.com/24CRSCPotluckRide>

DUE TO GLUTEN ALLERGIES, PLEASE BRING ANY BREAD ITEMS IN THEIR OWN SEPARATE CONTAINER, ALREADY CUT.

Dec. 4 - 100 Years of Protection

The Chippewa Valley Group of Wisconsin Sierra Club will host an online program on Wednesday, December 4 at 7 p.m. recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and its work protecting the fish, birds, other wildlife, habitats and special ecosystems of the upper Mississippi River. Zoom link: <https://sierraclub.zoom.us/j/98649563954> For dial in information, please call 608-315-2693.



Dec. 14 - Christmas Bird Count

Audubon's 125th Christmas Bird Count will be held from Dec 14, 2024 to January 5, 2025! Feeder counters, people who count birds at their home bird feeder, are invited to participate. A feeder count can be as simple as a single count of the birds that are present at any time on that day (10 minutes will do) or it could be a compilation of multiple counts from different times throughout the day. Any level of time and effort is a big help and greatly appreciated!

To participate, contact Coulee Audubon as soon as possible at couleeregionaudubon@gmail.com.



Environmental Education Grants

For spring 2025, CRSC will offer grants of up to \$200 each for environmental education projects to schools or community organizations involving young people at the elementary and middle school level within the CRSC region: Crawford, Grant, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties.

Applications may be completed online, emailed or mailed. The deadline for applications is January 5, 2025 with awards by January 31. Learn more: sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee/Education.

Funding for this program is possible thanks to an annual grant from the Paul E. Stry Foundation, shared dues from club memberships, calendar sales, and donations made by community members. To donate, email CRSierraClub@gmail.com or call 608-315-2693.



Bird feeding project, St. Rose, Cuba City. A 2017 Environmental Education grant recipient.

More December Events

Dec. 3: Film: Our Planet - Behind the Scenes at 5:30 p.m. at the Lunda Center, Black River Falls. <https://www.blackrivercountry.net/event/friends-of-the-black-river-invites-public-to-its-movie-night-and-anniversary-celebration/>

Dec. 4: Enviro Wednesday, 7 p.m., at The Nature Place, Myrick Park, La Crosse <https://natureplacelacrosse.org/calendar/enviro-wednesdays-3-2024-12-04/>

Dec. 6, 11, 19: Mississippi Valley Conservancy prescribed burn preparation at Sugar Creek Bluff from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. RSVP at <https://forms.office.com/r/r73f4LYFXn>

Dec. 7: Holiday Happening at Kickapoo Valley Reserve <http://kvr.state.wi.us/Events/Calendar/>

Dec. 7: Nature Saturday, 9:30 a.m., at The Nature Place, Myrick Park <https://natureplacelacrosse.org/calendar/nature-saturday-2-2024-12-07/>

Dec. 15: Full Moon Forest Bathing Walk starting at Riverside Park in La Crosse \$ <https://www.rejuvenature.earth/upcoming-events/full-moon-forest-bathing-walk-mrhcb-2ysa4-st7n7-aways>

Jan. 7, 2025: WI Chapter Book Club - Crossings: How Road Ecology is Shaping the Future of Our Planet by Ben Goldfarb. 7 p.m. Online, <https://act.sierraclub.org/events/details?formcampaignid=7013q000002HuZmAAK&mapLinkHref=>

Outings Leader Training

If you have a love for the outdoors or have special places or activities you'd like to share with others, please consider becoming an outing leader. As an outing leader

you are the bridge that helps connect the people and places in your community. Once trained, you plan the outing and we will help promote it - let's work together to get people outside in 2025!



Training includes two sections. The first section is 'Sierra Club Leader Training' which covers Sierra Club specific policies and guidelines, and the second is 'Basic First AID/CPR.' Both are required in order to be certified by the Sierra Club to lead outings.

Leader training may be done online OR there will be one full in-person day on March 23rd in the Black River Falls area. For longer, overnight outings or water based outings, additional training is required.

If you are interested, sign-up by filling out the interest form at <https://act.sierraclub.org/actions/Wisconsin?actionId=AR0493110> or contact Heather at heather.wittrock@sierraclub.org for more information.

Save the Date!

Wisconsin Chapter Virtual Volunteer Fair - January 23, 6:30 p.m. online. Start the new year by learning how you can get involved and make a difference. There are countless ways to volunteer with the Sierra Club and we would love to help you find your fit and get started. We have in-person, virtual, regular, or occasional opportunities that fit all types of schedules. Join our virtual volunteer fair to learn more, ask questions, and meet others who are also looking for ways to make a positive impact and protect the environment.

Learn more and sign up to attend at <https://tinyurl.com/WISC-0125VolFair>



Coulee Region Sierra Club Board Elections Information and Ballot

Thank you for participating in the democratic process of electing your local Sierra Club representatives! Enter your member number and then vote for up to four candidates to begin two-year terms in January 2024. Candidate bios are below. Please complete one ballot per member (both members in a joint membership may cast ballots). You will receive a link to the online ballot and your member number in an email OR via postcard. We must have your member number so your ballot can be verified by the Election Committee. Please vote either with the online ballot OR by printing, completing, and mailing the ballot show below.

**** All ballots must be received by midnight December 30, 2024 ****

To use the ballot shown below, complete and mail it by **December 20 to 1815 Cameron Ave. La Crosse, WI 54601.**

Dorothy Lenard - Dorothy recently retired from her role as an Administrator for the School of Natural Sciences, Engineering and Math at Viterbo University. She has a degree from Michigan Technological University in Forest Hydrology and a Master's in Servant Leadership from Viterbo. She and her husband Rich grew up in a small bay town on Lake Michigan surrounded mostly by State land. Yes, she loves and misses the lake effect snowfalls and outdoor saunas in the winter. Having lived in all regions of the United States, they eventually chose the Driftless area to settle down in and raise their three children. She has been active in numerous community activities and boards. Her passion is studying the environment, especially water protection. While on the La Crosse City Council, she worked with others to pass in 2009 the City of La Crosse and County of La Crosse Strategic Plan for Sustainability. In the summer, her family has a huge community garden in their yard where their specialties are garlic and perennials. Preparing and sharing sustainable food with family and friends is her favorite hobby.

Flo Sandok - Flo has spent the last 50 years of her life working on environmental issues. She lobbied and worked actively on pesticide and herbicide reduction, particularly in her community (Rochester, Minnesota) and was part of a group passing legislation in Minnesota to require schools to notify parents if they sprayed lawns. Flo formed an environmental group called Global Action which she contacts to write emails and lend support to issues on a frequent basis. Her theory is that having an email backup group to amplify messages is very helpful. She has been a longtime supporter of protecting the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, having testified at hearings, and has been a long-time member of Sierra Club. She was part of the Rochester Sierra Club when they won grants to acquire land for area parkland. Flo has trained with Beyond Plastics and belongs to Viroqua Plastic Free which is working with the local Chamber of Commerce to put on waste-free events and hosting a series of education forums at the public library. She is deeply interested in wildlife conservation and is working with the Wisconsin Farmers Union to draft language to make their policies more beneficial to wolves. She has lobbied in the legislature in St. Paul and is committed to reducing climate change wherever possible. Flo's home in Viroqua, has geothermal and solar and they drive an electric car. Flo is committed to working for a livable planet.

Avery Van Gaard - Avery was born and raised in La Crosse, as well as rural Vernon County. She has worked as a crew lead at Coulee Region Ecoscapes, a local landscaping business that centers planting native plants, installing rain gardens, and supporting other ecologically beneficial practices. She has served on the board of the Coulee Region Sierra Club group for several years and was previously a representative of the group to the Executive Committee. When she is not working, Avery has assisted in the group's campaigns and events - from the 2017 Water Quality Forum to the current "Ready for 100" campaign.



Coulee Region Sierra Club Board Elections - Ballot

Vote (X) for up to three people. Mail your ballot by **December 20** to ensure it is delivered by **December 30**. If you vote online, please do not use the mail-in ballot. Email CRSierraClub@gmail.com OR call 608-315-2693 with questions.

MEMBER NUMBER (REQUIRED): _____

_____ Dorothy Lenard

_____ (write in)

_____ Flo Sandok

_____ (write in)

_____ Avery Van Gaard

_____ (write in)