



It's Our Nature

Newsletter of the Fox Valley Sierra Group of the Wisconsin Chapter of the Sierra Club Vol. 22 Issue 1

Fox Valley Sierra Group Meetings

May 12, 2022 - 6:00pm

TBA

Currently we do not have a speaker lined up. Check for an email, our website or our facebook page. This will be a Zoom meeting.

June 9, 2022 - 7:00pm

**“Eat Your Weedies”
with Jessica Miller**

**1000 Islands Environmental Center
(1000 Beaulieu Ct. Kaukauna)**

This is an in-person Meeting!!

What do dandelions, stinging nettles, garlic mustard, chickweed, plantain and lambs quarters all have in common? We can harvest them for food and medicinal purposes! Spring and summer are a wonderful time in Wisconsin for gathering nature's bounty of weeds to fill your refrigerator or pantry, add a few accompaniments to a market purchased meal, craft a first aid ointment for bug bites or just get into the out-of-doors and learn a new skill. We'll discuss the do's and don'ts of harvesting plants and what vegetation to harvest based on the season as well as their uses and benefits.

Presenter Bio: Jessica Miller is a naturalist at Mosquito Hill Nature Center in New London, WI with over 20 years of experience teaching environmental education/appreciation. She recently completed a 1400-hour herbalism program and has been incorporating her knowledge of medicinal plants with her affinity for all things outdoors into her public programs. When not touting the joys of nature to all who will listen, Jessica enjoys hiking, biking, gardening, doing and teaching yoga, traveling and eating the items she's grown and foraged. Eat Your Weedies!

July - No meeting

August 11, 2022 - 6:00pm

Summer Picnic

**High Cliff State Park - Pines Shelter
(Lower park area left of the beach)**

Come share your summer with fellow Sierrans. Grill will be provided. Bring a dish to pass, your own meat for grilling, beverages, and place setting.

www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley
www.facebook.com/foxvalleysierra

From the Chair

May 2022 - Penny Paiser-Wilson

I hope you're all taking the opportunity to get outside and enjoy the return of the birds, the new shoots breaking ground and the swelling of the buds. We on the Fox Valley Sierra Group board have been working hard getting ready to reopen in person outings and meetings. Be sure to check out those opportunities tucked in the pages below as well as events yet to come on our website and Facebook page as spring and summer develop.

I also want to call your attention to the many environmental updates included in this issue. There have been positive developments in the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant renewal process, the Kinnard Farms CAFO permit and with the wolf situation here in Wisconsin, due in part to all of you making your voice heard after our meetings on those topics in previous months. At the time of this writing, the outcome of the Conservation Congress is not known but Chapter let me know that they had heard from many of you about writing resolutions immediately after our March meeting. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for being actively involved in protecting the animals, water quality and natural beauty of Northeastern Wisconsin.

Also in this issue, is an update of some proposed mining in our state, reminding us that we must always be vigilant and there is always more to be done. On that subject, please be sure to reach out to a board member if you become aware of an issue of which our group should be made aware. We are always looking for topics for our monthly meetings and actionable steps.

January 14th 1982 was the first meeting of the Fox Valley Sierra group making this year our 40th anniversary! We want to plan a party for December to celebrate the impact we've all made together during the past four decades. Be watching for more details soon.

Finally, a reminder to everyone that many hands make for light work. Your Fox Valley Sierra Group board can use your skills, no matter what they are and where your interests lie. Please volunteer whatever moments you can spare.

Have a wonderful spring and remember not to mow those dandelions. Our pollinator friends need them and you can eat them! See you out and about.

Let me introduce myself

Hello everyone. My name is Penny Paiser-Wilson and I'm your new Fox Valley Sierra Group Chair. As many of you know, our longtime fearless leader, Alan Lawrence, moved to Virginia this past fall leaving huge shoes to fill on our board. I hesitantly stepped into the shoes this past February.

I moved to the Fox Valley with my husband Gabriel in 1994 after completing graduate work in music at The Ohio State University. I took a teaching position with a Neenah Joint School District where I worked for 25 years. My husband and I are both active musicians in the community. I am a clarinetist with the Fox Valley Symphony orchestra and will be conducting the orchestra pit for this Summer's Kaukauna Community Players production of Cinderella where he will play trumpet. Together, we form the band Love, Light & Harmony, playing kirtan in yoga studios throughout Wisconsin and Minnesota and singer-songwriter at Farmers Markets, festivals and special events.

I have been a life-long environmental and animal advocate, competing in environmental speaking competitions starting in grade school, belonging to various environmental groups throughout my education and continually working to live sustainably and mindfully of our precious mother Earth and all her inhabitants. I am an avid gardener, interested in growing organic, sustainable food and am an advocate for humane and environmental farming practices. I love foraging and making my own food and medicine from nature's bounty. In addition, my husband and I enjoy hiking, biking and kayaking.

It wasn't until 2017 that I became involved with the Sierra club, working in Madison on a climate change march. After the march, Elizabeth Ward, our chapter director, introduced me to Allen and I became a member of the board here in the Fox Valley serving as the social media chairperson as well as the conservation chairperson. If you attended our October meeting, you may remember I taught a class on Winter Gardening in Wisconsin.

As your new chairperson, I want to continue our rich tradition of educating our members and the community of the precious beauty that we can enjoy here in our area and the need to advocate for and protect all that surrounds us. I hope you'll help me in this endeavor by letting me know about topics, issues and opportunities you would like to see us addressed in our monthly meetings and as service projects.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming in-person meetings and outings, and if you happen to see our band at one of the many Farm Markets or music venues in the area, be sure to stop and say hello!

OUTINGS

May 6-8, Friday-Sunday

Group Camping and Garlic Mustard pull at High Cliff State Park

A group site is reserved Friday and Saturday night. We will enjoy the outdoors, fresh air, relaxing around the campfire and maybe a game or a hike. Saturday morning-early afternoon we will be pulling garlic mustard. Food and gear are on your own. We will be tenting but there are a couple of small camper spaces available. We will share the cost of camping and firewood.

Sign up by May 3rd. Monny Hjerstedt, 920-558-0013 text/call, mhjerstedt17@gmail.com

May 7, Saturday

Garlic Mustard Service Trip - High Cliff State Park

For those of you who do not want to join us camping you can still come for the day pulling those nasty garlic mustard plants. Meet us at our group campground site #206 at 9:30 and we take a short hike to the Indian Mounds Trail. Bring a lunch, water and maybe gloves.

Sign up by May 3rd. Monny Hjerstedt, 920-558-0013 text/call, mhjerstedt17@gmail.com

June 21, Tuesday evening

Summer Solstice hike at Mosquito Hill, New London, WI

We will be led by a Mosquito Hill naturalist. Hopefully we will see a beautiful sunset. Details to follow. Signup will be through Mosquito Hill.

**There may be other outings
this spring and summer.
Keep watch for those on
facebook or our website.**

Explore, Enjoy and Protect

Garlic Mustard out competes many tree seedlings and other native vegetation. It adversely affects native insects and other wildlife. Control strategies must be applied for eight or more years until the garlic mustard seed bank is depleted. Vulnerable areas, especially woodlands, should be monitored each spring to promptly detect new invasions and prevent re-occurrence. Our local Sierra Club has been working on the patch by the Indian Mounds Trail for years and it is working.



Photo by Wi DNR

Wisconsin Wolf Update

Laura Menefee

Federal Endangered Species Act protections were restored for wolves in most of the Lower 48, including the Great Lakes, but omitting the Northern Rocky Mountains population, which is now under Federal review. The court decision relied in part on the fact that removal from the Endangered Species list fails to address that wolves continue to face hostile management policies in much of the area they've recolonized. The 2021 Wisconsin wolf cull played a significant role in the court's ruling, as does the high incidence of poaching in the Great Lakes.

Return to Federal protections means that wolves can only be lethally removed in incidents of threat to human safety, a threat which remains extremely low. Two human deaths were attributed to wolves in North America in the past 120 years, with evidence that was circumstantial. Nevertheless, US Senators Johnson and Baldwin have co-sponsored a bill to permanently remove Wisconsin wolves from ESA protections, prohibiting further judicial review.

Another statement in the court's ruling to return Great Lakes wolves to ESA protections cited the need for an update to Wisconsin's 1999 Wolf Management Plan. That plan listed 350 as a population goal for Wisconsin's wolves, below which number, Wisconsin wolves would automatically return to State protections. That goal is not a population "cap," but rather a goal population minimum. WDNR biologists recognize the need for an update to the 1999 plan, and have formed an advisory committee of stakeholders overwhelmingly stacked in favor of wolf removal interests, fifteen including hunters' associations such as Bear Hounders, trappers, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, livestock producers and government agencies traditionally allied with hunting interests. An organization awarded one of the six "Conservation interest" seats this author has never

before heard of, "Wisconsin Conservation Voices," could not be reached for comment after repeated attempts. The committee includes six Tribal Government representatives.

Any updated plan would remain circumscribed by Wisconsin's Act 169, passed in the middle of the night within hours of the 2011 de-listing. That Act legislatively mandates that a wolf hunt be held between November and March, which includes breeding season, during any year in which wolves are not federally protected. How this would affect any State protections imposed by WDNR remains unclear, but the 2021 challenge by an out-of-state hunting group, "Hunter Nation" to the WDNR's decision to "hold off" on a wolf hunt during breeding season February, 2021 was successful: the number of wolves killed exceeded the WDNR quota of 130 by 68%, eliminating 220 wolves in only three days, mostly with the use of hounds. Wolves were overwhelmingly targeted in prime habitat where there are few, if any, livestock producers, in areas popular among bear hounders. The state currently reimburses resident and out-of-state hounders for hounds killed or injured by wolves at the rate of \$2500 per hound.

While the bill co-sponsored by Johnson and Baldwin purports to address losses by livestock producers, wolves are responsible for less than 1% of all livestock loss. The species receiving the highest depredations payouts in the state remains hunting hounds, over one million dollars for hounds killed and injured over the wolf re-colonization period, accounting for one third of the state's depredations payouts for all species (see: <https://p.widencdn.net/7o52me/WolfDamagePayments>). While wolves remain federally protected, livestock producers do have non-lethal protections options, including the implementation of proven husbandry practices. Financial assistance for producers is available from Wisconsin's USDA Wildlife Services who received a \$60,000 grant from USFWS in 2021.

Drilling For Gold in Wisconsin

Plans to conduct exploratory drilling for gold and copper in north-central Wisconsin appear to be moving ahead now that a Canadian mining company has received an exploration license.

GreenLight Metals, a Toronto-based company, submitted a \$5,000 bond to the state and received an exploration license on Feb. 17 doing business as Green Light Wisconsin. The license expires June 30, but can be renewed.

The company also filed technical reports with Canadian authorities this month on the Reef and Bend mineral deposits in Taylor and Marathon counties, stating the deposits contain copper and gold reserves of “economic interest” that warrant further exploration.

The Bend deposit, located within the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest in Taylor County, contains 4 million tons of mostly copper and gold. The Reef deposit, which is roughly 12 miles east of Wausau in Marathon County, contains around 454,000 tons of gold reserves.

According to the reports, the company plans on conducting an exploration program “in due course” for the Bend deposit and begin compiling data on the Reef site this year. Even so, the company would need more approvals before it begins drilling, according to Ben Callan, chief of the integration services section at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

“They would have to take another step of filing a notice of intent with the department,” said Callan. “Then, in that submittal, they would detail what their plan is.”

Callan said the company plans to collect updated information on wetlands and surrounding habitat during the growing season that would be incorporated into its plan. Additional permits might be necessary.

In a statement, GreenLight Metals President and CEO Dan Colton said officials haven’t finalized a timeline around their plans.

“GreenLight is in the process of filing the paperwork required to obtain the necessary permits and

authorization for work to begin so we can provide a significant economic boost to the region while protecting our environment and transitioning our country as it accelerates toward green, clean energy,” said Colton.

Colton said the company looks forward to helping meet a rising demand for “clean energy metals” nationwide.

The transition to clean energy technologies is set to increase demand for minerals like lithium, nickel and copper, according to the International Energy Agency. Gold isn’t listed among them.

A 2021 report by the agency said demand for copper is expected to grow more than 40 percent to reach goals under the Paris Climate Agreement, adding existing mines would supply 80 percent of copper needs by 2030.

GreenLight Metals bought interests in the deposits for roughly \$5.5 million last year from Toronto-based Aquila Resources.

The company has four prospecting permit applications that are pending with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which officials hope to receive this year.

The company’s geological consultant recommended drilling seven boreholes in two phases at the Bend site. At the Reef site, drilling would be conducted in grids at six sites with 15 boreholes in each grid. The cost of the exploration is expected to run around \$1.3 million combined.

Metals like gold and copper that occur in sulfide ore bodies haven’t been mined in Wisconsin since the Flambeau mine shut down in 1997. The mine served as a catalyst for the state’s sulfide mining moratorium that was repealed in 2017 under a law passed by the Republican-controlled state Legislature.

The moratorium required companies to prove other mines operated and then were closed for 10 years without causing environmental harm.

Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant Update

For those of you that attended our January presentation by Physicians for Social Responsibility or have been following the license extension process for the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant, that extension has been put on hold!!!

Because of the work and diligence of many organizations and citizen voices across the country, including those from the Fox Valley Sierra Group, the NRC was held accountable to environmental regulations.

A lawsuit at Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant in Florida as well as a coalition of folks including PSR WI pushing the NRC on their faults has forced the NRC to recognize their violation of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) when it comes to issuing and assessing plants that are applying for their second 20 year licenses (aka subsequent license renewals) which is what Point Beach is doing. The NRC was using an inadequate Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). This means they will be considering more environmental impacts and should be using recent data on climate change and renewable energy scenarios.

We do not know the new timeline for the new generic environmental impact statement to be made and processed. And we do not know the new timeline for the license renewal process. Through a few technical pieces, this development means PSR WI will also be able to bring our legal contention about alternative energy scenarios in front of the NRC again and argue our case legally.

Congratulations. You made a difference!

Industry officials hope the 2017 law will open the door to mining and bring high-paying jobs, while environmental groups and tribes fear it will lead to environmental degradation.

“Mining naturally digs into groundwater and exposes groundwater and drinking water to potential contamination,” said Dave Blouin, mining committee chair of Sierra Club’s Wisconsin Chapter.

Both the Bend and Reef deposits are near water resources that include the north branch of the Yellow River in Taylor County and Eau Claire River in Marathon County.

The pending permits at the Bend site would cover sections of the Kidrick Swamp State Natural Area. The state’s nonferrous metallic mining law includes state natural areas as land deemed “unsuitable” for mining. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported residents near the Reef site have feared any development of that deposit may pollute another state natural area: The Dells of the Eau Claire River.

Blouin said technical reports filed by the company are early estimates of resources that exist.

The company’s consultant cautioned its findings relied on historical data, saying verification and re-drilling are necessary. The reports added there can be no assurance the resources might become economically viable.

GreenLight Metals is among many companies that have showed interest in the deposits.

Aquila Resources last explored the Bend and Reef mineral deposits in Taylor and Marathon counties a decade ago.

Aquila is the same company that sought to build the Back Forty mine near the Menominee River on the Michigan-Wisconsin border. The project experienced setbacks on its mining and wetlands permits last year, and Gold Resource Corp. bought Aquila in December. Gold Resource is conducting a feasibility study of the project and hopes to obtain permits next year.

Do you have an idea for a speaker for one of our monthly Fox Valley Sierra Group Meetings? Is there a topic or issue you want more information on? Let us know. We want to hear from you. Contact Penny at wilscats@new.rr.com with your ideas for upcoming Sierra events.

WI Land+Water 2022 Youth Conservation Camp Opportunities

Two unique conservation summer camp opportunities are available for middle and high school students this summer in Wisconsin. Youth in neighboring states are welcome to attend. These camps provide fun outdoor experiences, help foster an appreciation for nature, and introduce a variety of opportunities in natural resources and conservation careers. Natural resource professionals present programs on wildlife, habitat, water quality, soils, forestry, outdoor skills, and more. Engaging speakers and interesting topics give campers an opportunity to participate in hands-on activities, learn outdoor skills, make new friends, participate in typical 'summer camp' experiences, and enjoy Wisconsin's beautiful outdoors.

Middle school youth (entering 6-8th grade in fall) are invited to attend the WI Land+Water Middle School Conservation Camp June 15-June 18, 2022 held at Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center, Wisconsin Dells (Juneau County). The registration fee is \$200.00, and registration is due May 31 (fee increases to \$250.00 after registration deadline) and includes lodging, meals, snacks, t-shirt, and all activities/programs. To learn more, visit: wisconsinlandwater.org/our-work/youth-education/conservation-camp/middle-school-camp-registration

High school youth (entering 9-12th grade in fall; must be 17 or under) are invited to participate in the WI Land+Water High School Conservation Camp, June 20-June 23, 2022 at the North Lakeland Discovery Center in Manitowish Waters (Vilas County). Wildlife programs, habitat restoration projects, daily field trips, teambuilding activities, and hands-on activities provide an in-depth look at natural resources

management and careers. Registration fee is \$350.00, and registration is due May 31 (fee increases to \$400.00 after registration deadline) and includes all programs, meals, snacks, lodging and a t-shirt. To learn more, visit: wisconsinlandwater.org/our-work/youth-education/conservation-camp/high-school-camp-registration

Students are encouraged to apply for the Brad Matson Memorial Conservation Camp

Scholarships. Find more information at <https://wisconsinlandwater.org/our-work/youth-education/conservation-camp>

Students can also contact their local County Land Conservation Department to see if they offer camp scholarships: <https://wisconsinlandwater.org/members-hub/members>

To learn more about both camps, view the camp brochures at: <https://wisconsinlandwater.org/our-work/youth-education/conservation-camp>

For questions contact Kim Warkentin at the Wisconsin Land+Water at 608-441-2677 or email kim@wisconsinlandwater.org. Registrations are first-come, first-served, and space is limited at both camps.

###

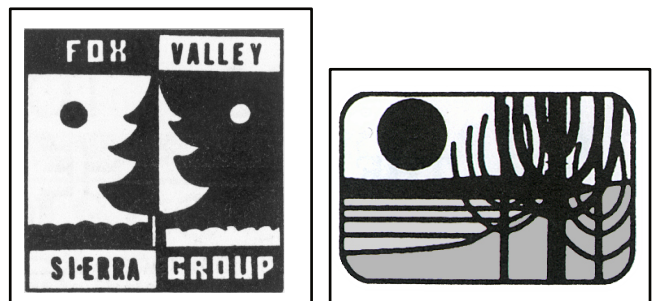
WI Land+Water is a nonprofit organization that supports the local and statewide efforts of all county land conservation committee supervisors and conservation staff across Wisconsin. Its mission is to protect, conserve, and enhance Wisconsin's natural resources by advocating for and supporting county conservation efforts, for current and future generations.

Fox Valley Sierra Group is celebrating 40 years

National Sierra Club logos over 130 years



Fox Valley Sierra Group logos & graphics over 40 years



It's Our Nature

Note from the Outgoing Chairperson

It has been a great honor for me to have been allowed to wear the hat of Group Chairperson for 19 years. It has been a superb privilege to represent and lead our group. It has exposed me to opportunities along the way. It has enriched me and given me special standing in our community, and to some extent even in State Government. And it has helped me create friendships with Sierra Club members within our State Chapter, and contacts in the national organization.

I can't say it has always been wonderful. The position can be a lot of work. Fortunately, I have worked with an excellent team of board members all these years. They each have important roles, and collectively we've been able to lead our Fox Valley Group. Other members also do things to make us successful.

Our group is now in its 40th year, beginning in 1982 with Dale Schaber serving as our first chairperson. Six other people served as chairperson before I accepted the role. I am pleased to pass the role to Penny Paiser-Wilson. She has served several years on our board, and I believe she will be very capable as our newest Group Chairperson.

Our board has diminished over the years, and really needs a few more people to help. Serving on the board are Monny and Jo Hjerstedt, Will Stahl, Rich Krieg and Laura Menefee. Diane Perschbacher serves as our treasurer, attends board meetings and is very valuable, though she has chosen not to be a board member.

I have retired from a career as an IT professional. My wife (Diana) and I decided to move to Virginia to spend the next part of our lives. This is what really made it necessary for both of us to step down from the leadership of the Fox Valley Group. I intend to remotely watch the group and remain in contact with some of my friends here.

There have been too many wonderful times with our group for me to pretend to identify some favorites over the years. There have been outings of many kinds, including hiking, biking, skiing, snowshoeing, canoeing, camping, and service work. There have

been meetings, trainings, picnics, and parties. And there have been rallies and protests and trips to the State Capitol to talk with legislators. Quite a bit of travel, event preparation, and lots of friends and good times. I am so glad that I joined Sierra Club many years ago and that I got involved with group leadership. It has been a significant part of my life and satisfaction of life these many years.

In my new community near Roanoke, Virginia we have intended to take a break for a while. But I've already found myself writing to my town mayor and council



persons about acquiring land and building trails. Maybe habits are hard to break.

Different communities have different problems, but we all have some that are the same. A regional issue I've been paying attention to in my new home involves a gas pipeline crossing our mountains. It has its environmental issues, and currently the project is stopped. But, as much as I don't like its harmful and ugly qualities (it makes rivers muddy during construction, and it leaves wide exposed paths through forested mountains) I must admit that I am a consumer of natural gas and that I would not like to be without the resource. We must hold companies responsible for their actions, but we must also help with solutions.

Thank you for the many wonderful years with the Fox Valley Group.

~Alan Lawrence
alan_lawrence99@yahoo.com
920-422-2347

Fox Valley Sierra Group
Of The Wisconsin Chapter Of The Sierra Club

P.O. Box 124
Neenah, WI 54957

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
APPLETON WI
PERMIT 39



It's Our Nature

Newsletter of the Fox Valley Sierra Group of the Wisconsin Chapter of the Sierra Club Vol. 22 Issue 1

sierraclub.org/wisconsin/foxvalley

FOX VALLEY SIERRA GROUP CONTACTS

Chairperson, Conservation,

Facebook

Penny Paiser-Wilson • (920) 720-9741
133 Klompen Court,
Neenah 54956-4352
wilscats@new.rr.com

Vice Chair, Chapter Delegate, Chapter Conservation Chair, Group Political Chair

Will Stahl • (920) 725-9185
216 Stevens St., Neenah 54956
wrsy55@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer

Diane Perschbacher • (920) 216-2159
2531 Bruce Ct., Neenah 54956-6108
DPerschbacher1@new.rr.com

Newsletter Editor, Web, Communications

Monny Hjerstedt • (920) 558-0013
567 Oak St., Neenah 54956
mhjerstedt17@gmail.com

Outings, Forestry,

Land Management

Rich Krieg • (920) 660-3557
1428 S. Clay St., Green Bay 54301
richkrieg@new.rr.com

Environmental Education

Laura Menefee • (920) 824-5339
Menefee.laura@gmail.com

Secretary, Membership, Hospitality

Jo Hjerstedt • (920) 479-4900
567 Oak St., Neenah 54956
jhjerstedt@hotmail.com

Stay up-to-date on the latest environmental news, outings, programs and events by checking out our website at sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley or find us on [facebook.com/foxvalleysierra](https://www.facebook.com/foxvalleysierra)

It's Our Nature is published three times a year
by the Fox Valley Sierra Group,
P.O. Box 124, Neenah, WI 54957.

Subscription included with
Sierra Club membership dues.
To Join - www.sierraclub.org



FVSG web site