

# THE MUIR VIEW



NEWS OF THE SIERRA CLUB IN WISCONSIN - [wisconsin.sierraclub.org](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org)

## Group Boundary Reorganization Member input sought

By Elizabeth Ward, Conservation Programs Coordinator and Liz Wessel, Membership Committee Chair, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter

The Executive Committee of the John Muir Chapter is seeking member input on a proposal to revise the boundaries of local Sierra Club groups in Wisconsin. Under the new framework, group territory would be determined by county lines rather than by zip code. These changes, recommended by chapter staff, are intended to empower the local groups and create a clear pathway for members, supporters and volunteers to engage in the issues that matter most to them.

As the nation's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots organization, the Sierra Club's power lies in its members and their ability to address environmental issues at the national, state and local level. Local groups are an essential part of that equation. They are led by volunteers, and have their own governing body and ability to address local conserva-

tion issues under the umbrella of the statewide chapter. The chapter supports the groups by providing resources, helping build leadership and providing a framework for local activism, action and volunteerism.

The John Muir Chapter currently has six active groups; however, with the recent disbanding of the Wisconsin River County and St. Croix Valley Interstate Groups, over a third of the state is not covered by a group. Much of this undesignated territory lies in the northern and central parts of the state where important issues like taconite and sand mining, tar sands expansion, logging, and factory farming threaten our environment. Harnessing the power of our membership in those areas will provide an opportunity for members to organize and confront these issues head-on.

### CURRENT GROUP BOUNDARIES



### PROPOSED GROUP BOUNDARIES



For existing groups the current boundaries can be difficult to decipher. When the boundaries were last updated, postal mail was the main source of communication. Therefore, getting bulk mail rates for newsletters and other mailings was critical and having boundaries based on zip codes made sense. With more and more communication becoming electronic, along with an increase in membership throughout the state, this is no longer necessary. Switching to boundaries

based on county lines will make it much easier to identify group territories and will increase the efficiency for groups working on county-wide issues or endorsing in county elections.

Continued on pg. 14



### Attend the 2014 Autumn Assembly with Keynote Speaker Ron Seely!

By Shahla Werner, PhD, Director, John Muir Chapter  
Sierra Club's Autumn Assembly, featuring keynote speaker Ron Seely, will take place October 10 to 12 at the Phantom Lake YMCA Camp in Mukwonago, Wisconsin. The camp, founded in 1896, sits on 72 acres of scenic woodlands and

offers a variety of opportunities for attendees to connect with nature. This year's assembly, hosted by the Great Waters Group, whose territory includes the Greater Milwaukee Area, will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act and include updates Continued on pg. 10

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# FROM THE CHAIR

*Enjoy all that Wisconsin has to offer!*

As I write this, spring is plodding into summer. By the time you read it long days of sunlight will be upon us. It's time to hike, camp, bike and paddle! Or, perhaps it's time to sit on a porch with binoculars, or stroll through a flower garden looking for butterflies and hummingbirds. There is always a way to commune with the natural world.

That's a key dimension of Sierra Club's philosophy – think of our motto, "Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet." It fuels much of the energy we devote to our advocacy.



Yesterday, I was delighted by the first-ever appearance of an indigo bunting at my bird feeders, and I'm so glad I didn't take those feeders down early. Nature just keeps rewarding our efforts, doesn't it? If you plant fruit-bearing native dogwoods or serviceberries in your yard, you are likely to be rewarded someday by a flock of elegant cedar waxwings. We can help create and sustain much to be grateful for on this yin side of our being.

On the yang side however, I spent the last couple of weeks learning about and sharing Enbridge Inc.'s plans to jack up capacity for Pipeline 61 in Wisconsin, to carry Canadian Tar Sands crude oil on its route from Superior south to Delavan, then to Illinois refineries and beyond. While the media has focused attention on President Obama's Keystone XL pipeline conundrum, Enbridge quietly planned to force

even higher flow through this existing 42-inch pipe, enabling it to carry 1.2 million barrels per day. This tar sands "bitumen," as the thick gunk is called, is diluted with caustic chemicals, heated and pumped under high pressure. It is more likely to rupture pipe and much harder to clean up. (Just ask the folks in Marshall, Michigan where over \$1 billion has been spent cleaning up the Kalamazoo River following Enbridge's 2010 spill.) Line 61 runs southward a little over 3 miles west of my house. Does it run near yours? Does it cross your favorite stream? Had you even heard of it previously? You can read more about this issue on page 4 of this newsletter and on the John Muir Chapter website, including our public comments delivered at an air permit hearing by Shari Eggleston.

Have you heard of the John Muir Chapter's effort to revisit our local group boundaries across the state? Liz Wessel and the membership committee are actively seeking input from members. Please look over the map in this issue and provide your comments using the survey on page 15. We hope to make it easy for you to get involved in a local group or start one up if there isn't one near you! Finally, be sure to read about our upcoming big events:

- Wilderness Act 50th Anniversary celebration in the Apostle Islands September 27, a great time of year to visit northern Wisconsin and Lake Superior.
- Our annual Autumn Assembly on October 10-12 near Mukwonago. Get up to date on what's happening and socialize.

In the meantime, sign up and attend a group or chapter outing, and make some new friends -- enjoy all that Wisconsin has to offer!

*Jim Kerler*

*Chair, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter*

## THE MUIR VIEW

222 S. Hamilton, Suite 11, Madison, WI 53703

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Please include the author's first and last names, and day and evening phone numbers at the top. Acceptance of submission contingent upon availability of space and must meet Sierra Club guidelines.

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**DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2014 ISSUE IS AUGUST 15**

# Join Us: Apostle Islands Boat Tour

To Celebrate 50th Anniversary of Wilderness Act *by Sophia Callahan, Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter Volunteer*

Fifty years ago, the passing of the Wilderness Act designated millions of acres of wilderness as protected land to be regulated by the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). Since then, 757 wilderness areas have become protected places throughout the United States. Wisconsin's seven wilderness areas contribute to our state's natural beauty and provide havens for recreation and retreat. In the last edition of *The Muir View*, Chapter Director Shahla Werner shared fond memories of her experiences at Sylvania Wilderness Recreation Area, located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, not far from the Wisconsin border. There is no doubt that we all have great stories or comforting memories of time spent in areas of pristine wilderness—time made possible by the continuing commitment to preserve such areas for our country and the world's enjoyment and for ecological health.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act which protected these special areas from development and disturbance, the John Muir Chapter is planning a unique and exciting opportunity to explore part of the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness Area on the shores of Lake Superior. Join us on Saturday, September 27, 2014 as we take a two-hour boat tour of the spectacular Apostle Islands, just off the Bayfield Peninsula. The boat will leave at 1 p.m. from the Bayfield City Dock (just past 20 Rittenhouse Avenue, Bayfield) and will return around 3 p.m. On board, we will have distinguished guest speakers, including Tia Nelson, daughter of former senator and pioneering conservationist Gaylord Nelson; Mike Wiggins Jr., chair of the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Ojibwe; Neil Howk, assistant chief of interpretation and education, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, National Park Service; and Dave Blouin, Mining Committee chair, Sierra Club - John Muir Chapter. Presenters



will discuss the valuable natural and cultural resources of the region and share insights on the potential impacts of the proposed taconite mine on Lake Superior, the Apostle Islands, the Kakagon Sloughs and the Bad River Watershed. There will also be ample opportunities to relax and admire the gorgeous scenery.

Prior registration is necessary for the tour as space is limited. The ticket price is \$25. Tickets can either be purchased by visiting the Wilderness Act website (<http://www.wilderness50th.org/>) and clicking on the map to find our event or via phone (608-256-0565). There are also a very limited number of complimentary tickets available to students, tribal members and members of the Sierra Club Mining Committee. If you qualify for one of these spots, please contact Shahla Werner ([shabla.werner@sierraclub.org](mailto:shabla.werner@sierraclub.org)) prior to registering. These tickets are available first

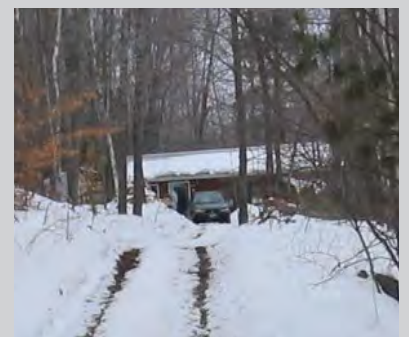
come, first-serve.

Although we won't have time to dock and explore the Apostle Islands themselves during our brief foray, this Wilderness Area offers a variety of fantastic outing opportunities. There are more than 50 miles of trails available for hiking on the islands, with an additional five miles of lakeshore trails on the mainland which are open to the public year-round. Around the islands there are dozens of excellent places to camp, bike and kayak inexpensively. Some of the islands also feature historic lighthouses.

This is a unique opportunity to see and learn about these precious natural assets that are the Apostle Islands. Join us to enjoy the astounding array of autumn colors on the shores of Lake Superior and celebrate the Wilderness Act!

## For Sale by Owner

Older cabin on 6+ wooded acres carpeted with wintergreen & ferns, vernal pond/swamp with blue-spotted salamanders, wood frogs, spring peepers and pileated woodpeckers in ageing aspens; large red maples for syruping. Enjoy wood thrush, alder flycatchers, trilliums, wood anemones, juneberries & more. Winterized cabin has stainless steel chimney liner for woodstove, LP wall furnace. Half hour NW of Green Bay \$70,000. Text/call 920-604-8069 or email [sundj30@hotmail.com](mailto:sundj30@hotmail.com)



# Is Wisconsin the New Tar Sands Central?

By Don Ferber, John Muir Chapter Executive Committee

While nearly everyone was focused on the Keystone XL pipeline, the Enbridge Corporation has been quietly working to expand tar sands line 61 through Wisconsin from Superior to Delavan from a “mere” 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) to over 1.2 million bpd by the end of 2015! This includes upgrades to three existing pumping stations this year, and a major “upgrade” of nine additional pumping stations in Wisconsin next year. By way of comparison, Keystone XL is proposed to be “only” 830,000 bpd.

Should you be worried? Very! As a state that is “open for business” and having a legislature and Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) focused on developing rather than preserving our precious environmental heritage, concerns over safeguarding our lands and waters are warranted. In 2010, an Enbridge pipeline with one-sixth of the flow proposed for line 61 spilled nearly 1 million gallons of tar sands crude into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. Four years and \$1 billion later, it’s still not cleaned up. Other means of transporting tar sands by rail and water are even more risky!

The proposed expansion is not surprising. Tar sands industries are desperate to get as much tar sands out of Canada as quickly as possible, with transport being the main impediment. New pipelines, rail lines or ports can’t be built fast enough to keep up with what they could extract. It’s not an either/or policy: it’s both. But opposition has stopped a proposed Northern Gateway pipeline west through Canada, Keystone XL is also stalled, and plans to ship tar sands east have also been problematic. That leaves Minnesota and Wisconsin as their best hope.

For Enbridge to increase the tar sands through Wisconsin requires boosting the flow through Minnesota. Enbridge has proposed to increase the Alberta Clipper line 67 from about 450,000 to 800,000 bpd, and line 3 from about 400,000 to 760,000 bpd – a total of 1.56 million bpd, and more than enough to supply line 61.

However, Minnesota may not prove to be an environment friendly to tar sands. With a more progressive political environment, and a Public Utilities Commission (PUC) that has been very supportive of renewable energy having regulatory authority over pipeline expansion, approving added flow in the tar sands pipelines is not a done deal.

The Minnesota PUC held hearings, including one on April 3 in St. Paul, on Enbridge’s request to expand flow in the Alberta Clipper pipeline. To keep additional tar sands from reaching Wisconsin, the Sierra Club Four Lakes Group and 350 Madison sent a busload of 41 plucky Bucky activists to the rally and hearing to voice their opposition. Despite being pelted with hail at the rally, our dedicated activists weren’t deterred from peppering the PUC with a barrage of



facts and stories about the risks of tar sands and pipelines. While construction unions came out in strong support of the pipeline, our testimony provided the PUC with compelling evidence that tar sands extraction, transport and use is not in the public interest, and the expansion should not be permitted. A decision is due this summer.

While Enbridge might burst with pride if line 61 flow is expanded, that’s not all that could be bursting. Tar sands material (bitumen) is diluted with toxic chemicals to enable it to be pumped through the pipes, and is very abrasive and corrosive (think hot asphalt). Line 61 puts many precious waterways in peril, including the Wisconsin and Namekogan Rivers and the Petenwell/

Castle Rock flowage, as well as prime farmland, national forests and other natural resources areas. Communities such as Fort Atkinson, Lake Arrowhead and Nekoosa are also directly at risk, along with others in close proximity. Less than a decade old, line 61 has already had a number of significant spills in Wisconsin – January, 2007 in Clark County, January, 2009 in Rusk County, and July, 2012 in Grand Marsh. Yet Enbridge states that tripling the flow in this pipeline is safe. Isn’t one definition of insanity continuing the same action and expecting a different result?

On May 5, the WDNR held a single, little-publicized air permit hearing related to the expansion proposal that includes three additional 25-million-gallon storage tanks in Superior. On short notice, a few dedicated activists went to Superior to testify against granting the air permit and expansion.

Thanks to strong responses from the Sierra Club’s John Muir Chapter, including Chair Jim Kerler, 350 activists, noted writer Eric Hansen, and local activists, the Jefferson County Board concurred, and quickly passed a resolution on a 27-2 vote asking for denial of the air permit and a complete environmental impact analysis on the project.

The Dane County Board is weighing the same action, and we are strongly encouraging all counties along the pipeline to act quickly to do the same. If the pipeline goes through your county, check what waterways, resources and communities could be impacted, and contact local and county officials with your concerns. Information and updates on line 61 are at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Involve/Line61.asp>.

Even with Enbridge’s pie-in-the-sky belief that this pipeline won’t burst and despoil Wisconsin’s precious resources and harm communities directly, the climate change impacts from extracting and burning tar sands fuels means it can never be safe. Enbridge would have you believe line 61 is a path to heaven. We think it heads in the other direction.

# CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

## Executive Committee Nominations Sought

We need you to serve! The John Muir Chapter is now accepting applications to serve on the Executive Committee. Three at-large seats for three year terms (beginning January 2015 and end December 2017) will be up for election this fall. All Executive Committee members are asked to engage in activities, tasks and events in areas listed below that contribute to the Chapter's well being:

- General and operational health of the Chapter
- Membership development and retention
- Strategic planning and decision making
- Fiscal and financial health including fundraising

The next few years will be important ones for the Chapter. In 2015, a new legislature and Governor will be seated. Our efforts on mining will continue to be a priority, as will our efforts to encourage the state

to consider cumulative impacts of high capacity wells and siting of factory farms. We will continue to resist the development of carbon based fuels while pushing for clean renewable energy sources. In 2015, the Chapter will also work to expand the outings program in order to help achieve the national Sierra Club goal of 1 million people outdoors.

A full description of Executive Committee member responsibilities is available as well as a short application form. Please contact the chapter office at [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org) or 608-256-0565 to express your interest in serving. A member of the Nominating Committee will contact you with details on the nomination and election process. All nomination materials must be submitted by **August 15, 2014**. Thank you in advance for offering your time, talent and resources to the John Muir Chapter!

## THE VALUE OF YOUR VOLUNTEERING

By Darrel Ruechel, Sierra Club-Fox Valley Group, Ice Age Trail Coordinator

Have you ever thought about the value of the volunteer work that you do? Some people may be able to volunteer more than others, because they have more available time or the ability to do physical work, but whatever you can do does help. Volunteering also makes us feel good because we know we are doing our part to make our communities better places to live and to recreate.

As the Sierra Club-Fox Valley Group's (FVG) Ice Age Trail coordinator, I personally know a lot about the Ice Age Trail and am aware of the thousands of hours that volunteers spend each year building or maintaining the trail. Many Sierra Club members are among those who volunteer on the trail. When the Ice Age National Scenic Trail is eventually completed in Wisconsin, it will be close to 1,200 miles long. The trail presently includes more than 630 miles open to the public for walking, hiking, backpacking and snowshoeing. Many segments also support cross country skiing. The trail currently meanders from Door County through the northern and southern Kettle Moraine, through Rock, Dane, Waupaca and Langlade Counties and then west to St. Croix Falls in Polk County. Volunteers are the heart, soul, hands and backbone of this effort and their hard work is adding miles to the trail each year. The FVG and many other Sierra Club groups in Wisconsin have had a long history of helping to maintain, build, support and hike the trail.

The Ice Age Trail is located entirely in Wisconsin and is one of only 11 National Scenic Trails in the United States. It generally follows the end moraines of the most recent glaciations although it diverges from them in several areas to include other features of the glacial landscape and a glimpse of the Driftless Area. Whether you seek a short stroll over gentle terrain or a multi-day, deep-woods adventure, there is a perfect segment for you. To hike through the entire Ice Age Trail takes about three months. The Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA), the National Park Service, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources cooperatively manage the Ice Age Trail. Other partners such as the U.S. Forest Service and county and municipal park and forestry departments manage certain segments. Many private landowners also allow the trail to cross their property and are a great source of support for the trail.

Established in 1958, IATA is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization headquartered in Cross Plains. Its mission is to create, support and protect the Ice Age Trail. More than 3,000 members nationwide support the IATA mission through on-the-ground work and financial gifts.

Ice Age Trail volunteers devote approxi-



mately 70,000 hours of time per year on the trail. In addition to the work accomplished, these hours help secure funding for the trail from both public and private sources.

Whether you consider volunteering on the trail or with the Sierra Club, remember that your time IS valuable. Just as the existing Ice Age Trail needs continual maintenance clearing sticks, branches and vegetation growth -- to say nothing about building new trails -- so too does the Sierra Club have a continual need for regular volunteers to meet its mission and to make our communities better. As Sierra Club members, let us each remember to do our part. You will feel better for it, and your volunteering will have a valuable impact on our shared environment.

For more information on volunteering, donating or hiking the Ice Age Trail visit the IATA website [www.iceagetrail.org](http://www.iceagetrail.org). For volunteer opportunities within the Sierra Club visit <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Involve/volunteer.asp>

# ISSUES AT A GLANCE

## *Sierra Club Speaks Out on Burr Oak CAFO*

Burr Oak Heifers is a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) based near Coloma, Wisconsin. In 2013, the Adams County Circuit Court ordered them to close four facilities that housed 4,250 cattle on earthen lots due to groundwater pollution. In addition, they were fined \$65,000, forced to pay \$10,000 for a neighbor's well, and ordered to remove cattle from the fields. In response, Burr Oak Heifers is building an enclosed facility on the same property to house 3,100 cattle. Despite this facility's history of water pollution violations, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) is proposing to give Burr Oak Heifers a water discharge permit with a nitrate limit of 28 mg/L, rather than the state and federal limit of 10 mg/L (known as an ACL or Alternate Concentration Limit). The higher limit is being offered because the background levels of nitrate are already at 14.9 mg/L. The WDNR is also claiming that "the existing or anticipated increase in the concentration of that substance [nitrates in this case] does not present a threat to public health or welfare."

*The Journal of Environmental Health* reported that 10 percent of 4,000 Wisconsin wells tested between 2003 and 2010 were contaminated with nitrates. Consuming excess nitrates has been linked to miscarriages in pregnant women, bladder cancer and diabetes in adults, and "blue baby syndrome," a condition which depletes blood of oxygen and can lead to coma, brain damage and death. Allowing Burr Oak Heifers to vastly exceed nitrate limits sets a dangerous public health precedent that will make Wisconsin's nitrate pollution problem worse. Hundreds of Sierra Club members sent comments to the WDNR and attended a public hearing in mid-April voicing concerns over the WDNR's proposal to grant Burr Oak an ACL for nitrates. We don't know what the agency's ultimate decision will be, but we are hopeful that they will decide in favor of protecting water quality and public health in the Central Sands region.



## **Sierra Club Urges DATCP To Consider Water-Safety**

On April 17, the Sierra Club and others participated in a three-hour listening session between the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) officials and stakeholder groups who represent agricultural, environmental and governmental interests regarding the review of the Livestock Siting Rule as required every four years.

During the 2010 rule review, we urged the DATCP board to do everything it could to restore local control over livestock siting and restrict manure spreading in karst areas with fractured bedrock and sinkholes that are vulnerable to rapid, large-scale water pollution. At the 2014 listening session we expressed our dismay about the growing number of Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in Wisconsin -- our state now has 263, up from 186 in 2009 -- and associated threats to drinking water, aquatic resources, and sustainable, organic family farms posed by industrial agriculture. In particular we raised concerns about the growing dead zone in Green Bay, which had 43 hypoxic days in 2011, meaning that oxygen levels were too low to support aquatic life for this extended period, a problem linked by UW-Green Bay researchers in large part to agricultural runoff.

Because of these growing threats, we strongly urged DATCP to implement expert recommendations that came out of the 2010 review related to engineering manure storage structures, odor management and evaluation, setbacks between CAFOs and residences, and high-use buildings like hospitals and schools, and increased local restrictions on spreading manure on frozen ground. Finally we urged DATCP to do a robust review of the Livestock Siting Rule by holding public listening sessions throughout the state. We hope that DATCP honors our requests and does everything in its power to increase protections for Wisconsin's drinking water and its more than 15,000 lakes, and 53,000 rivers and streams.

## **High Capacity Well Resolutions**

This summer the Sierra Club's Water Sentinels will be working with counties to pass groundwater protection resolutions. These resolutions are a reaction to bills like SB 302 and its companion AB 679 which undermine the unanimous Lake Beulah v. DNR Supreme Court decision. The Lake Beulah decision states that "the DNR has the authority and general duty to consider whether a proposed high capacity well may harm waters of the state," and provides Wisconsin citizens the opportunity to submit scientific information while the permit application is under review to trigger further investigation of the environmental impact of a proposed high capacity well. SB 302 and AB 679 limit the DNR's authority to consider impacts of high capacity wells on ground and surface water levels, alter well permit conditions, and rush approval timelines in permitting. Although these bills failed to pass, we expect to see similar attacks on Wisconsin groundwater introduced in the next legislative session.

Local county groundwater resolutions will help raise awareness about high capacity well impacts that we're already seeing. More than 3,000 high capacity wells have already been permitted in the Central Sands Area alone, where surface water drawdowns are a fact of life. In 2013, American Rivers rated Central Wisconsin's Little Plover River as the fourth most endangered river in the nation.

To date resolutions have been passed by Adams, Wood, Portage, and Waushara county boards. Waushara's is the most recent and speaks directly to its opposition to SB 302 and AB 679 and its support for the Lake Beulah Supreme Court decision. The Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association has also passed a resolution noting its opposition to "any new legislation related to High Capacity Well permitting at this time."

*Please contact the chapter office at [shahla.werner@sierraclub.org](mailto:shahla.werner@sierraclub.org) if you are interested in helping us pass a groundwater protection resolution in your county!*

## Want to reward your favorite volunteer, activist, business or elected official?

What better way to say "Thank You" to the people who make a difference in your local community than with a Sierra Club award? The John Muir Chapter has an annual awards program with a variety of categories to choose from, and we want YOUR nominations! Awards are given at our Autumn Assembly in October and are a great way to reward your local superstars. Award descriptions and nomination papers are available at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/awards.asp> or by contacting our Awards Chair Lacinda at [lacinda.athen@gmail.com](mailto:lacinda.athen@gmail.com) or 608-274-7870. Nominations are due by August 1.

## Volunteers Needed

We're gearing up for an intense election season. It's time to take back the state and elect strong conservation champions that will protect clean air and water. We've already endorsed candidates at the local, state, and federal level, and we'll need all hands on deck to elect these environmental leaders.

Contact Elizabeth Ward at [elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org](mailto:elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org) or (608) 256-0565 to learn how you can make a difference in an election near you!



## WI Club Members Lead National Outings

If you're looking for an adventure this summer, consider joining one of the national Sierra Club outings. Of the many offerings available this year, we took note of a few that have a local connection. Four Wisconsin club members will be leading a total of nine national Sierra Club trips in 2014.

John Muir Chapter members Helen Bannan-Baurecht and William Baurecht will be leading three California outings. Family Service and Fun in Marin County (trip 14218A), July 6 to 12, focuses on the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, home to 53 species of mammals, 250 birds, 20 reptiles and 11 amphibians. Honoring Washoe Traditions in Their Homeland, Tahoe National Forest, includes hikes in the splendid Eastern Sierras and a stay at Sierra Club's Claire Tappan Lodge, July 27 to August 2 (trip 14245A). Or hike to splendid High Sierra ridges and lakes during the Mountain

Medley outing, August 17 to 23 in Tahoe National Forest (trip 14254A).

Phil Snyder will head up a number of outings including Superior Day Hiking on the Superior Hiking Trail in Minnesota, August 10 to 16 (Trip 14252A) as well as Hut-to-Hut in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, September 15 to 20 (trip 14194A). Or help naturalize the shores of Snowmass Lake with Anne Slaughter Perrote during the Rocky Mountain Wilderness Restoration in Colorado, August 9 to 16 (trip 14288A).

For details on these and other trips visit [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org), select Outings and Book Your Trip to search by trip number.

For a list of outings closer to home, visit the Outings page of the chapter website at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/outings.asp>.



Join us in the  
"Duck Pond"  
July 31st,  
2014

Madison  
Mallards  
vs.  
Kenosha  
Kingfish

7:05p.m.

*The Madison Mallards are pleased to welcome Sierra Club to a night at the ballpark*



**TICKETS \$15**  
Reserved Field Box Stadium seat & official Mallards hat

- \$5 of every ticket donated to the Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter
- 50/50 raffle benefits Sierra Club
- First pitch will be thrown out by a Sierra Club representative

**To purchase tickets:**  
Go to: [www.MallardsGroups.com](http://www.MallardsGroups.com)  
Enter: Sierra  
At the bottom of the page click "buy"  
Choose your seats (Green indicates available seats)

Limited number of Sierra Club tickets available. Tickets must be purchased online by July 17 or while supplies last.

# Which “Wild Life” Will It Be On Lulu Lake?

by John Berge, Sierra Club-Southeast Gateway Group member

That choice was the headline of an excellent article by environmental writer Don Behm in the March 2 *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, pointing out how people in an estimated 80 to 90 power boats were partying on Lulu Lake last summer. The article was brought to our attention too late for us to attend a public hearing on March 6 in front of the Troy Town Board, so I wrote a letter to them shortly thereafter outlining our opposition to these major disruptions on this small, sensitive lake, and urging limitations to the use of gasoline-powered motors on Lulu Lake. The Southeast Gateway Group (SEGG) has had canoe trips to this lake and we believe that canoes and electric trolling motors are best suited if we aim to protect it. Some members of the SEGG have been caretakers living on The Nature Conservancy land for years. Natural ‘wild life’ versus wild parties seems to be an issue Sierrans should speak up about.

Lulu Lake (84 to 95 acres, depending on the source used) in northeastern Walworth County is surrounded by mostly Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Nature Conservancy land with only two private properties on it, but it is connected to Eagle Spring Lake (279 to 310 acres) by the Mukwonago River channel. There are no public restrooms on Lulu Lake, so beer parties can mean people trampling the local

wetlands, fens, bogs and sedge meadows that ring the lake. Portions of the lake are shallow so that large motors on pontoon and other boats can be quite disruptive to the lake bottom. According to the DNR, the lake is home to the rare long-ear sunfish, pugnose shiner and several other species of fish. Loud music has already driven one resident away on weekends.

The Town of Troy public hearing was called “to hear from interested persons regarding boating on Lulu Lake, and impacts on the lake and its natural environment, in light of recommendations received from the Nature Conservancy to restrict or prohibit motorized boats.” Ninety-seven people signed in and 43 spoke. According to the minutes, 21 persons who spoke were opposed and 20 persons who spoke were in favor. In addition, letters and emails on file were in favor of the recommendations 29 to 20. Many Eagle Spring Lake residents, who regularly party on Lulu Lake, have signed a petition opposing the conservancy proposal of electric motors only.

At the April 9 Town of Troy board meeting attended by several SEGG members, Lulu Lake was deemed a sensitive issue and any decision was put off until at least October. This means that the disruption of the lake will continue for at least one more summer.

An advisory committee was authorized to report back by the October board meeting. The nine-member committee consists of all three town board members (advising themselves), one from the DNR, one from the Nature Conservancy, one Lulu Lake resident, one Eagle Spring Lake resident and two citizens from the Town of Troy, all to be named before the May town board meeting.

Protecting a small lake in southeastern Wisconsin from the inroads of people more interested in partying with beer, boats and loud music than in the environment and rare or threatened species may seem like a small thing compared to global climate change or mining of fracking sand. But local actions taken on local issues have long been one of the strengths of the Sierra Club. This issue is in our back yard and we can have an effect through local action and local government.

The John Muir Chapter will host an Autumn Assembly field trip to Lulu Lake on October 12, offering a chance to learn more about this beautiful area. The outing will be led by Nature Conservancy Director Pat Morton. See page 11 for registration details.

For more information or to get involved in this issue contact LD Rockwell [ld.jarockwell@elknet.net](mailto:ld.jarockwell@elknet.net).

## Paddling Trips:

It's summertime! Enjoy the outdoors on a River Touring Section paddling trip. For a complete list and detailed description visit: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/rts/>

### Late July Montana Whitewater

Class II-IV; Car Camp. Join experienced paddlers on some classic rivers in northwest Montana for all or part of this trip. Contact: Phil Johnsrud, 715-445-4777, [johnsrudp@tds.net](mailto:johnsrudp@tds.net)

### August 2-3 RIVER SAFETY AND RESCUE CLINIC (See website for details.)

### August 9-10 Manitowish River

Quietwater; Car Camp. Paddle two segments of the Manitowish. Experience the beauty and importance of Wisconsin's northwoods. Contact: Carl Wisler, 262-542-9593, [carl.wisler@att.net](mailto:carl.wisler@att.net)

### August 23-24 Flambeau River

Class II; Canoe Camp. Refresh your soul on the Flambeau and learn how State Forests are

important for protecting rivers. Contact: Rich Krieg, 920-660-3557, [eddyout@gmail.com](mailto:eddyout@gmail.com) or Dale Dean, 608-302-5744, [daleink55@gmail.com](mailto:daleink55@gmail.com)

### September 13 Badfish Creek

Moving Water; Day Trip Come see how the water starts out clearer from this highly regulated effluent and gets murkier from less regulated farmland runoff as we go downstream. Contact: Carl Zimm, 608-246-0485, [beampowered-tetrad@yahoo.com](mailto:beampowered-tetrad@yahoo.com)

### September 20 - 21 Oconto River

Quietwater; Car Camp. We'll paddle quietwater stretches from Suring to Hintz on Saturday and from Hintz to Pulcifer on Sunday. Learn how Wisconsin's Managed Forest Law impacts the state's forests. Contact: Gregg Riemer, 608-257-5239, [duNord@sbcglobal.net](mailto:duNord@sbcglobal.net)

### September 25-28 Namekagon River (for women)

Moving Water; Canoe Camping. Join five other Sierran women for a scenic 25 mile canoe paddle on the Namekagon River. This trip is

ideally suited for women wanting an introductory wilderness canoe/camping experience. Learn the history of the Namekagon and St. Croix Rivers, and how they became a National Scenic Riverway. Cost: Contact: Nancy McDermott, 608-238-1421, [njmcderm@gmail.com](mailto:njmcderm@gmail.com)

### September 27-28 Wisconsin Whitewater (rivers to be determined)

Class II-III; Car Camp. Another beautiful fall weekend (if we're lucky). This is a chance to improve paddling skills learned earlier this year in the clinics or on other rivers, and to see bald eagles and kingfishers along the way. Contact: Bruce Nelson, 608-244-6397, [b1bnelson@att.net](mailto:b1bnelson@att.net) or Kasy Culbertson, 608-222-0746, [kasy99@gmail.com](mailto:kasy99@gmail.com)

### October 25-26 Wolf River (Sections II & III)

Class II-III; Car Camp. Annual Halloween Trip. We'll paddle Section III on Saturday and Section II on Sunday. Contact: Phil Johnsrud, 715-445-4777, [johnsrudp@tds.net](mailto:johnsrudp@tds.net)





# Protect John Muir's Wisconsin Boyhood Home!

By Jeffrey Grad, intern and Shahla Werner, PhD, Director, John Muir Chapter

About 60 people celebrated John Muir's 176th birthday, the 44th anniversary of Earth Day, and the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act at Muir Memorial Park. The April 19 event helped highlight the importance of protecting our last unique places from development. It was sponsored by the Wisconsin Friends of John Muir, Ice Age Trail Alliance, Marquette County Healthy Communities, and the Sierra Club.

"When my family and I first arrived at Muir Park, nature lovers of all ages were happily cleaning up litter while enjoying migratory bird songs," said Sierra Club intern Jeffrey Grad. "It was humbling to see so many strong, old oaks and hickories! While walking along the park

trail, it became clear to me how John Muir found his passion. After the clean-up, Shahla Werner described the importance of continual support for the National Wilderness Preservation System established by the 1964 Wilderness Act. Even though Muir Park isn't one of Wisconsin's seven remote, northern Wilderness Areas, it is readily accessible, public land that offers the chance to retrace our founder's historic footsteps. Kathleen McGwin and Daryl Christensen were our guides through the history of the Muir family and native bird and plant species that currently occupy the park. The celebration, which concluded with a free concert and delicious birthday cake prepared by Chef Lynn Bult in Muir's

honor, was a perfect example of how important nature is to Wisconsin communities."

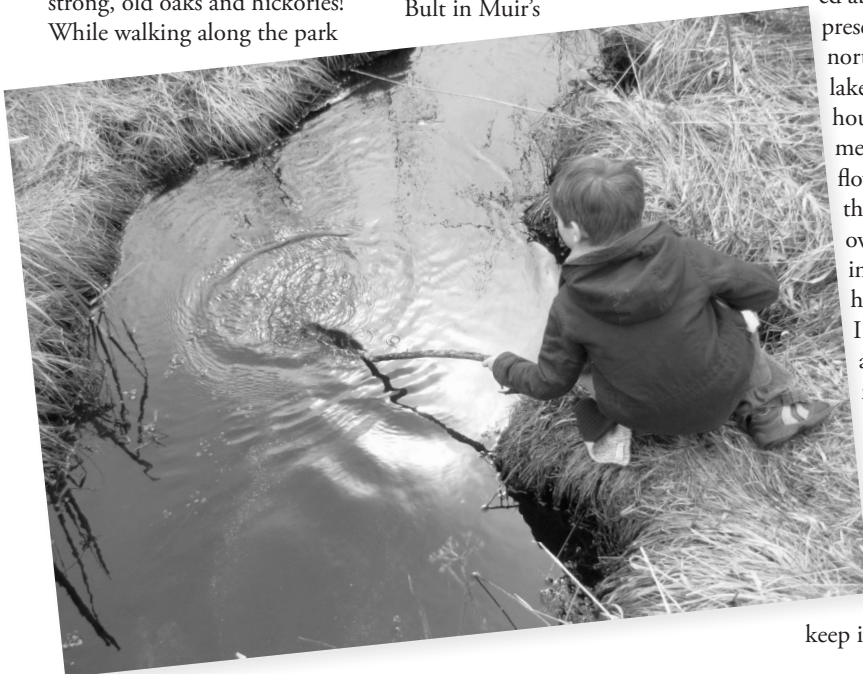
In 1849, John Muir's family moved from Scotland to build their farm at Fountain Lake in Marquette County, Wisconsin. There, the 11-year-old boy developed a deep connection to the nature that surrounded him and instilled Muir's dedication to protecting wild places, which would later spur him to found the Sierra Club while pushing for the establishment of our National Parks. In fact, the first piece of wilderness Muir tried to preserve was on Fountain Lake.

During an early Sierra Club meeting in 1896, Muir talked about his efforts to preserve it. "On the north side of [Fountain] lake, just below our house, there was a Carex meadow full of charming flowers ... and around the margin of the meadow many nooks rich in flowering ferns and heathworts. And when I was about to wander away on my long rambles I was sorry to leave that precious meadow unprotected; therefore I said to my brother-in-law, who then owned it, 'Sell me the forty acres of lake meadow, and

allow cattle or hogs to break into it, and I will gladly pay you whatever you say. I want to keep it untrampled for the sake of the ferns and flowers; and even if I should never see it again, the beauty of its lilies and orchids is so pressed into my mind that I shall always enjoy looking back at them in imagination, even across seas and continents, and perhaps after I am dead.'"

Though Muir failed to preserve the land in his lifetime, successful conservation efforts over the years have served to maintain Muir's vision of pristine wilderness. In 1957 Marquette County acquired the first parcel of land to form John Muir Memorial Park, which includes all the land surrounding Fountain Lake, now known as Ennis Lake.

Muir Park, which encompasses Muir Park State Natural Area, designated by the WDNR in 1972, isn't the only protected land near Muir's boyhood home. In 1979, 1,054 acres of wetland and upland habitat was acquired across the street from Muir County Park to form the Fox River National Wildlife Refuge, managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to protect sandhill crane habitat. In 1985, the Sierra Club - John Muir Chapter spearheaded a drive to acquire 27 acres of Muir Park north of the lake.



keep it fenced and never

 Continued on pg. 14

on our campaigns to expand clean energy and transit and protect Wisconsin's water, land, and wildlife for future generations. The Autumn Assembly is a public, family-friendly event featuring indoor and outdoor environmental activities for all ages.

On Saturday, we are honored to welcome Center for Investigative Journalism editor and reporter Ron Seely as our keynote speaker. Until 2013, Seely was an award-winning reporter for the *Wisconsin State Journal*, the state's second largest daily newspaper, where he worked for 35 years covering science and environment. Seely is a three-time winner of the Wisconsin Press Association's award for environmental reporting as well as the American Chemical Society's prestigious James T. Grady - James H. Stack Award. An avid angler and wilderness paddler, Seely and his wife Doreen have two children and live in Madison.

In addition to our distinguished keynote speaker, we'll hear from a range of other experts on topical conservation issues. Attendees will have an opportunity to screen a mining documentary on Friday evening. In addition, we'll learn about the geology of the Penokee Hills and hear from Mining Committee member Barb Flom on how strategic alliances helped Sierra Club successfully fight to retain local control in sand mining decisions. She will also offer tips on how we can use similar alliances to win conservation campaigns in the Capitol, even when the cards are stacked against us.

For those passionate about climate change solutions, renewable energy strategist Carl Siegrist will discuss solar energy's potential in Wisconsin, and WISPIRG Director Bruce Speight will discuss reducing costly, wasteful highway spending and expanding transit. We will also get a gripping update on the threats that tar sands expansions pose to the Great Lakes region. Those interested in protecting Wisconsin's vital water resources will enjoy the presentation by Milwaukee Riverkeeper's Cheryl Nenn, who will give us an update on Waukeshas'

proposed Lake Michigan water diversion and its implications for the Great Lakes Compact.

We'll also showcase Sierra Club - John Muir Chapter's Our New Our Wild Wisconsin campaign with presentations from Department of Natural Resources biologist Heather Kaarakka, who will discuss threats posed by white-nosed syndrome to native cave-nesting bats, and professor Marcia Bjornerud, who will discuss GTAC's proposed iron ore mine and the geology of the Penokee Hills.

On Saturday evening, we'll recognize outstanding Chapter volunteers and community leaders during our awards ceremony. After dinner and awards, attendees will get a chance to bid on eco-friendly items in a silent auction to benefit the Chapter's conservation work. Sunday attendees will participate in a hands-on Communications Workshop featuring local author and activist Eric Hansen and *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* editor Ernie Franzen.

Field trip options include a Friday morning tour of Johnson Controls International in Glendale, highlighting the company's onsite and offsite renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives, followed by an afternoon hike of Engel Conservation Area in Muskego, and a sunset canoe trip on Phantom Lake (canoes and life jackets will be available courtesy of Phantom Lake YMCA). On Sunday we'll tour Lulu Lake State Natural Area and learn about current problems with high impact recreation threatening rare species in that unique habitat. Don't miss the fun! Available accommodations include camping, canvas-walled platform tents, and limited private dorm rooms. Attendees can also opt to attend the daytime sessions only or stay offsite in Mukwonago.

For a complete schedule or to register online, visit <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/aa.asp>. Register by September 15 to avoid late fees. See the registration form on page 11 for rates and lodging options. Contact the Chapter office at 608-256-0565 for additional detailed information.

## 2014 Autumn Assembly, October 10-12

Phantom Lake YMCA Camp, S110 W30240 YMCA Camp Rd, Mukwonago, WI, 53149

### Tentative Schedule

#### Friday, October 10

- 11-12:15 p.m. Johnson Controls International facility tour, Glendale
- 2-3:30 p.m. Engel Conservation Area hike, Muskego
- 4 p.m. Sunset Canoe Trip on Phantom Lake
- 5-7:30 p.m. Registration, Silent Auction, Snacks
- 7:30-8 p.m. Mining Documentary Screening
- 8-9 p.m. Micky Kienitz Slideshow of Hull Rust Mine & Penokee Hills

#### Saturday, October 11

- 7:30-8:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:30-9:30 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSIONS:
  - Waukeshas' Water Diversion Proposal & the Great Lakes Compact, Cheryl Nenn, Milwaukee Riverkeeper
  - White Nose Syndrome in Wisconsin, Heather Kaarakka, WDNR Conservation Biologist
- 9:30-10:30 a.m. Solar, Utilities, Jobs: What's Really Happening and Why? Carl Siegrist, Renewable Energy Strategist
- 10:30-10:45 a.m. Break

- 10:45-11:45 a.m. Keynote Speech with Ron Seely "The Necessity of Environmental Journalism"
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00-2:00 p.m. Iron Mining & The Geology of the Penokees, Marcia Bjornerud, PhD., Geology Professor
- 2:00-3:00 p.m. Tar Sands Threats to the Great Lakes Region, Beth Wallace, Pipeline Safety Consultant
- 3:00-3:15 p.m. Break
- 3:15-4:00 p.m. Reducing Wasteful Highway Spending and Expanding Transit - Bruce Speight, Director WISPIRG
- 4:00-4:45 p.m. Middle Class Philanthropists: How Anyone Can Leave a Lasting Legacy, Melinda Gustafson Gervasi, Attorney
- 5:00-6:00 p.m. Dinner
- 6:00-7:00 p.m. Social hour with snacks, Silent Auction, Wilderness Slides, Book Signing
- 7:00-8:00 p.m. Chapter Awards
- 8:00-8:30 p.m. Silent Auction Closes
- 8:30-10:00 p.m. *Bag It* film screening or jam

- session: bring your harmonica, dulcimer, guitar, rain stick or other musical instrument, and we'll play together around the fire
- 10:00-11:00 p.m. Stargazing (Weather Permitting)

#### Sunday, October 12

- 7:30-8:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:30-9:00 a.m. Pack up
- 9:00-9:45 a.m. Frac Sand Mining: How Alliances with Towns & Counties Defeated Efforts to Strip Local Control, Barb Flom, JMC Mining Committee
- 9:50-10:30 a.m. Communications workshop with Ernst Franzen, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* & Eric Hansen, Author & Activist
- 10:30-11:30 a.m. Local Group / Sierra Student Coalition Panel Discussion:
- 11:30-Noon Turn in Nametags, Lunch on own
- 1:00-3:00 p.m. Field Trip: Lulu Lake, Troy

# 2014 Autumn Assembly Registration

Phantom Lake YMCA Camp, Mukwonago, WI

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Instructions

Select your registration, meal, field trip and lodging choices. Add the totals for each section together.

Register by September 15 to avoid late fees.

**Online registration also available at:**

<http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/aa.asp>

**Questions:** 608-256-0565 or [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org)

## Assembly Registration

The registration fee includes meals, beverages and snacks as well as program fees. Children's rates available upon request. Call (608)256-0565.

### SATURDAY & SUNDAY REGISTRATION:

**Regular Rate-if paid by September 15**

\_\_\_\_\_ # Adults (12 & up) x \$70 \_\_\_\_\_

**Late Rate-if paid after Sept. 15**

\_\_\_\_\_ # Adults (12 & up) x \$85 \_\_\_\_\_

### SATURDAY ONLY REGISTRATION:

**Regular Rate-if paid by September 15**

\_\_\_\_\_ # Adults (12 & up) x \$60 \_\_\_\_\_

**Late Rate-if paid after Sept. 15**

\_\_\_\_\_ # Adults (12 & up) x \$75 \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Total** \_\_\_\_\_

## Meals

Please reserve your meals and indicate any dietary restrictions below

**Saturday:** Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_ Lunch \_\_\_\_\_ Dinner \_\_\_\_\_

**Sunday:** Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

## Field Trips

Optional field trips are available at no extra charge, however, advance registration is required. Indicate the number attending each trip below.

**Johnson Controls Tour** (limited to 15 ppl) \_\_\_\_\_

Fri. 11 a.m., Glendale, WI

**Engel Conservation Area Hike** \_\_\_\_\_

Fri. 2 p.m., Muskego, WI

**Canoe Phantom Lake** \_\_\_\_\_

Fri. 4 p.m., Phantom Lake YMCA camp

**LuLu Lake Tour** \_\_\_\_\_

Sun. 1 p.m., Troy

## Lodging

Options include a limited number of dormitory rooms, platform tents or pitching your own tent. (Motels are also available nearby.)

**Private Dorm Room**-reserve an entire room for you and a roommate or just yourself. These rustic rooms offer electricity, bunks and a private bath/shower. Guests must provide their own bedding. NOTE: Only 4 available. First come/first served.

\_\_\_\_\_ # rooms Fri. night x \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # rooms Sat. night x \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

**Platform Tents**-Sleep 4-6 adults, separated into male only, female only and co-ed tents. Guests must provide their own bedding and flashlights. Shared bathhouse nearby.

\_\_\_\_\_ # people Fri. night x \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # people Sat. night x \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your preference:

Male only      Female only      Co-ed

**Tenting**-Pitch your own tent on the grounds. Guests must provide their own camping gear and bedding. Shared bathhouse nearby

\_\_\_\_\_ # sites Fri night x \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # sites Sat night x \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

**Lodging Total** \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate preferences: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Payment

**Total due** (Registration + Lodging) \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail registration and payment to:** Sierra Club, 222 S.

Hamilton St-Suite 11, Madison, WI 53703

CHECK (made payable to Sierra Club-  
John Muir Chapter)

CREDIT CARD

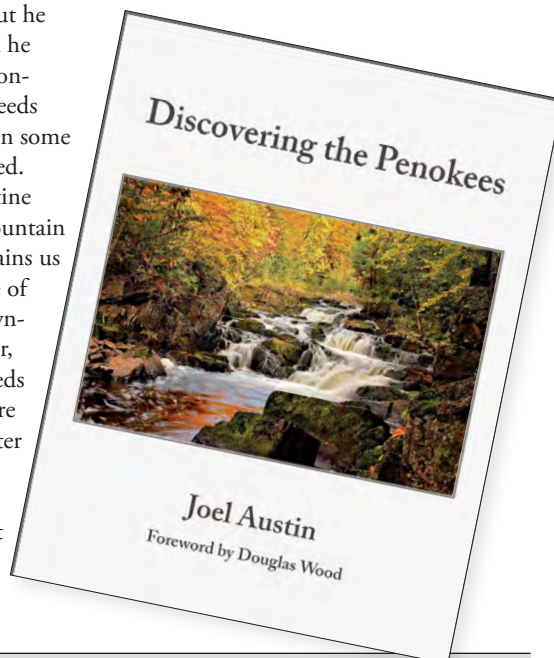
Cardholder name: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

## *Discovering the Penokees* by Joel Austin, Sweetwater Visions, 160 pages, 2014.

Joel Austin was born in Wisconsin, but he had never heard of the Penokees until he moved to Ashland. This remote Wisconsin wild land needs to be known; it needs friends. Wilderness is scarce, and when some see it, they see resources to be exploited. Others, like Austin, consider the pristine remnants of a 1.8 billion-year-old mountain range and perceive the cycle that sustains us all. The Penokees are a pristine source of water — so pure that a few miles downstream, on the shores of Lake Superior, it feeds the largest natural wild rice beds in the Great Lakes and the 16,000-acre Kakagon/Bad River Sloughs. This water is rated as some of the purest water on the planet. Seventy-one miles of rivers and streams flow through intact biotas that sustain a lavish array of flora and fauna.



speak of the connection to their source and the sure ruination of everyone's cradle.

"You have to see life from the eyes of a sturgeon. Rivers and streams are the lifeblood of the earth," says Mike Wiggans Jr., Tribal Chairman of the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Ojibwe.

Austin's mother provides a brief bio of the author, revealing that his talents and interests go beyond photography: he studied limnology and fisheries at UW-Stevens Point. He's a survivor. At one time, he was diagnosed with a tumor on his brainstem. His prognosis was guarded, but he lives a miracle.

When reading these thoughtful and heartfelt pleas for the Penokees, it's easy to be hopeful and recall the words of Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Austin published this book to increase awareness of all that is slated to be lost. The book isn't slick. It has a homemade feel to it. The messages aren't literature, but they do offer very accessible and credible information. Why increase awareness? It's a call for more voices, more awareness, more outrage, and more love for the Penokees and everyone that might know them for generations to come. Without a resounding upswell of support to protect the Penokees, Austin's book could become an elegy for a lost wilderness. But then, maybe Austin and his friends can conjure another miracle.

*Amy Lou Jenkins is the award-winning author of Every Natural Fact: Five Seasons of Open-Air Parenting. Contact her at [www.AmyLouJenkins.com](http://www.AmyLouJenkins.com) if you have a book to suggest for her consideration to be reviewed.*

*"Whether you know the Penokees well or are just now learning about them, I hope that this book will motivate you to care what happens to this beautiful, wild place... Mining, by definition, cannot create a truly sustainable-in-the-long-term economy. Beauty and an intact and healthy ecosystem can."*

*—Joel Austin*

Austin seeks to woo the reader with 120 images of strikingly lush landscapes in every season. View photo essays that explore rushing waters, waterfalls, Indian pipes, sunrises, rainstorms and vistas of scarlet autumn trees. You will want to visit this beautiful place, but you'd better plan your trip now.

In simple terms, Austin explains what could be lost and how little will be gained if the proposed taconite mine, the biggest open-pit mine in the world, is realized. Like any good persuader he uses logic — the environmental track record of taconite mining is that it always (100 percent of the time) causes environmental devastation. No landscape has

ever survived this type of mining without poisoning water sources, strangling streams that feed wetlands, and a spiraling array of catastrophic events. Go looking for an example of responsible, safe open-pit mining, and you will never find it. It doesn't exist.

More than a book of photographs, *Discovering the Penokees*, is a collection of voices. Other voices join Austin's in a collection of short essays. Economic consultants show that money made from mining jobs creates a short-term economy for a few people, but the community always loses in the long-run. Communities are better served by more sustainable economic plans. Native elders

# Mining Issues Update

By Dave Blouin, Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter Mining Committee Chair

## Conservation Congress Success!

Overwhelming majorities supported three important resolutions at the annual state-wide Conservation Congress hearings in April. The resolutions were: oppose Gogebic Taconite's (GTac) proposed open pit mine in the Penokee Range, repeal 2013 Act 1 – the new iron mining law known in the conservation community as the Bad River Watershed Destruction Act, and direct the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to establish stronger air standards for frac sand mining to protect public health.

Each of these resolutions was approved by around two-to-one margins across the state and the two taconite mining resolutions even passed in Iron and Ashland Counties where the mine is proposed. Thanks to John Muir Chapter (JMC) Mining Committee members and other Sierra Club members who introduced the resolutions in many counties around the state. The supported resolutions will appear on the 2015 statewide ballot if they are approved by internal Conservation Congress committees.

## GTac Update

Wisconsin DNR reports that Gogebic Taconite has drilled a total of 22 boreholes so far at the proposed mine site but is not yet splitting samples with the state. That means there is still significant uncertainty about the extent of asbestos and sulfides that would be encountered if the mine is developed. Sulfides produce acid when exposed to air and water and the resulting acid percolating through tailings and waste rock can liberate toxic heavy metals that then pollute surface waters, wetlands and ground water.

DNR expects GTac to apply for permission for additional boreholes to be drilled later this year. GTac has also begun some field work to establish baseline conditions. Under the new law, a permit application could be submitted as early as mid-June of this year but DNR believes this is unlikely given the sheer quantity of baseline information that must be gathered to support an application.

A citizen lawsuit was filed in March against the DNR over the fact that the state did not issue stormwater control permits for bulk sampling that took place last winter. While

the sampling has been concluded, the suit is moving forward to ensure the state is required to issue stormwater permits for future mining exploration.

## Committee Updates

Northern Wisconsin state members, watch for an invitation to upcoming Chapter House Parties! These House Parties will serve to engage and organize members on chapter priority issues and especially to learn more about mining issues. Chapter Mining Committee members will be organizing these fun events to meet-and-greet fellow members in and around towns like Ashland, Iron River and Bayfield.

The Mining Committee is also busy developing presentations for member webinars on both the taconite and frac sand mining issues. Watch your email for opportunities to join a free webinar on these important topics.

*Don't forget to bookmark our mining page at: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/mining.asp> and check regularly for updates.*

## How do YOU want to change the world?



Photo: Community GroundWorks

Protecting our environment,  
living sustainably

Support our group and  
over 60 other nonprofits through  
Community Shares of Wisconsin.

Give generously—through  
workplace giving, or by giving online.

[www.communityshares.com](http://www.communityshares.com)



## ☞ Group Boundaries *Continued from pg. 1*

Multiple factors were taken into consideration when developing the draft map included in this newsletter. Membership distribution and geographic size of current groups was analyzed. In some instances group leaders have reported difficulty engaging all of the members in their large territories. Resizing some groups may make it easier for all members to actively participate. The ratio of urban to rural areas was considered, as well as the environmental challenges facing each region. Inevitably there will be some overlap, but the goal was to combine counties with similar conservation issues, making it more likely that most members will identify with and rally around the local causes.

Mapping out prospective group boundaries in currently undesignated areas does not mean that a group will be formed in the area, but it does provide a framework for local members should they choose to form one. Active, effective and long-lasting groups require at least 10 passionate, dedicated leaders that will engage the community on local issues, recruit new members and fulfill

the administrative functions of a group. If you live in an undesignated area and are interested in forming a local group, please contact the chapter office at (608)256-0565 or [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org).

Because Sierra Club is a democratic organization, the Executive Committee is seeking input from all members on the proposed redesign. The Executive Committee has approved a feedback and review process that includes:

- Offering a webinar presentation and discussion for group leaders and an additional webinar for all members on July 8.
- Publishing an article and survey in the July-September 2014 Muir View with a survey due date of September 1, 2014.
- Posting the survey online and sending an email link to members with an email on file.
- Asking local groups to discuss and send their input to the Chapter by October 1, 2014.

- Preparing a revised group boundary plan and making it available for Autumn Assembly attendees October 10-12, 2014.
- Reviewing feedback at the Executive Committee October 2014 meeting.
- Making a final decision on Group Boundaries at the Executive Committee November 2014 meeting.

Please complete and return the survey on page 15 or take the survey online at: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/About/findgroup.asp>. The staff and Executive Committee look forward to your help in reorganizing the groups and harnessing the grassroots power of our membership in the most efficient and effective way possible.

*To register for the webinar contact [elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org](mailto:elizabeth.ward@sierraclub.org)*

## ☞ Muir's Boyhood Home *Continued from pg. 9*

In 1989, the WDNR designated Observatory Hill, the highest point in Marquette County, as a State Natural Area.

And now, you have a rare chance to help with a joint effort between the Natural Heritage Land Trust, Ice Age Trail Alliance, Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, FWS, National Park Service, Wisconsin Friends of John Muir, Ice Age National Scenic Trail, and the Sierra Club to purchase and permanently protect 198 additional acres of high-quality woodland, prairie and wetland habitat, including 38 acres of the land originally settled by John Muir's father, Daniel, adjacent to the Refuge and Muir Park.

If we're successful, this new protected parcel will eventually be owned by the FWS and the Ice Age Trail Alliance, and it will be open to the public for hiking, hunting, cross-country skiing, fishing, bird-watching, and other recreation. Your donations will help cover property costs not covered by grants (such as anticipated stewardship grant funding) as well as removal of non-historic buildings from the property and ongoing restoration work critical for maintaining plant and wildlife species. The current family who owns the land has the same conservation-minded mentality as Muir, with a love for the land and strong commitment to upholding its integrity. The acquisition, which is expected to take place in fall 2014, will permanently protect this unique area.

*For more information and to donate, visit the Natural Heritage Land Trust website, <http://nhlt.org/page.aspx?page=johnmuir>. Thank you in advance for making your tax-deductible donation to protect this property, and for encouraging friends to help us protect John Muir's legacy. I've donated through NHLT's website, and I can confirm the donation page works!*

# GO SOLAR

with Sierra Club


**How it works:**

- Sierra Club members can sign-up for a free site assessment at [www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org](http://www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org)
- H&H provides an estimate and, if the homeowner decides, installs the system
- At the end of the program period H&H provides a rebate to the system hosts and a donation to the Sierra Club based on the total number and size of systems installed


**The Benefits:**

- You save money and put your values into action
- Wisconsin reduces its dependence on dirty fossil fuels
- The John Muir Chapter raises money to support conservation work in Wisconsin

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(608)273-4464  
or visit [www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org](http://www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org)



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# GROUP BOUNDARIES SURVEY

We appreciate you taking the time to answer these questions.

Please return your completed survey by September 1, 2014 to:

**Sierra Club- John Muir Chapter,  
222 S. Hamilton St.,  
Madison, WI 53703**

or enter your responses online at: <http://wisconsin.sierra-club.org/About/findgroup.asp>

## General Questions

1. Please tell us where you live:

City: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which Group you are in? Please check the appropriate response:

\_\_\_\_\_ Chippewa Valley Group

\_\_\_\_\_ Coulee Region Group

\_\_\_\_\_ Four Lakes Group

\_\_\_\_\_ Fox Valley Group

\_\_\_\_\_ Great Waters Group

\_\_\_\_\_ Southeast Gateway Group

\_\_\_\_\_ Unassigned Area

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't know which Group I am assigned to

3. Do you belong to any of the Wisconsin Sierra Club Specialty Groups?

\_\_\_\_\_ River Touring Section (Statewide)

\_\_\_\_\_ Inner City Outings (Madison)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sierra Student Coalition

4. How many Group meeting(s) or event(s) in WI have you participated in since becoming a Sierra Club member? Please check the one that best applies.

\_\_\_\_\_ 0 events or meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 events or meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ 2 - 5 events or meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ 6 - 25 events or meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ More events or meetings than I can keep track of

\_\_\_\_\_ I did not know that there were any Group meetings/events

5. Are you currently active with the local group in your area?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I am very active

\_\_\_\_\_ I'm somewhat active

\_\_\_\_\_ I used to be active

\_\_\_\_\_ I'm not, but I have thought about it

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not active with my local group

6. Do you support using county lines and aggregating counties under a Group?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't care

Please provide a short explanation of your answer.

7. Looking at the proposed change in Group boundaries, would the proposed changes make you more or less inclined to get involved with the Sierra Club at the local level?

\_\_\_\_\_ More inclined to get involved

\_\_\_\_\_ Will not change my involvement

\_\_\_\_\_ Less inclined to get involved

Please explain your answer above:

8. Do you have any other thoughts regarding Group boundaries that we should consider as we move forward? This could include suggestion(s) for a different configuration/grouping of the counties. Please use the space below to explain what change you would make and why.

## JOHN MUIR CHAPTER CALENDAR

### Executive Committee Meetings:

Saturday, September 20, 2014, MATC - Portage Campus  
(tentative)

### Events Calendar:

- July 8**            **Group Boundary Reorganization Webinar**
- July 14-17**       **Penokee Mine House Parties**  
*Sponsored by Sierra Club Mining Committee, details at [www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/mining.asp](http://www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/mining.asp)*
- July 31**           **Sierra Club night at the Madison Mallards Game**  
*Tickets: [www.mallardsgroups.com](http://www.mallardsgroups.com) password: sierra*
- August 12**       **Fall Partisan Primary**  
*Voter registration and polling: <https://myvote.wi.gov>*
- September 27**   **Gaylord Nelson Wilderness Act Celebration**  
*Bayfield, Tickets: [action.sierraclub.org/wildnelson](http://action.sierraclub.org/wildnelson)*
- October 10-12**   **2014 Autumn Assembly with Ron Seely**  
*Phantom Lake YMCA, Mukwonago: <http://www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/aa.asp>*
- November 4**     **Fall General Election**  
*Voter registration and polling information: <https://myvote.wi.gov>*

Website: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org>

Phone: (608)256-0565

E-mail: [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org)

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