

# THE MUIR VIEW



NEWS OF THE SIERRA CLUB IN WISCONSIN

[wisconsin.sierraclub.org](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org)

## 2010 ELECTIONS UPDATE



### THE ELECTIONS ARE COMING, BUT ARE WE READY FOR THEM?

By Dave Blouin

This year's spring election falls on April 6 and, as always, the elections are mostly local races such as municipal and county seats. The fall primary is September 14 and the general election is on November 2.

While the fall elections are always very important for advancing our campaign priorities, I firmly believe the spring elections can be just as important and deserve our attention. Local elections are a great chance for a small number of people to make a huge difference in the outcome. While races for state office require dozens of volunteers and large organizations, local elections are often run by a handful of folks working over the dining room table. You

can learn where a candidate stands on the issues important to the Sierra Club by working with either your Group or Chapter Political Committee. The campaigns and committee work tend to be shorter duration -- this can be an easy way to help out if you have limited time and labor to give.

City, town, and county officials make important land use decisions that affect Sierra Club priorities on an almost daily basis. Contrast that activity with the relatively small amount of important legislation passed by our state representatives. While statewide laws are generally higher profile and wide-sweeping, we can't lose sight of the fact that we have a great opportunity to make a difference by becoming more involved at the local level.

How do we learn about these opportunities? Contact your local elected representative and volunteer to serve on a committee. There are often vacancies on important committees whose responsibilities include environmental protection, conservation, and land use. Or volunteer to track the meetings of important committees and report back to your Group Executive Committee. The effort will pay off in more effective Group conservation campaigns and the regular interaction and work to educate officials will advance our goals.

Looking ahead to the fall elections, Group and Chapter Political Committees will be looking for lots of volunteers to help meet our goals. Contact me or your Group Political Chair if you can offer your help. If you're uncertain of your polling place and candidates, visit [vpa.wi.gov](http://vpa.wi.gov).

The world is run by those who show up - so we must remember to. Let's make this a successful 2010 by increasing our involvement to meet our conservation and political goals. ♻️

*Dave Blouin is the Political Chair of the Sierra Club's John Muir Chapter.*

## SPRING CONSERVATION CONGRESS

The annual WDNR spring hearings on fish and wildlife rules and the annual Wisconsin Conservation Congress meeting will be held at the on **Monday, April 12, at 7 p.m.**

Legendary conservationist Aldo Leopold helped to create the Conservation Congress in 1934 to maximize public participation in Wisconsin's 72 Counties on natural resources decisions. Although all citizens can attend and voice their opinions on wildlife and environmental issue questions, recent hearings have not been heavily attended by those whose primary focus is wildlife or habitat conservation and protection.

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# FROM THE CHAIR

by Eric Uram, Chair  
John Muir Chapter

Well, now I get to write to you all about the issues on my mind. I hope you find this effort informative, thought-provoking and maybe even inspirational. Be sure to give me some feedback -- good, bad or indifferent -- so I can understand what it is our members need or want (eric.uram@sierraclub.org).

Firstly, as Bill Clinton's election team and George Stephanopoulos said so many times, "It's the economy stupid!" It still rings true, as the economic turmoil these past couple of years has played a key role in shaping our future, including the legislative arena.

We've had a few things clear state and federal hurdles -- better laws, good court decisions, and key appointments at agencies. However, much work remains. There will be some issues with inertia -- like high-speed rail and federal green jobs programs that will continue to move; but other issues are still out there without any assurances of gaining a solution before the end of the Legislative or Congressional sessions.

At the time I write this, state efforts to improve groundwater protection and provide

better energy policy are still unfulfilled. Two issues that you, our members, chose as John Muir Chapter priorities. Now, your help is needed for keeping the momentum going on seeing these issues through the legislature. Your calls and letters are critical -- and with elections coming in November, your vote will be critical as well. The choice to elect or reject the current crop of politicians and their positions on key environmental issues will be your choice in about six months.

Keep an eye on our website to track legislative opportunities and votes from elected officials. An informed electorate is critical to passing good legislation and electing the best people to office. We need to make sure that the post-2008 election party doesn't turn into a midterm election hangover. Keep yourself, your family and your friends informed, engaged and involved in the legislative and electoral process and help bring a better future for ourselves, our families, and the environment.

So remember, explore, enjoy and protect the planet -- take advantage of your right as a taxpayer and voter to keep your elected officials informed on your priorities and then either retain or discard their efforts with your vote in November. In the meantime, go outside and have fun!

Secondly, I would like to welcome and extend my thanks to those chapter members who fulfilled their tenure as chapter excom officers -- Jim Steffens as chair and Cheri Briscoe as Secretary. Thanks to you both for your very capable efforts, we may be calling

on you in time of need. Replacing these two will be Jim Kerler (Vice Chair), Will Stahl (Conservation Chair) and Liz Wessel (Secretary). I welcome all of the new officers and look forward to their assistance in helping run an efficient and effective leadership team. Our remaining excom officer is Harriet Iwamoto, who remains as our very capable treasurer (thanks, Harriet).

I look ahead to a better year and promise to improve our Chapter's effectiveness at shaping that future. ☺



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# CAPITOL CONSERVATION CONSERVATION LOBBY DAY 2010

By Rep. Spencer Black

On a bright day in January, more than 500 people descended on the state Capitol to lobby their state Representatives and Senators to support environment legislation. The occasion was the annual Conservation Lobby Day. Many Sierra Club members were in attendance.

The crowd of conservationists who came to Madison follow in a proud Wisconsin tradition -- of citizens speaking up for our outdoors. In fact, environmental battles are only won because good people are willing to demand that their elected representatives stand up to the polluters and stick up for our outdoors.

Due to the support of the conservation community, the state Legislature has recently passed measure after measure to improve our environment. In just one year, Wisconsin has enacted new laws to protect our lakes with statewide bans on phosphorus in fertilizer and detergents. We've made the first additions to the wild river system in more than four decades. We approved groundbreaking rules to prevent incompatible development from harming habitat in lakes and rivers, and we finally enacted a statewide requirement for recycling of electronic waste.

These changes didn't just happen. They happened because of the activists who fight every day for a better environment. Citizens jammed

the public hearing to support the phosphorus ban. They wrote letters and made phone asking the Legislature to support protecting our wild rivers. They talked one on one with the legislators asking for the recycling of E-waste.

The folks at Conservation Lobby Day took time to celebrate these hard won victories. However, no one came to Lobby Day just to sit back and celebrate. That's because now is no time to rest. The Legislature is now going into the final month of the biennial session. Major initiatives which will dramatically expand our system of environment protection will be front and center in the closing days of the current Legislature.

Most prominent is the Clean Energy Jobs Act. This will probably be the most contentious piece of business before the Legislature -- environmental or otherwise. The Clean Energy Jobs Act will sharply change the way Wisconsin provides for our energy needs by reducing our dependence on fossil fuels. The Act would significantly reduce Wisconsin's greenhouse gas emissions, require that 25 percent of our electricity come from renewable sources by 2025, and mandate investments in energy efficiency and conservation sufficient to reduce our overall energy use by 2 percent a year. Passage of the Act will position the state to be a leader in new energy technology, clean up our air, fight global warming and create 15,000 new clean energy jobs.

Another ground-breaking proposal is a comprehensive bill to strengthen the laws that protect our groundwater. The proposal would make sure that wells for water bottling companies and other activities do not damage our drinking water or our lakes, streams or wetlands. Also on deck are measures to reduce pollution from mercury and reduce the use of toxic chemicals.

It's rarely easy to pass environmental legislation. Most, if not all, proposed conservation measures face opposition from well funded and well connected lobby groups. For example, the oil and coal interests are going all out to kill the Clean Energy Jobs Act -- but Wisconsin citizens have always placed a priority on conservation. When we take the time to contact our legislators and get our fellow conservationists to do the same, our advocacy has time and time again overcome the special interest lobbies.

You may not have been one of the crowd in Madison for Conservation Lobby Day but you can still be heard loud and clear. Your voice is vital. Let your legislators know you feel. That can make all the difference. ☺

*Representative Spencer Black has served in the state Legislature for 25 years. He chairs the Assembly Natural Resources Committee. He is a former Chair of the John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club.*

## THE MUIR VIEW

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**DEADLINE FOR JULY-SEPTEMBER 2010 ISSUE IS MAY 15, 2010**

## SPRING CONSERVATION CONGRESS *Continued from Page 1*

The first half of the evening will include fish and wildlife rule changes proposed by the DNR. The second portion contains Conservation Congress advisory questions. Many of these become official DNR rule change questions the following year. The entire Spring Hearing ballot, including the locations of each county meeting, is available through the WDNR website ([www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/nrboard/congress/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/nrboard/congress/)).

The most interesting advisory question this year (#61) advocates for phasing out lead fishing tackle less than one inch long and weighing less than one ounce for use in Wisconsin waters. If this passes the Spring Hearing, it could become a DNR rule the following year. It would go far in reducing the incidence of lead poisoning in waterbirds, especially Common Loons and Trumpeter Swans, and the secondary poisoning of raptors, such as eagles and ospreys. Lead toxicosis is

very costly to treat, often exceeding \$1,000 per bird in medication alone. Many inexpensive non-lead alternatives to lead sinkers and jigs are already available, but sometimes only by asking. For more information, see the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative Issues paper, "Lead Poisoning of Wisconsin's Birds," ([www.wisconsinbirds.org/leadpoisoning.htm](http://www.wisconsinbirds.org/leadpoisoning.htm)) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency ([www.pca.state.mn.us/oea/reduce/sinkers.cfm#information](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/oea/reduce/sinkers.cfm#information)).

Please attend your Spring Hearing if possible. While it is useful to hear and participate in the discussion, you can also fill in the ballot and leave if you have limited time. For more information, call Karen Etter Hale at the Madison Audubon office at 608-255-BIRD (2473). ☺

*Karen Etter Hale is Executive Secretary of the Madison Audubon Society, and an avid, talented gardener residing in Lake Mills, WI*

# SIERRANS ON THE MOVE

## WORKING TO IMPROVE WISCONSIN'S TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

By Liz Wessell

Never in my time in Wisconsin can I recall opportunities to make progress on our transportation system- or rather, the transformation of transportation. I, like many other Sierrans, have visited or lived in cities in the United States or had the opportunity to live abroad where cars rarely figured into daily transportation. I never owned a car until I moved to Wisconsin.

Wisconsin, like many states, puts the majority of its transportation funding into the construction and maintenance of roads. A small fraction of funding goes to public transit and bike and pedestrian infrastructure. This funding allocation and lack of a stable funding source for multimodal transportation prevents communities from increasing mobility and accessing transit. And it keeps us from addressing the 24% of greenhouse gases from transportation sources.

The Chapter's Global Warming Solutions Team and several of our local groups are focusing on improving transportation policies. Unfortunately, emissions are projected to grow even with the introduction of cleaner fuels and more efficient cars. In other words, we need policies that reward efficient neighborhood planning and expanded transit options. And these options need to be integrated into systems that make sense for the communities and regions they serve.

So what's going on? Right now, the legislature is considering several pieces of legislation that would authorize Regional Transit Authorities. Transit Authorities enable communities to build, operate and maintain efficient multimodal systems with stable funding. And simultaneously, the state has pursued, as part of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, funding to begin to rebuild an intercity rail arterial system linking the core cities of Wisconsin with cities around the region. Both of these are essential to reduce Wisconsin's carbon footprint from transportation. And the legislative clock is ticking; the Regional Transit Authority legislation needs to be passed by April 22nd - Earth Day!

### To create Regional Transit Authorities, the Team has focused on:

- ▶ Generating support for Regional Transit Authorities across the state. RTAs provide the mechanism for local governments to work together for the most efficient and effective multimodal transportation solutions for each geographic area. And most importantly, these authorities can provide consistent and stable funding for these systems.
- ▶ Supporting legislative initiatives that have been introduced to create RTAs. The legislative actions are urgent. The 2010 census could result in communities losing funding for operating funds for transit. They need RTAs in place to take advantage of federal opportunities and to protect current systems.

The Biennial Budget, 2009 Wisconsin Act 28 (Act 28), already authorized the creation of RTAs in Dane County, the Chippewa Valley, and the Chequamegon Bay. If you are lucky enough to live in these areas, please participate in designing the future of transit in your area, and support any local referenda to provide sustainable funding for improved transit services.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Support bills that authorize RTAs.** Drafted from a bipartisan Legislative Council Study, AB 282 provides authority to create Regional Transit Authorities across the state. AB 282 resolves the issue for the entire state rather than continuing on an incremental approach. However, this may not be the bill that gets passed. For areas with no specific legislation like Green Bay, Janesville and LaCrosse, this is the only legislative solution available. RTAs can provide or contract for transit services in their jurisdictions and seek funding from a variety of sources including state and federal funds and up to a half cent sales tax.

In addition to AB 282, please **urge your legislators to support the following bills** authorizing the formation of RTAs in the following areas: AB 723, to create an Interim RTA and permanent RTA in Southeastern WI (communities in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, Racine & Waukesha Counties), AB 734, to create an RTA in the Fox Valley; and AB 791, to create an RTA in La Crosse County. Please visit <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org> and click the Legislative Tracker button for details on these bills.

**2010 National Rail Day** (May 8) offers an opportunity to celebrate Wisconsin's historic connection to rails but more importantly our future connection. We need to continue to build support for regional rail transportation and links to our long distance transportation hubs. Amtrak traditionally has events at its major hubs like Chicago and communities have created their own events. The Global Warming Solutions Team welcomes ideas and the opportunity to work with Groups in creating events across the state that send a unified message of support. Please call me at (608) 238-9934 or email me at [lizard59sc@yahoo.com](mailto:lizard59sc@yahoo.com) if you want to be part of an event in your community.

To rebuild our rail system, we have focused on generating support for an intercity rail system that will connect Milwaukee and Madison and ultimately the corridor of communities running from Chicago to Minneapolis. This proposal is part of the Midwestern Intercity Rail Proposal.

Starting with the Madison-Milwaukee corridor takes advantage of the completed environmental analysis for this corridor. The project attracted the recent award of \$882 million of high speed rail funding from the Obama Administration. The projected time frame for completion of this project is 5 years. I look forward to a Club Outing where we can take the train in celebration!

Thank you for all the work done in each community around the state! ☘

*Liz Wessell is a member of the Global Warming Solutions Team of the Sierra Club's John Muir Chapter.*

# MUIR IS STILL HERE...

## IN MARQUETTE COUNTY

By Kathleen McGwin



In 1870, John Muir wrote to his brother, "The happiest days and scrap portions of my life were spent in that old slant-walled garret and among the smooth creeks that trickled among the sedges of Fountain Lake meadow."

That "slant-walled garret" was the Muir family's first home in Marquette County, Wisconsin. The great naturalist co-founder of the Sierra Club and often called the "Father of our National Parks," spent his childhood running through the prairies, climbing the hills, and searching for bird's nests just south of Montello after he and his father, sister and brother emigrated from Scotland and built that slant walled-garret so the rest of the family could follow.

Marquette County Board of Supervisors has declared 2010 as the year of John Muir. The Montello Historic Preservation Society's summer of 2010 exhibit is named "Muir is Still Here." It will tell the story of the Marquette County that reared and influenced one of its most famous sons and it will bring the visitor from 1849 into 2010 and all the natural glories that Marquette County still holds. Muir is still here in the stories we repeat today of those early settler families and in the evidence of their lives in our communities today.

He is still here in the shadows of oaks and expanse of prairie. He flies overhead with the spring migration of birds that fill Marquette County woods and wetlands with song. Muir is still here in the orchids that poke their heads through the wet sedge meadows and in the sculpted glacial landscape that affords kettle lake and rock outcrop views.

John Muir did not grow up in a self made world. He was immersed in the culture of pioneer and immigrant life. He built roads alongside neighbor boys. He borrowed books from a district library set up in a neighbor's home. He was encouraged by others to learn and follow his dreams. In every corner of Marquette County, life was being staked out, mills were being built; settlers were drawing boundaries, forming school districts and setting in place wheels of American life.

Marquette County provided natural beauty, a rich wilderness, and a diverse community of settlers. The Fox River brought travelers, the churches and schools opportunity and connections. "Muir is Still Here" will tell the tale of Muir in Marquette County, Marquette County in Muir, and where you can still find wildness, beauty and the land that Muir loved. The John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club was instrumental in helping generate funding to buy land which is now a part of John Muir Park and state natural area.

The Marquette County Board of Supervisor's resolution reads:

"WHEREAS, John Muir (1838-1914) was America's most famous and influential naturalist and conservationist; and WHEREAS, as a child and young man he lived in Marquette County where he started to formulate his love of conservation; and WHEREAS, his words and deeds helped inspire President Theodore Roosevelt's innovative conservation programs, including establishing the first National Monuments by Presidential Proclamation, and Yosemite National Park by congressional action; and WHEREAS, as a writer, he taught the people of his time and ours the importance of experiencing and protecting our natural heritage; and WHEREAS, the life of John Muir demonstrates and remains today an inspiration for environmentalists and conservationists everywhere. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Marquette County Board of Supervisors, in recognition of the values for which John Muir demonstrated, issues this proclamation to declare 2010 as the Year of John Muir in Marquette County."

The Montello Historical Preservation Society is planning an exhibit and a year of activities during 2010 that celebrates the history, beauty, ecology and wilderness of Marquette County that greatly influenced John Muir's wilderness philosophy as well as the great achievements of Muir. Join us is recapturing the natural world that inspired Muir and learn about the place of his childhood.

For a list of Year of Muir events, please go to [www.kathleenmcgwin.com](http://www.kathleenmcgwin.com) and click on "Montello Historic Preservation Society" ☘

*Kathleen McGwin is a freelance writer based in Montello, WI. She is also President of the Montello Historic Preservation Society.*



# WISCONSIN WATER TEAM LAUNCH

By Eric Uram

A clear majority of Americans currently live near a water body that fails to meet its water quality standards. In the 40 years since we passed the Clean Water Act (CWA), water quality has improved considerably. However, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) still reports that nationwide about 40 percent of rivers, 45 percent of lakes and over half of our estuaries fail to meet their minimum water quality standards. Due to this, our waters are threatened with excessive pollutants that can trigger fish kills, beach closings and other environmental and human health threats. All of which are 100 percent correctable. In Wisconsin, over 1,100 listings for impaired waters were included on the state's 303(d) list.

So, what's the 303(d) list? The CWA requires that lakes, rivers, and streams have water quality standards protective of their designated use (cold water trout streams differ from warm water farm ponds). When data shows that a waterbody fails to meet a standard because of pollution, it is considered impaired and placed on the 303(d) list.

Placing waters on the 303(d) list is important because it serves as a trigger for CWA provisions designed to address the complex causes of environmental problems. One of these tools is a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), which forms the basis for restricting pollution from discharge pipes and non-point sources and makes the cleanup of Wisconsin's polluted waters possible.

Measuring the changing characteristics of waters becomes the biggest challenge because the monitoring equipment needed is usually operated by hand and the frequency for establishing problems requires regular testing. What does Sierra Club have? Lots of hands!

This past week, I participated in the planning session to launch the Wisconsin Water Sentinels Program, a Sierra Club-sponsored program designed to help stop water quality threats in our own backyards. Most members take polluted lakes or streams personally; and the answer to getting them unpolluted is personal, too.

In order to get the WDNR to force polluters to cleanup their pollution, we need hands -- lots of them -- to establish a monitoring network. By coordinating with current volunteer monitoring programs in Wisconsin under state agency and other educational or organizational efforts, we can establish the need for action. Some of you may already be participating in other programs -- we want to hear from you about what's going on with them.

As Chapter Chair, I firmly believe the reason we have a Clean Water Act is to ensure our waters are fishable and swimmable; and as the Water Sentinels believe, drinkable too. They aren't for diluting or flushing pollution downstream.

The John Muir Chapter and the Water Sentinels are looking for volunteers as we enter another spring thaw and severe storm period. First thing, document problems -- take your camera (cell phone cameras can be just as good) when you travel and get images of the pollution problems you see in your area. Send the pictures along to your group conservation chair or e-mail them to me and we will begin to tackle the solutions.

The Chapter Water Team -- Jim Kerler, Deb Saeger, Will Stahl, Karen Wollenburg, Kathy Stahl, Elizabeth Mackey, and Suzanne Schalig -- are ready to help by visiting your group meetings and discussing next steps in organizing our efforts, helping train volunteers on monitoring, and coordinating the outputs to bring meaningful results. So Wisconsin Sierra Club, are you up for cleaner waters? It's time to get knee-deep and work together to protect and clean up our waters! ☺

*Eric Uram (eric.uran@sierraclub.org) is the Chair of the Sierra Club's John Muir Chapter.*

# IT'S RAINING WATER ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WATER TEAM

By Jim Kerler

We all know water is an essential life-giving resource. Although the 1972 Clean Water Act initiated great strides to improve and protect water quality, we still have pollution problems with many of our surface and ground waters. And new threats such as confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) continue to emerge. Rep. Spencer Black pointed out in the last Muir View that Wisconsin is home to 1.2 quadrillion gallons of groundwater, yet we have begun to experience groundwater shortages in several regions.

Just about a year ago Wisconsin's John Muir Chapter began to assemble a team of volunteers from around the state to work on water issues. Today, I chair meetings of the 8 core members of this team, which includes Elizabeth Mackey, Deb Saeger, Kathy Stahl, Will Stahl, Sue Schalig, Eric Uram and Karen Wollenberg. We find ourselves thoroughly engrossed (though not quite submerged!) in water quality issues and the opportunities they present for Sierra Club members to drive home positive changes.

Over 400 Sierra Club members and friends submitted their concerns over the (now-approved) DNR permit for the expansion of Rosendale Dairy, which will soon become Wisconsin's largest dairy of over 8000 cows. Your comments, along with the anguished responses from local neighbors, have fueled our current efforts to correct inadequacies of Wisconsin's Livestock Siting Rules. These rules are up for review by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

In a related action we recently contacted about 1100 members on our email list, asking them to attend hearings or submit comments in support of DNR proposed "NR 151" Runoff Rule Revisions. While not perfect, these revisions would improve on the way farmers, construction companies and municipalities control runoff of phosphorous and sediment, which lead to algae blooms, contaminated drinking water and fish kills. In parallel, we have joined the Sierra Club Water Sentinel program, which will offer Wisconsin citizens the opportunity to monitor and protect their home waters. Don't miss Eric Uram's article on Water Sentinels in this issue!

We have also participated in two efforts to promote proposals to protect groundwater quality and quantity:

- ▶ One is a joint campaign to support regulations that protect drinking water quality in areas of "karst" geology, where shallow soils, fractured bedrock and sinkholes provide a conduit for anything spread on the land to reach groundwater. This includes manure, septage and industrial waste -- all of which can pollute groundwater and sicken well users.
- ▶ We are also participating in the Groundwater campaign being mounted with multiple groups under the moniker of the Wisconsin Water Coalition. This alliance is working to raise awareness about the need to protect groundwater quantity by changing the way the DNR issues permits for high capacity wells, requiring statewide water conservation, and increasing protection for Wisconsin's springs.

Sierra Club members are in a position to seize upon opportunities to ensure that Wisconsin's waters are fishable, swimmable and drinkable for all in the years to come. I hope you will get involved with these important campaigns. ☺

*Jim Kerler is the Sierra Club's John Muir Chapter Water Team Leader.*



# WISCONSIN RIVER COUNTY GROUP TO BE DISSOLVED

By Jim Kerler

There may be many reasons. The Wisconsin River Country Group (WRCG) of Sierra Club, covering parts of several counties in the middle of the state (roughly centered on Wausau), no longer appears to be active. Though the group had provided leadership for the John Muir Chapter on a number of issues in the past, Rich Wentzel, the group's chair, recommends that it be dissolved. He cites a lack of volunteer leaders to run for group office, inability to sustain meetings and a drop in overall group activities. Other reasons could include the economy, local demographics or the election of more environmentally concerned politicians.

The Club's national Office of Volunteer and Activist Services has been informed of the situation and the Chapter Executive Committee's intention to dissolve the group. Assuming there is no immediate protest (and active engagement) by area Sierra Club members, dissolution of the group will proceed following a two thirds vote of the state Executive Committee meeting during their May 4th meeting, which is via teleconference.

Current Club members in the area will still have access to the complete range of club activities, including Sierra Magazine, the Muir View chapter newsletter and outings at the chapter and national level, including River Touring Section outings. Former WRCG

members will still be welcomed as activists on issues that are important to them and will have the option of receiving the newsletter of another group within the chapter.

We hope that someday the club can again maintain an active group in the Wisconsin River Country area. Then again, we'd love to see a surge of interest right now. ☺

Jim Kerler is vice chair of the Sierra Club's John Muir Chapter.

If you have questions or comments about this proposed action, please contact the chapter office by April 25th.

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# PLIGHT OF THE BUMBLE BEE



By Linda Linssen

The next time you visit a farmers' market or grocery store, remind yourself that a many of the booths would be empty if not for invertebrate pollinators such as bees, butterflies and moths. These creatures play a vital role, according to Madison ecologist Frank Hassler, providing "critical ecosystem services by pollinating wildflowers and food crop."

Pollinators enable flowering plants to reproduce and bear fruit, so we have them to thank for fruits, nuts, vegetables and other essential foods in our diets. By some accounts, you can thank a pollinator for at least every third bite you eat. You can thank them for alfalfa, too, if you enjoy meat and dairy products.

Despite their critical role in the food chain, invertebrate pollinators have been declining in the U.S. since the mid-twentieth century, threatening a wide range of flowering plants, as well as commercial crop production. In Wisconsin, many species are in trouble, including native bumble bees - one of the top pollinators of native plants and cranberries.

Urban development and other land-use changes have negatively impacted the plant-pollinator relationship. Human land-use activity has removed many suitable habitats. Some pollinators need plants that flower sequentially to ensure they have adequate food sources throughout the season. Other pollinators need specific plants for survival. For example, the Karner blue butterfly relies on wild lupine as its sole larval host plant. As a result of the plant's decline, the Karner blue is an endangered species.

Hummingbirds, moths and butterflies that migrate seasonally need plants along established "nectar corridors" to give them the energy to survive their long journeys. Disruption of those corridors puts migrating pollinators at risk for starvation. Some bees and other pollinators need undisturbed nesting areas, populated by plants that sustain them.

Research has shown that excessive exposure to synthetic pesticides can kill pollinators or impair their reproduction. Broadcast applications of non-selective herbicides can destroy plants that serve as nectar sources for a variety of pol-

*"A garden is more than just an artistically planted composition of plants for beauty's sake; it is a living organism. What makes a garden beautiful is the interplay of nature - the interaction between the elements of nature - the sun, the rain, the wind and of course, all the creatures that call a garden home. Nothing is more satisfying to the gardener than seeing the bees, butterflies and spiders living among and harvesting the fruits of our labor ... and to be lucky enough to witness the beauty and grace of a ruby-throated hummingbird sipping nectar from our flowers ... that is the ultimate affirmation that our garden has arrived!"*  
- Jeff Epping, Director of Horticulture - Olbrich Botanical Gardens

*"Maintaining insect pollinators is crucial for agricultural crops as well as for native plants. Some butterflies have very specific needs for host plants and size of area required; providing habitat maintains their populations in areas where we are also conserving and restoring vegetation. Providing hummingbird habitat maintains their populations with resources along their nesting and migration routes. Native plantings support native insect populations that in turn support bird populations. Conserving a wide diversity of pollinators in the state is a step in the right direction."*  
- Susan Carpenter, Outreach Specialist/ Native Plant Garden - UW Arboretum

linators, kill larval host plants for butterflies and moths, and reduce available nesting materials for bees. Fear of bees (and an aversion to insects in general) has sent many homeowners scrambling to buy pesticides that promise insect-free yards - at the cost of killing everything within range, including bees, butterflies and caterpillars.

What can you do to help pollinators survive? Grow things that flower. Choose plants that bloom at different times throughout the growing season and choose a variety of heights, colors and shapes to attract a variety of pollinators. To attract native pollinators, choose native plants such as purple coneflower, rattlesnake master, borage, bee balm, lemon balm, aster, blazing star and milkweed... as well as dill, fennel, basil and other flowering edibles.

Consult local professionals and experienced gardeners for additional possibilities, including shrubs and trees that attract pollinators. Raise

your mower blade and mow less often. This will give plants that attract pollinators a chance to bloom. It will also save you time and money.

If you have the space (and no one in your household is allergic to pollen or bee stings), you can also help sustain pollinators by creating a variety of nesting sites that mimic their native habitats. In Wisconsin, you'll find a vast array of sources for habitats and feeders to help you attract bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other pollinators to your yard and garden.

Mark your calendars! June 21-27, 2010 is Pollinator Week nationwide. Last year, Wisconsin helped raise awareness of the benefits of pollinators, along with 30 other states. For updated information about this event, visit the Pollinator Partnership website ([www.pollinator.org](http://www.pollinator.org)).

Linda Linssen is a Madison-based writer. She can be reached at [linda@greenwriter4u.com](mailto:linda@greenwriter4u.com).

# CONSERVATION COMMENTS

By Will Stahl

I've been a Sierra Club member since 1986. However, I've always felt too busy to participate, other than sending in my money and reading the newsletters as they came. Raising children, going to work and fixing up houses seemed about enough to do, but I always had the idea that, someday, I'd get more involved. As I approached my retirement from public school teaching, I began attending local meetings.

Eventually, I was asked to join the group's executive committee and I found myself our representative to the John Muir Chapter ex-com. I kept showing up long enough that they finally asked me to take over as Conservation Chair when Eric Uram became ex-com chair. His are big shoes to fill and it's going to take some time to learn to fill them.

The John Muir Chapter is, as the rest of the planet, confronted with myriad environmental issues, too many for any one person or group to confront. Fortunately, the chapter has decided to focus its energies on two main issues, global warming and water problems.

Each of these two present an array of challenges and so we have further narrowed them down. The global warming team is working mainly on energy, encouraging the clean kinds and eliminating the dirty ones. The water team is working mainly on the issues around CAFO's, the concentrated animal feeding operations that have so much potential to contaminate water, both above and below ground. With these two issues at the forefront of current legislature, please read the Both of these issues are in front of the legislature right now. Please read the articles elsewhere in this issue explaining the positions and actions we are taking.

Then start showing up. More than anything, solving these problems requires people who are willing to communicate with the public and let our lawmakers and enforcers know that we are out here and we are watching them. If you have only been giving your money, consider giving some of your time. There's plenty to do. ☺

Will Stahl is the Conservation Chair of the John Muir Chapter and a Fox Valley Group Delegate.



## SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB

Your financial contribution means a lot to us. By supporting our Chapter, you support Sierra Club's work in your own backyard. This makes you an essential part of our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the quality of life in our cities, and to promote the enjoyment of nature. **Thank you.**

Mail your contributions to Sierra Club, John Muir Chapter 222 S. Hamilton St., Suite 1 Madison, WI 53703-3201  
To donate electronically go to <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org> and click the "Donate" button.



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WISCONSIN NATIVE SPECIES

# TIARELLA CORDIFOLIA

**Common Name:**  
Foamflower

**Family Name:**  
Saxifrage (Saxifragaceae)

**Flowering Time:**  
April to June

**Habit:**  
Deciduous; partial shade to shade. Prefers a moist site high in organic matter.

By Edward Lyon

Upon being asked to write about a native plant species, the first that came to mind was one of my favorites for both native and ornamental applications, *Tiarella cordifolia* L. or heartleaf foamflower. I grew up in upstate New York on a dairy farm. One of my favorite places to spend time was a glen created by a long, rock-bottomed cold stream that ran through a predominantly beech, sugar maple and white pine forest.

The environment was always cool and deeply shaded most of the season and the *Tiarella* grew along embankments starting right at the water's edge and extending up the slope to probably within four to 6 feet of the incline, depending on moisture and organic matter. There were two forms, a clumping form, *T. cordifolia*, and a running variant, *T. cordifolia* v. *cordifolia*.

I loved its deeply lobed fresh green leaves that could make a ground cover in some areas and delicate early spring flowers that were so white they would light up the shade. Interestingly, as common as I found it in my native New York woodland, it is endangered and protected in Wisconsin -- and New Jersey. It is considered a perennial forb in the Saxifragaceae family, and is found on the cool rich forest floors of eastern North America and Canada.

The foliage of this woodland groundcover resembles an oak or maple leaf and is attractive from summer through fall, and can turn shades of red or bronze in autumn. In fact, one of the first and best cultivated forms is called oakleaf. Cultivars for gardens have been developed so it is a highly desirable ornamental as well as native. The delicate white flowers often have a slight pink accent and grow up to 12 inches tall.

They are airy and loosely arranged and bloom early to mid-spring; the flowers of cultivars are much denser and more prolific. An attribute is the long duration of flowering very early in spring for about 6 weeks. It has a peculiar yet attractive seed pod that appears as 2 boat-shaped, papery wings

with the upper overturned in the lower. The ripe seeds are held tightly inside until a raindrop hits the lower lip and launches the seed into the air.

The compact foliage of the species can range from matte to semi-glossy with three to seven-lobed leaves generally four to six inches across and may have pronounced red coloration along the veins. The foliage arises directly from the stolons and can be evergreen in mild winters in the Midwest. *Tiarella* is closely related *Heuchera*, *Tellima* and *Mitella* and is also called false miterwort because of its similarity to *Mitella* (miterwort).

Cultivated selections have produced larger, extremely profuse flowers and variations in foliage lobing, including near blood-red leaf venation. That coloration, whether species or ornamental selection, often disappears in mid-summer. The foliage of cultivated varieties can range from matte to very glossy and selections now include pinker flowers. Horticulturally they are great for shaded rock gardens, woodland gardens, border fronts, and wild gardens.

For the native gardener, foamflower will naturalize and can be planted in moist areas along stream banks or planted in mass to create an attractive ground cover. It is a great plant for the alkaline areas of the Midwest where we despair at not being able to grow acid loving wildflowers and shrubs.

Foamflower is easily grown in average, medium wet, well-drained soil in part shade to full shade and prefers a moist site high in organic matter with partial shade to shade and does not tolerate drought well. The only non-drought issue I have seen identified is a tunneling maggot that burrows into the roots, killing it off at the roots as described by William Cullina (*Growing and Propagating Wildflowers of the United States and Canada*).

Foamflower attracts butterflies, which is a benefit to shade and woodland gardeners who feel only sun plants attract insects. It is considered deer resistant and can be grown in areas with more sun provided it has mulch, rich organic matter and enough moisture.

Whether you're creating native woodland plantings, ornamental shade gardens or a combination of both, this plant is a delight as either species or in its many cultivated variations. I find both are useful at Allen Centennial Gardens and my own home garden. ☺

*Edward Lyon is Director of Horticulture at the Allen Centennial Gardens.*

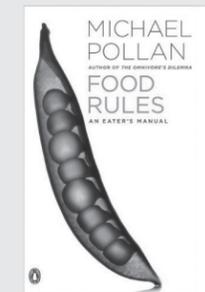
# THE GREEN REVIEW

BOOKS RELEVANT TO WISCONSIN SIERRA CLUB MEMBERS

By Amy Lou Jenkins

## FOOD RULES: AN EATER'S MANUAL

by Michael Pollan, Penguin Group, 2009, 139 pages.



Michael Pollan has long been captivating and upsetting those who eat. He entertained us with the historical evolution of four major crops in the *Botany of Desire*. He provoked and disturbed us in *The Omnivores Dilemma*, telling us that much of what we eat is bad for the environment and bad for the body. He also contributed to the documentary, *Food Inc.* (Coming to PBS in April) which chronicles the environmental and health pitfalls of the extensive factory farm. Pollan began to answer readers questions about what the heck can we eat with another James Beard Award winner: *In Defense of Food*.

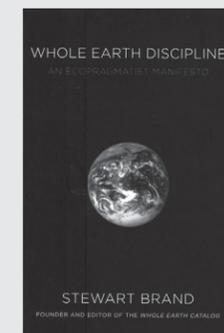
In *Food Rules*, readers experience another historical evolution. What's the bottom line in terms of healthy eating? You won't find extensive facts, statistics, or pleas for the environment. This book is for those who have already decided to make a change. Here's a blue print for exiting the Western Diet, which supports the Western epidemics of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. These 64 rules with concise explanations could help you to live a longer and healthier life, while living a little lighter on the land.

Pollan divides the rules into three sections. In the first section "Eat food." We are given a set of rules that point us back to real food. Some of this advice is counterintuitive to the food rules of the modern grocery store, "eat food that would eventually rot." Forget all the hype; "don't take the silence of the yams" as a sign that it has less to offer you than the convenience product pushed at you on billboards, commercials, and the middle shelves of grocery stores. In the second section we are given more specifics about what to eat. This advice often harkens back to old values, sometimes as far back as Chinese proverbs "Eating what stands on one leg (mushrooms and plant foods) is better than eating what stands on two legs (fowl), which is better than eating what stands of four legs (mammals.) Some of the simple advice is fun—don't eat cereal that changes the color of your milk. By the third section, we are given advice that tells us that how we should eat. We shouldn't eat too much, and his simple advice tries to give you rules to make this easier. By the time we get to the final section, perhaps the reader has learned that nutritious food won't leave us so empty that we can't seem to get enough.

**Could this diet change a life, change the world? I really do wonder. I'm going to give it a try. Watch my progress at [www.AmyLouJenkins.com](http://www.AmyLouJenkins.com).** ☺

## WHOLE EARTH DISCIPLINE: AN ECOPRAGMATIST MANIFESTO

by Stewart Brand, Viking Adult, 2009, 336 pages.



National Book Award winner Stewart Brand (*Whole Earth Catalogue*, 1972) has been working on the environmental front lines for decades, but he seems to have missed the meeting on the politically correct message of conservation. He's not pulling any party line. *Whole Earth Discipline* instead exhorts all those who care for and manage the resources of the earth to consider the needs of people, while following scientific principals rather than popular sentimental ideology.

Brand's writing is enticing, and optimistically organized around stewardship opportunities, including controversies such as urban farming and nuclear power. It isn't a given that environmentalists will agree with everything he says. But his work is so rich in historic, scientific, and cultural context that readers will likely stay engaged and listen. And isn't that what the movement needs—more impassioned listening and cooperation with those holding differing points of view? The intelligence, scope, and passion of *Whole Earth Discipline* are gifts born of many decades of caring and scientific dedication to the health of a people-sustaining planet.

*Amy Lou Jenkins is the author of Every Natural Fact: Five Seasons of Open-Air Parenting, May 2010. Her Essay "Close to Home" appears in the April 2010 release Wild with Child.*



# SPRING OUTINGS

The Sierra Club, as an organization, serves a dual purpose. John Muir's vision for an environmental group was not just one of education and legislation. He felt very strongly that the best way to empower people to want to protect the wild places of the earth was to get them out to enjoy them. Therefore the Sierra Club has always fostered a strong outings program to go along with our conservation ethic. To that end, there are many local events available to hike, bike, camp, ski etc. To see the latest information, visit <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/Events/outings.asp>

Outings are open to all members of the John Muir chapter and to the general public. Note that all outings are subject to change. PLEASE contact trip leaders ahead of time so they know you are coming and can contact you in case of cancellation or other changes.

## SATURDAY, APRIL 3 : SPRING HIKE AT THE NEW GLARUS WOODS STATE PARK

Join us for a 4 - 5 mile spring hike through prairies and forests at New Glarus Woods State Park. The hike is moderate with rolling hills and ravines. Meet at the parking lot off State Hwy. 69, 2 miles south of New Glarus at 10 a.m. Carpooling from Madison meets at 9 a.m. at the western Hill Farms State office parking lot, 4802 Sheboygan Ave. State Park sticker is required for cars. Bring water and a snack. Lunch option at a local Swiss restaurant afterward if interested. For more information contact David Smith at 608-233-1210. [4L]

## SATURDAY, APRIL 17 : JOHN MUIR/EARTH DAY HIKE

Celebrate Earth Day and learn about the legacy of John Muir with an easy hike at John Muir Park in Marquette County near John Muir's boyhood home. Afterwards we'll visit the Aldo Leopold Preserve, and the "shack" where Leopold wrote his famous Sand County Almanac. Wear walking shoes and bring water and lunch. Meet at 10:30 a.m. at the John Muir Park parking lot on County Hwy. F in Marquette County, 11 miles north of Portage. Madison carpool leaves at 9:30 a.m. from the south parking lot at Olin Park, off John Nolen Dr. For more information contact Kathy Mulbrandon at 608-848-5076 or [kmulb@charter.net](mailto:kmulb@charter.net).

## SUNDAY, APRIL 18 : ICE AGE TRAIL OAK RESCUE

Celebrate Earth week by rescuing native oaks on this popular section of the Ice Age Trail just west of Cross Plains in the driftless area. It has restored prairies and woodland areas that have undergone some restoration, but is in need of much more TLC to remove woody invasives and rescue the native woodland. We'll be joining the Dane County Chapter of the Trail in this effort.

Meet at 9 AM. Take Hwy 14 just west of Cross Plains to Cty KP. Go north ~ 2 miles to Table Bluff Rd. Turn left for .3 miles to parking area on the left. Bring fluids and snack or lunch if staying into the afternoon. Wear work clothes and sturdy shoes and gloves. For more info, contact Don Ferber at 608-222-9376 or [d\\_ferber@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d_ferber@sbcglobal.net). [4L]

## SUNDAY, APRIL 25 : ROUGHNECK RIDE

Note: This year's ride is on Sunday! This is an early, 22 mile bicycle ride in the hills southeast of Mondovi. It's a challenging route with a couple of long hills and many short gnarlies, on township roads with some gravel. Mountain bikes work best. Meet at 9:30 AM at Western Dairyland Community Action Center (formerly Naples School), located east of Mondovi on Hwy. 10, then south on Hwy. BB, 1 mile to the Center. More info or to RSVP: Libby & John Stupak: 715 833-1941 or [stupakls@hotmail.com](mailto:stupakls@hotmail.com) [CV]

## SATURDAY, MAY 1 : NEW ICE AGE BIKE RIDE

Join the Pie Riders for a 40 mile road bike ride through Ice Age terrain. Spring flowers? Maybe. Snowstorm? Possible. Fun? You bet! Ride starts in Cornell at 10 AM at the parking lot across from John Henry's Café. Rest stop, with beverages and muffins at the Ice Age Visitor Center on CTH M. More info or to RSVP: Eleanor Wolf: 715 835-4829 or [ellewolf@arczip.com](mailto:ellewolf@arczip.com) [CV]

## SATURDAY, MAY 1 : ICE AGE TRAIL REPAIR

Have skills with a hammer and nails and want to help upgrade a section of the Ice Age Trail? We'll join with the Dane Trail chapter to improve a chronically wet section of the Trail to make it more passable and enjoyable for hikers. We'll be assembling puncheons on site and placing them on the Trail. Meet at 9 AM. Take Hwy 18/151 to Verona exit 81. Go ~ 1 mile to Lincoln St and turn left and go to the end. Bring water and a snack or lunch if staying into the afternoon. Wear work clothes and sturdy shoes and gloves. For more info, contact Don Ferber at 608-222-9376 or [d\\_ferber@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d_ferber@sbcglobal.net). [4L]

## SUNDAY, MAY 2 : TIFFANY WILDLIFE AREA TRAIN RIDE

The Lower Chippewa River Alliance is sponsoring a ride on antique railroad motor cars into the Tiffany Wildlife Area. Steve Betchkal, local birding expert, will help identify birds on short hikes into oak savannas and open prairie meadows. Leave boarding area (4 mi. south of Durand on Hwy 25) at 7 AM and return at noon. Park on east side of Hwy 25. Pre-register by sending \$20 per person with name, address, phone or email to Lower Chippewa River Alliance, PO Box 74, Durand WI 54736. More info or to RSVP: Dave Linderud: 715 672-8595 [CV]

## MONDAY TO SATURDAY, MAY 10-15 : WOMEN'S NORTHWOODS SERVICE WEEK, BOULDER JUNCTION

Join other outdoorswomen in the beautiful Northern Highland State Forest to assist with research projects, plant native trees, prepare canoe camp sites, and/or quash alien invasives in native forest ecosystems. Stay at a lakeside cabin near Boulder Junction with canoes, showers, and screen porch. Work four days and have an optional fifth day to attend a nearby birding festival or explore hiking trails, lakes, and rivers.

Limit 8; cost \$25, including accommodations, breakfast and lunch. Participants bring ingredients and recipe for one evening meal for all. Sponsored by the Central U.P. MI group. For details and an application, call or email Sherry Zoars (906-358-1110; [zoars@copper.net](mailto:zoars@copper.net)). Include name, address, telephone number, and where you read about the trip.

## SATURDAY, MAY 15 : INDIAN LAKE COUNTY PARK REMNANT PRAIRIE TOUR AND INVASIVES REMOVAL

Learn about remnant prairies and invasives removal techniques from experts in the native plant communities of this County Park, including long time resident and nature enthusiast Denny Connor. We'll tour some of these areas including some rarely seen prairie remnants, and learn about native plants and management techniques. Meet at 9 AM at the Indian

Lake County Park parking lot on Hwy 19, 2 miles west of Hwy 12. Bring fluids and a snack or lunch if staying into the afternoon. Wear work clothes with sturdy shoes and gloves. For more info, contact Don Ferber at 608-222-9376 or [d\\_ferber@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d_ferber@sbcglobal.net). [4L]

## SATURDAY/SUNDAY, MAY 22 & 23 : WILDERNESS FIRST AID TRAINING

This Wilderness First Aid (WFA) course is a joint effort between the Sierra Club Four Lakes Group and Wilderness Medical Institute (an institute of the National Outdoor Leadership School). The 2-day course will cover a wide range of wilderness medicine topics for people who travel in the outdoors. WMI's curriculum is unique and includes many advanced topics that other programs leave out such as dislocation reduction, focused spinal assessment and epinephrine administration. In just two days, you'll have the knowledge, skills and ability to make sound decisions in emergency situations. This course is ideal for trip leaders, camp staff, and outdoor enthusiasts.

Course runs 8 am to 5 pm each day at the Aldo Leopold annex in Black Earth. For more information or if you have questions, please contact Terri Felton, 608-663-8874 or [tfelton@tds.net](mailto:tfelton@tds.net). Cost is \$175, with an additional charge for camping/lodging (includes meals). Lunch is included for everyone. The deadline is posted as April 17, since that is our deadline for a minimum number to run the class (15), but we can accept registrations until the course is full (30).

## SUNDAY, MAY 23 : SIERRA CENTURY BICYCLE TOUR

The fourteenth annual Sierra Century Bicycle Tour takes place rain or shine, with distance options of 12, 30,60, 80, or 100 miles.

For details, visit <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/chippewa/century.htm> Proceeds from this fund raiser go toward grants to area schools for environmental education. Register early for a cheaper rate! [CV]

## OUTING INFORMATION

### Host group is indicated in brackets

[CV] Chippewa Valley Group [GW] Great Waters Group  
[CR] Coulee Region Group [SEG] Southeast Gateway Group  
[4L] Four Lakes Group [SCVI] St. Croix Valley Interstate Group  
[FV] Fox Valley Group [JM] John Muir Chapter

### Liability Waiver & Carpooling

In order to participate in a Sierra Club outing, you will need to sign a liability waiver. In the interests of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

# 2010 QUETICO CANOE TRIPS

## JULY 30 - AUGUST 8 BOUNDARY WATERS/QUETICO CANOE TRIP

Join eight other voyageurs on the unique adventure into the timeless and pristine wilderness of Canada's Quetico Provincial Park. Two 9-person crews traverse the park one way, one from Ely, MN the other from Atikokan, ON, and meet along the way. Expect to see wildlife and ancient Ojibway pictographs, travel the waterways and portages of the trappers and voyageurs, fish and swim in drinkable lakes, learn about Quetico's natural and cultural history and stargaze through crystal-clear skies. Experience is not required, but good physical fitness and a positive attitude are essential. Shared costs are \$495, including canoes and packs. A \$100 deposit will hold your reservation.

Trip Leaders: Bill Moore at 262-785-9022 or [environ1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:environ1@sbcglobal.net), [GW/4L/JM]

## AUGUST 13-22 : BOUNDARY WATERS/QUETICO CANOE TRIP

Join us on an adventure into the timeless and pristine wilderness of Quetico Provincial Park. Summer weather rewards paddlers who travel when the days are longer and weather warmer. Expect to sightsee and learn about the region as we travel the waterways and portages of the native peoples and voyageurs. On our journey, we paddle shorter distances over our eight days so you can spend time sharing in opportunities to fish, explore, relax and reflect. Experience is not a requirement, but good physical fitness and a positive attitude are essential.

Shared costs are \$495, including canoes and packs. A \$100 deposit will hold your reservation. The trip leader is Eric Uram. Call 608-233-9022 or e-mail [eric.uran@headwater.us](mailto:eric.uran@headwater.us). [GW/4L/JM]

## AUGUST 19-28 : BOUNDARY WATERS/QUETICO CANOE TRIP

Into the pristine wilderness a small group of younger and not so young men will travel to a base camp to fish, cook and tell stories of the day's adventures around the fire. Loons, eagles and other wildlife will be our companions as we (figuratively) lose ourselves in serene peacefulness while learning and appreciating wilderness values so necessary for such places to exist. Experience is not necessary, but good physical and mental fitness are needed to navigate the unpredictable nature of the outdoors.

Shared cost is \$495 excluding personal gear, transportation and some pre- and post-trip meals. \$100 deposit for accepted applicants. The trip leader is Bill Mathias. Call 920-339-0437 or e-mail [wj.mathias@gmail.com](mailto:wj.mathias@gmail.com).

# SPRING RIVER TOURS

Interested in paddling some great water with fun and skilled paddlers? If so, the River Touring Section (RTS) is the group for you. Every year, our members lead paddling adventures on both quiet water and whitewater. We also lead instructional clinics to teach you paddling and safety skills.

RTS is affiliated with the Sierra Club, but our trips are open to everyone. We want to get you on rivers. We hope that you grow to enjoy paddling and to love rivers and support groups that work to protect them such as the Sierra Club and the River Alliance of WI. For more information, please visit our website at <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/rts/>



## INSTRUCTION CLINICS

RTS members offer several instructional clinics for a nominal fee. These clinics are a great way to gain skills and confidence. As we strive to maintain a low student to teacher ratio, typically 4 to 1 or less, we can offer highly individualized instruction. The clinics fill up early, so to avoid missing out, reserve your spot now by calling the clinic instructor and sending in your fee (non-refundable). Fees cover supplies and refreshments -- all of the clinic teachers volunteer their time. The remaining funds are then donated by the River Touring Section to conservation and river protection groups.

### JUNE 5-6 : WHITEWATER CLINIC

Class II; Car Camp. Clinic Fee: \$30 per person; Camping Fee, \$5 per person per night.\* RTS whitewater clinics are for reasonably experienced moving water (river) paddlers who want to learn whitewater skills and novice whitewater paddlers who want to improve their skills. This is for open canoes, not kayaks. Paddlers must provide their own properly equipped canoe. Except for some classroom sessions, separate instruction will be provided for solo and tandem participants. Potluck dinner Saturday night for participants, instructors, and RTS paddlers. Please bring a dish to share.

\* We reserved the group camp site at Bear Paw for camping Friday and Saturday nights. If you prefer other lodging arrangements, see the Wolf River Territory website ([www.wolfriverterritory.com](http://www.wolfriverterritory.com)).

For information and registration, contact: Registration: Doug Robinson, 608-334-8026, [dougknu@charter.net](mailto:dougknu@charter.net). Solo Clinic Leader: Doug Robinson, 608-334-8026 Tandem Clinic Leader: Pat Wilson, 608-788-8831

### JUNE 12 : MOVING WATER CANOE CLINIC

Class I. Clinic Fee: \$25 per person. Confident and competent on lakes, but not ready for rivers? Then this canoe clinic is for you. We'll review the basic strokes -- draws, prys, sweeps, forward, back and J. We'll discuss safety, reading water, and maneuvers: ferries, side slips and eddy turns. Then we'll practice these skills as we canoe the Kickapoo. To register or get more details, contact Meg Nelson at 608-242-8633 or [prairiesmoke2@gmail.com](mailto:prairiesmoke2@gmail.com).

### JUNE 19 : QUIET WATER CANOE CLINIC

Quiet water. Clinic Fee: \$15 per person. This clinic is designed to prepare paddlers for safer and more enjoyable quiet water paddling. Minimum age: 12. Clinic topics: safety issues, paddling dynamics, basic paddling strokes, extensive practice of important strokes, canoe rescue and paddling together. Solo and tandem paddlers welcome. Participants should bring their own tandem or solo canoe (rentals may be available, but check with trip leader), paddle, PFD, lunch, and water. To register or get more details, contact Carl Zimm at 608-246-0485 or [beampowered-tetrode@yahoo.com](mailto:beampowered-tetrode@yahoo.com)

### JULY 31-AUGUST 1 : RIVER SAFETY & RESCUE

Class I-II; Car Camp. Fee: \$20/person, plus camping fees. Limited to 10 people. Through active, hands-on instruction, you will learn many river rescue techniques, including how to throw and receive a rope, swim a rapid, release pinned boats, and manage rescue scenarios. Note that swimming in the river and intense activity are part of this clinic. We will paddle the Red River on both days, continuing our rescue instruction and offering informal paddling instruction to those who are interested. To register or get more details, contact Judd Lefebber and Jen Kiecker at 608-412-1631 or [jenkiecker@hotmail.com](mailto:jenkiecker@hotmail.com). DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS JUNE 10.

## PADDLING TRIPS

### APRIL 10-11 : ROBINSON & MORRISON CREEKS

Class II; Car Camp. When the water is up in the spring, these two small, scenic creeks are a lot of fun. Although the Robinson has a couple of drops, they can be portaged. Trees often need to be portaged as well. We'll pick up spring thaw trash as we go, leaving the streams in better shape for those who follow. Wet/dry suits are required for this early season trip. Contact Phil Johnsrud at 715-445-4777 or [johnsrud@iola.k12.wi.us](mailto:johnsrud@iola.k12.wi.us).

### APRIL 24-25 : POPPLE, UPPER PESHTIGO

Class II-III; Car Camp. We plan to run sections of both these wild and historic rivers, but could end up running two sections of the Popple. Learn about the historic values and user issues associated with these smaller rivers. Wet/dry suits and helmets are required. Contact Jess Ruben, 920-207-7881, [jbi-re@yahoo.com](mailto:jbi-re@yahoo.com); or Larry Zibell, at 715-546-2131.

### APRIL 25 : BARK RIVER NEAR DOUSMAN,

Class 1+. Join us for an early spring paddle on a clear stream made so by restored wet lands. As there are 7 bridges, portaging may be needed. Weather and water level dependent. For details, contact Kasy Culbertson at 608-222-0746 or [kasy99@gmail.com](mailto:kasy99@gmail.com).

### MAY 1-2 : PINE RIVER

Class II; Canoe Camp. Join us for the 35th annual Pine River weekend! We plan to paddle from Highway 55 to Chipmunk Rapids in Forest and Florence Counties. This is a terrific opportunity to canoe and camp on one of Wisconsin's designated "wild rivers." There will be time to reflect and discuss the challenges and changes facing this river. For details, contact Walt Ruben at 262-573-4852 or [walt\\_ruben@yahoo.com](mailto:walt_ruben@yahoo.com); or co-leader, Larry Zibell, at 715-546-2131.

### MAY 2 : PECATONICA RIVER, SOUTHERN WI

Class I. This small, gentle river flows through picturesque scenery including farmland and wooded hillsides. In some areas there are rocky cliffs like along the Kickapoo River. The river has many bends and some nice currents. You will get good practice with steering. If our timing is right we'll see and discuss migrating birds and spring wildflowers. For details, contact Dan Wallace at 608-835-5144 or [dwallace@src.wisc.edu](mailto:dwallace@src.wisc.edu).

### MAY 8-9 : WHITEWATER RIVERS, CENTRAL WI

Class II-III; Car Camp. Rivers to be determined by water levels. Possibilities include the Little Wolf, Eau Claire, Big Rib, etc. We'll discuss storm water runoff and how to control it as we paddle these exciting wild rivers. Wet/dry suits and helmets are required. For details, contact Doug Robinson at 608-334-8026 or [dougknu@charter.net](mailto:dougknu@charter.net).

### MAY 15-16 : BRULE RIVER (WI/MI BORDER)

Class II; Canoe Camp. The Border Brule, as it's sometimes called, features a few class I-II rapids, wooded shorelines, and a true sense of wilderness. You can expect to see eagles and other wildlife and practically no houses. We will cover 10 to 12 miles a day and space may be limited due to campsite size. This is a great chance to learn about canoe camping. For details, contact Leo Hummel at 608-322-7014 or [dhummel@centurytel.net](mailto:dhummel@centurytel.net).

### MAY 22 : BADFISH CREEK

Class I. Day trip. Badfish Creek meanders through scenic woodlands a few miles South of Madison. Not only is it a pretty little gem, but it also features a surprising amount of fast moving riffles and Class I. Come along and practice your paddling strokes, maybe learn some new ones and learn about how and why this little river provides reliable flows and clean water. For details, contact Paul Janda at 608-839-5831 or [pauljanda@mail.com](mailto:pauljanda@mail.com); or co-leader, Carl Zimm, at 608-246-0485 or [beampowered-tetrode@yahoo.com](mailto:beampowered-tetrode@yahoo.com).

### MAY 22-23 : PIKE RIVER

Class II-III; Car Camp. Paddle from upstream of Cty K bridge to Yellow Bridge. A nice run at higher spring water levels. Introduction to DNR landing (previously unknown). Wet/dry suits and helmets are required. For details, contact Jean Johnson at 920-748-6699 or [jeanjohnson624@gmail.com](mailto:jeanjohnson624@gmail.com); or co-leader, Larry Zibell, at 715-546-2131.

### MAY 29-31 : BOIS BRULE / KETTLE RIVER

Class I-II/Bois Brule. Class III-IV/Kettle; Car Camp. Join us for a day on the Kettle River and two day trips on the Bois Brule. Saturday, we'll paddle the Kettle from Banning State Park to Sandstone MN. We will leave Brule DNR campground at 8 A.M. on Saturday for Kettle River. Sunday, we'll paddle the Bois Brule from Pine Tree Landing to Highway 13 - this section includes a series of Class II rapids. Monday, we'll go from HWY 13 to Lake Superior. We'll learn about the

work to protect this trout stream. Helmets required for rapids on the Kettle and Bois Brule. Camping is available at the DNR Campground south of Brule WI in Douglas County. The trip leader will reserve as many sites as possible. This is a busy weekend so please share your site with fellow Sierrans. For details, contact Phil Olson at 715-682-3434 or 715-292-5202 (cell); [philole@centurytel.net](mailto:philole@centurytel.net).

### JUNE 5-6 : PESHTIGO AND WOLF RIVER

Class II-II+. Car-Camp. We'll paddle the upper Peshtigo on Saturday and a section of the Wolf on Sunday. These two day trips were intentionally designed to coincide with the whitewater clinics so that paddlers who don't need the clinic, but aren't ready (or willing) to teach at one of the clinics can join the weekend festivities, camp with the group, and paddle area rivers with experienced trip leaders. This is a great opportunity to build skills and confidence. For details, contact Gary Leander at 570-401-6335 or [gleander@charter.net](mailto:gleander@charter.net); or co-leader, Gregg Riemer, at 608-257-5239 or [du-nord@sbcglobal.net](mailto:du-nord@sbcglobal.net).

### JUNE 19-20 : WISCONSIN WHITEWATER

Class II-II+; Car Camp. This trip is designed for paddlers learning the art of whitewater paddling - there won't be any rapids rated above Class II+ on this trip. We'll paddle rivers in northern Wisconsin, with the choice of rivers dependent upon water levels and the groups' interest and experience. Likely candidates include the Pike, Oconto,

Wolf (Sections I and/or II) and Peshtigo (Section II). This is a great opportunity to build skills and confidence with the support of other paddlers. For details, contact Bruce Nelson at 608-244-6397 or [b1nelson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:b1nelson@sbcglobal.net); or co-leader, Kasy Culbertson, at 608-222-0746 or [kasy99@gmail.com](mailto:kasy99@gmail.com).

### JUNE 19-20 : PLOVER AND MECAN RIVERS

Class I; Car Camp. This trip is for those that like to paddle small rivers. The Plover offers a variety of settings that include gentle riffles, wooded bluffs, lowland hardwood forests, and almost unbroken tranquility. The Mecan is a premium trout stream with crystal clear water. It maintains a steady current and at times requires precise maneuvering around tight bends. Come learn about the threats and impacts of irrigation and proposed bottled water facilities. For details, contact Leo Hummel at 608-322-7014 or [dhummel@centurytel.net](mailto:dhummel@centurytel.net).

### JUNE 27 : BARABOO RIVER

Class 1; Day Trip. This stretch of river is shallow and rocky with a nice current. Good for plastic and Royalex canoes or kayaks. Shallow gravel sections would be hard on nice kevlar or fiberglass boats. Kayakers should wear helmets. This section used to be blocked by three dams, which have been recently removed, allowing boaters and wildlife to return. Come see how this now free-flowing river makes a fine centerpiece to historic downtown Baraboo. For details, contact Carl Zimm at 608-246-0485 or [beampowered-tetrode@yahoo.com](mailto:beampowered-tetrode@yahoo.com)

**PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED:** Each trip includes the name and contact information of the trip leaders. You must call the leaders prior to the trip to register and to get the logistics of the trip (when and where it departs.) Trip leaders can provide information about the trip and help you assess your abilities to participate. Leaders reserve the right to limit participation based on the number of people registered, participant skill levels, trip difficulty, and other reasons.

**GEAR:** You are responsible for providing all of your gear—boat, paddles, life jacket, bail bucket, and so on. You'll also need to provide weather-appropriate clothing. This means a wet or dry suit for early and late season runs and for whitewater as well as gear to minimize sun exposure, such as a hat and sunglasses.

All participants MUST wear a properly fitted and securely fastened life jacket on all the trips and in the clinics. For Class II and higher whitewater, participants should wear a life jacket designed for whitewater, a whitewater helmet, and have a boat that is properly outfitted with floatation and thigh straps. These items may be required for some Class II trips (see trip description and talk to the trip leader) and are absolutely required for Class III and higher water.

You are responsible for providing all of your camping equipment—tents, sleeping bag, food, etc. Trips marked "Car Camp" means you'll return to a camping

site for the evening. "Canoe Camp" means you need to carry all your equipment with you in your canoe. "Canoe Camp with Portage" means you'll have an opportunity to carry all of your gear at some point on the trip.

**CLASSES OF WATER:** We want your RTS experience to be fun. We also want it to be safe. The International Scale of River Rating Difficulty is a guide for assessing the difficulty of a stretch of water and will help you decide if a trip is appropriate for you and your skill level. Many of these trips are suitable for paddlers with solid flatwater canoe skills. Trip leaders are always happy to discuss the nature of the river with you.

**LIABILITY WAIVER & REQUIREMENTS:** All participants are required to sign a liability waiver prior to the trip and abide by decisions made by the trip leaders. If you would like to read the liability waiver form before you sign up for a trip or clinic, please see: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/>. CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of CA.

**TRANSPORTATION:** You are responsible for providing your own transportation to and from the river. We can identify people who have space in their car and people who need rides, but we do not make transportation arrangements.

**OTHER:** We do not allow non-paddlers, pets, glass containers, or alcoholic beverages on our trips while we are on the water.

## INTERNATIONAL SCALE OF RIVER RATING DIFFICULTY

Your guide for assessing the difficulty of a stretch of water. Some rivers will not clearly fall into a neat system. Temperatures below 50 F should change a rating to be one class more difficult than normal.

**CLASS I:** Moving water with few riffles and small waves. Few or no obstructions.

**CLASS II:** Easy rapids with waves up to three feet and wide clear channels that are obvious.

**CLASS III:** Rapids with high, irregular waves capable of swamping an open canoe. Narrow passages that often require complex maneuvering. May require scouting from shore.

**CLASS IV:** Long, difficult rapids and constricted passages that often require precise maneuvering in very turbulent waters. Scout from shore often necessary and conditions make rescue difficult. Canoeists and kayakers should have the ability to roll.

*From the American Canoe Associate Web Site.*

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?** Visit [wisconsin.sierraclub.org/rts/](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org/rts/) or contact: Meg Nelson, RTS Chair, at: [prairiesmoke2@gmail.com](mailto:prairiesmoke2@gmail.com), 608-242-8633.

## JOHN MUIR CHAPTER CALENDAR

### 2010 EXCOM MEETINGS

- May 4 Conference Call  
June 12 First Congregational Church, Baraboo

### 2010 EVENTS

- April 6 Spring Election  
April 21 John Muir's Birthday  
April 22 Earth Day  
October 8-10 Autumn Assembly, La Crosse

Check the John Muir Chapter website, or e-mail or call the Chapter office for updated information.

Website: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org>  
Phone: (608) 256-0565  
E-mail: [john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:john.muir.chapter@sierraclub.org)



Celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day by helping the John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club in protecting Wisconsin's air, water, and wild places. When you make a donation to the Chapter, you support the Sierra Club's work in your own backyard. You allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness and wildlife, to improve the sustainability of our cities, and to promote the enjoyment of nature.

You can also donate online at [wisconsin.sierraclub.org](http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org) or by sending a contribution to us to the address below. Thanks in advance for your support of the Sierra Club and for all you do for Wisconsin's natural resources.

**Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter**  
222 South Hamilton Street, Suite 1  
Madison, WI 53703

