



Sierra

March
2009

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group

MARCH MEETING

Long Distance Bike Touring

Tuesday, March 31st

7 pm at the

HoChunk Three Rivers
House at 8th & Main

(6 pm: ExComm meeting)

**Sierra Club members &
non-members all
welcome!**

Speakers: Maureen Kinney and Ed Ludwig

Local members Maureen Kinney and Ed Ludwig will show pictures from their many bike trips and discuss the ins and outs of bike touring. They have biked across the country along the northern tier from Everett Washington to Portland, Maine over a series of summers, around Michigan and WI, the Canadian Maritime provinces and Iceland, Ireland and Zimbabwe. They combine biking with visiting tourist sites along the way. They have always biked self-contained, meaning no support or sag wagon. They have used their solo bikes with panniers to carry gear, and a tandem bike with trailer. They will give suggestions on how to plan a tour and what gear options you might want to consider.

FROM THE CHAIR:

Sometimes, it's hard to keep up with all the information thrown at us...newspapers, emails, blogs, radio and television, not to mention all the regular mail we receive daily. There's been good news for the environment (see Stimulus Bill article) and not so good news (see CapX2020 article). Even reading this newsletter can prove tricky (see Paper or Computer article).

While we may not be able to keep up with the news and events, we must remind ourselves that much good is happening and continues to happen because of committed folks like you who do those small daily activities to improve our part of the world. May you continue on this green path!

Marilyn Pedretti

608-317-9698 or mjpedretti@yahoo.com

Clean Energy Coalition

Thursday, 3/26/09 at 7:00 p.m.

Ho-Chunk Building Basement

*Topic: Retrofitting La Crosse's Buildings
for Greater Energy Efficiency*

The two speakers will be Jeff Rich (with Gundersen Lutheran Hospital) and Jeff Ihnen, engineer with Michaels' Engineering who spearheaded the remodeling of the Doerflinger Building in downtown La Crosse

Save this date...

Sat., April 25, 2009

Earth Day Celebration

More details in next
month's issue!

THANK YOU....

Coulee Wildlife Rehabilitation Center extends their sincere gratitude to all who attended January's presentation and those who offered to help transport birds. "We want to thank you all for your most generous donations to our rehab facility. We will be able to feed our education birds for approximately five weeks from your contributions. That is incredible! ... Thank you again for helping us give animals and birds of the Coulee Region a second chance!"

Suzanne & Merv Broten, Coulee Wildlife Rehab

Sierra Club Outing

So, it was too cold in January and too warm in February for skiing. Maybe we can find an activity just right for March. If interested in participating in an outdoor activity, contact Sharon Stoll at Stollsha@msu.edu.



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Maureen Kinney
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Sierra Club Green Home: An online clearinghouse

Even Sierra Club executive director Carl Pope had trouble fixing up his home to make it more efficient and less toxic. In late 2007, as Pope was meeting with a group of donors, he mentioned he wanted to make his home more energy efficient but was having trouble finding the right products, services, and contractors.

The donors suggested that this was an area the Sierra Club might be able to help people with. Businessperson Gary Rappeport proposed creating an online clearinghouse.

The result is a new partnership between the Sierra Club and Green Home, an educational website aimed at helping people create more efficient, less toxic abodes.

If you want to test your home's health, carbon footprint, watch a home-improvement video, or find product ratings, check out www.sierraclubgreenhome.com

Green Home rates products for indoor air quality impact; and energy, water and material use.

CapX2020 Continues

On March 3rd, a proposed power line running from North Dakota to Wisconsin known as CapX2020, was recommended for approval in Minnesota. Although the route has not been determined, a substation will be placed in either La Crosse or Holmen.

The Citizens Energy Task Force Attorney Paula Maccabee was reported in the *La Crosse Tribune* as stating: "CapX2020 didn't have to prove that these power lines are the best alternative, or that they would carry wind energy rather than dirty coal. The burden of the proof to show alternatives was placed on basically unfunded, grassroots citizens."

Paper or Computer?

We've received a few requests lately from members asking that they receive their newsletter electronically, rather than on paper. Until recently, our local group wasn't able to easily accommodate those requests since the labels came from the National headquarters. However, in the next few months that system will be changing to provide for more local control.

We will be researching this alternative in the next few months and ask for your input. Those members interested in opting for the electronic version, please drop us a line at: Sierra1601@charter.net

Federal Stimulus Bill Includes Green Initiatives

On February 17th, President Obama signed the economic stimulus bill into law with the majority of the funding for clean energy and other key green initiatives intact.

Here are a few of the details on how the final economic stimulus bill will help bolster our economy while protecting our environment, reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and cutting global warming pollution:

- The \$26.86 billion investment in energy efficiency will help to kick-start the economy by creating more than half a million jobs and saving hundreds of billions of dollars in wasted energy costs;
- The \$18.95 billion it includes for green transportation, including public transit and high-speed rail projects, will put more than 300,000 people to work building the transportation solutions we need to cut greenhouse gas pollution;
- The \$32.80 billion the bill includes for clean energy projects will help significantly reduce global warming pollution and cut down on pollution to rivers, lakes, and coastal waters, making them safe for drinking water, swimming and fishing.

This is an important first step towards rebuilding our economy while protecting our planet.