



Sierra

February
2008

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group

Rescheduled
due to bad
weather in
January

FEBRUARY MEETING

The Cultural Significance of Wilderness: A Lost Voice?

Tuesday, February 26th
7 pm at the
HoChunk Three Rivers House
at 8th & Main
(6 pm: ExComm meeting)
**Sierra Club members &
non-members all welcome!**

Speaker: Rick Kyte
**director of the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics
in Leadership and associate professor of
philosophy at Viterbo University**

Environmentalists from the mid-nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries shared a conviction that the experience of wilderness was crucial to the health of American society. That conviction has all but disappeared from contemporary social commentary. This presentation will look at the writings of authors such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold, and Sigurd Olson in an attempt to reclaim an important voice in American social and political life.

FROM THE CHAIR:

The bad news is that the January Sierra Club program was canceled due to the forecast of bad weather on the 29th. The good news is that Rick Kyte will be able to come to do his program at the February meeting instead.

I apologize to those who came to the January meeting to find the doors locked at Three Rivers House. The tribe closed the building and sent employees home at noon on the 29th due to concerns about the weather. That left the Sierra Club without a meeting place. We decided not to try to find an alternate place at the last minute because of the same concerns about weather conditions that night. The good news out of this is that better weather should lead to a better turnout for Rick Kyte's program in February.

A group of eight people had a fun cross country ski outing on Saturday, January 26th, followed by lunch at the Blue Cup Coffeehouse. This is some of the best cross country ski conditions we've seen in this area for years. We want to continue an active outings program in the Coulee Group. Anyone

with an outing idea for the coming months, please let me know. We're especially interested in getting new leaders involved.

I also had a wonderful time cross country skiing by myself at Black River State Forest on Sunday the 27th. The snow and the weather were ideal. The remarkable thing was that I skied from 10:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., and never saw another person on the trail. A master planning process was started for Black River State Forest in early 2007 and is still going on. The original plan was to have a public meeting to discuss preferred alternatives in late 2007, but in October the target date was changed to early 2008. I encourage Sierra Club members to watch for the notice of public meeting and participate in the comment period. This is a key natural and recreational resource for our area.

Pat Wilson



Coulee Region Sierra Club
Maureen Kinney
620 South 23rd Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

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EPA Denies California Limit on Auto Emissions

On December 19, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen L. Johnson denied California's petition to limit greenhouse gas emissions from cars and trucks, overruling the unanimous recommendation of the EPA's own legal and technical staffs.

The goal of California's proposal is to cut vehicles' greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent between 2009 and 2016. A total of 18 states, representing 45 percent of the nation's auto market, have either adopted or pledged to implement California's proposed tailpipe emissions rules. The EPA decision demonstrated the Bush administration's determination to oppose any mandatory measures specifically targeted at curbing global warming pollution. This sets in motion a legal battle that EPA's lawyers expect to lose.

Audubon Society Meeting

February program
The Kirtland's Warbler Says
"Yes" to Wisconsin
7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 20 at Three Rivers House. Kim Grveles of the DNR's Bureau of Endangered Resources will speak about the first ever documented breeding of the Kirtland's Warbler in Wisconsin, at the Plum Creek Timber Company land in central Wisconsin

Clean Energy Coalition Thursday, February 28th

How green, how energy efficient can the new county jail be? That's the topic of the next Clean Energy Coalition meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 28 at the Three Rivers House. La Crosse County has this new jail on the drawing board as we speak.

Mississippi Valley Conservancy Snowshoe/Ski Tour February 16

MVC will have a snowshoe and ski outing on the recently acquired Medary Quarry, a 475-acre grassland, woodland and reclaimed quarry atop the bluffs above La Crosse. The time is 10 a.m. to noon on Feb. 16. For more information, go to MississippiValleyConservancy.org. Please register in advance at mrich@mississippivalleyconservancy.org.

La Crosse District Nurses Association Program on the Environment

Tuesday, March 18th
7-8:00 pm at the Food Co-op (Community Room)
Focus on hospital practices that contribute to waste and toxicity of the environment. Nick Nichols from Gundersen Lutheran will be presenting on local issues for the hospital. He will also present on the city and county eco-friendly designation efforts.

Members and non members are welcomed to attend these free programs