



GREAT WATERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

John Muir Chapter - Sierra Club

www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/gwg

March/April 2005

Number 2

Sierra Club Project Focuses on Water

“Building Environmental Communities” Program Gets Fast Start in Milwaukee

by Joyce Harms, BEC Team Leader

The focus of the 2005 BEC program is “water,” specifically, building awareness around issues that will maintain and restore a healthy Great Lakes ecosystem.

Building Environmental Community '05 is a program implemented at a handful of locations around the country designated by the Sierra Club as “sites of national focus.” Because Milwaukee has been tagged as such a site, three Sierra Club staffers have been funded on a full-time basis to work with the Club’s members in raising the level of environmental awareness and activism in the area.

Over the course of the year we will look at four primary issues that feed the concept of restoring and maintaining a healthy Great Lakes ecosystem:

- Mercury in water (March & April);
- Sewage overflows (May & June);
- Habitat preservation (July & August);
- Urban sprawl (September & October).

During March and April we will offer a range of activities to help people understand what the impacts are on Lake Michigan when mercury and other pollutants continue to spew from the outdated control devices still servicing the valley coal-fired power plant.

We invite you to three regular, ongoing activities. The first is Conservation Conversations, a monthly discussion of articles or books on timely topics. Materials for the discussion will be posted at www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/gwg/. Click on the link to Milwaukee Office.

The second activity is an Activists Nite, where you can do something about environmental problems. Check the next page for time and place.

And finally, join us monthly at our Sierra Club Happy Hour. Time and place on page 2.

The BEC program is *your* program. It’s about your environment, your place to canoe or kayak, to bike, hike

and to swim. It’s about the water you drink and the health of you and your family. BEC wants to help you make our water, land, and air clean and safe. This is our year, our time to make our water fresh again. As one of our Great Waters Group members commented: “Water is our middle name.”



BEC Staff Members from left to right: Rosemary Wehnes, Jessica Eagle and Joyce Harms

Water Conservation Program Starts Now

The Milwaukee metropolitan area will launch a water education and conservation program on March 2 with a press conference at the War Memorial building. Check the newspaper and our website for time and other details. The Great Waters Group of the Sierra Club supports this program and is working with a number of other organizations to implement it. The program will educate citizens of the area on water use and call on people to engage in water conservation practices. The Southeastern Municipal Executives Association (the mayors of the region) is also behind this program and will promote it in their communities.

Upcoming General Meetings

The Great Waters Group holds monthly meetings at the Mayfair Mall Community Center in Wauwatosa. The Community Room is on the basement level of Mayfair Mall in the Garden Suites East area near the center of the mall. Park on the east side of the Mall near General Cinema. Walk into the Mall where you see the office for Fox World Travel. The sign for the Community Room as well as the Sierra Club sign will direct you downstairs. Please join us!

Claiming Stakes on Lake Michigan

Barbara Miner

Mayfair Mall Community Room, Monday, March 21, 7 pm

Piece by piece, development is being planned along our lakefront that could dramatically change Milwaukee's prized property with little feedback from its owner--the public. Freelance journalist Barbara Miner's investigative article on this issue that was published in Milwaukee Magazine uncovered plenty of potential changes to our lakefront. Join us and keep yourself up to date on what might be coming our way -- before it's TOO late!

Environmental Warrior Finds Home in Wisconsin

Michael Frome

Mayfair Mall Community Room, Monday, April 18, 7 pm

How lucky we are! The author of the Rand McNally National Park Guide, Michael Frome, long a lecturer, teacher and author for national environmental publications and professor of environmental journalism for several universities, has recently found residency here in Wisconsin. As Gaylord Nelson, founder of Earth Day, described Michael, "No writer in America has more persistently and effectively argued for the need of national ethics of environmental stewardship than Michael Frome." A distinguished historian from Bellingham, Washington, Michael has studied and written on the history of the national parks for decades. Inspired you will be!

BEC March/April Calendar of Events

For all events, please call the Sierra Club office at 414- 453-3127.

March

4: BEC Program Kick-Off. Join us to get an overview of the BEC program, meet the staff, enjoy refreshments, and peruse the calendar of activist events. Call for location.

7: Activist Night. 7 – 9 pm Blue Mound Road office: 8112 W. Blue Mound Rd. Will be preparing for visibility event around the EPA final release of mercury rules. RSVP Jessica Eagle

13: Conservation Conversations. 6:30 – 8:30 pm Blue Mound Road office. "Mercury: It's Blowing in the Wind!" RSVP Rosemary Wehnes

15: "Walking Backwards." 4 pm Meet in front of Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave. where we will walk backwards to Lake Michigan in protest of the EPA release of mercury rules that are regressive.

23: Public Meeting on mercury and its impact on the Great Lakes ecosystem. Location and time to be announced.

24: Sierra Club Happy Hour. 6 pm Milwaukee Ale House (on the water, of course) RSVP Jessica Eagle

30: Activist Night. 7 – 9 pm Blue Mound Road offices. RSVP Jessica Eagle

April—Earth Month!

4: Activist Night. 7 – 9 pm Blue Mound Road office: RSVP Jessica Eagle.

10: Conservation Conversations. 6:30 – 8:30 pm Location to be announced. "Exploring Environmental Values". RSVP Rosemary Wehnes.

22: Earth Day Wave! Be a part of the largest human wave Milwaukee has ever seen along the shore of Lake Michigan. Meet at 4 pm at Bradford Beach House. **Sierra Club Happy Hour** follows. RSVP Jessica Eagle

27: Activist Night. 7 – 9 pm Blue Mound Road office. RSVP Jessica Eagle.

Create an Environmental Legacy



Bequests have played a key role in the Sierra Club's environmental successes over the years. Make a commitment to the next generation by remembering the Sierra Club in your will. Your support will help others preserve the intricate balance of nature.

Planning now may make your gift more meaningful and reduce taxes on your estate. We have many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter. For more information and confidential assistance, contact:

John Calaway
Director, Gift Planning
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor,
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 977-5639 or e-mail:
planned.giving@sierraclub.org

Outings and Activities

Sunday, March 20: IMAX Outing, Coral Reef Adventure

Join Great Waters Groupers for an Equinox outing. We will examine the biology of the world's reef system, an underwater garden of sea life. The clear waters of Australia, Tahiti and Fiji are examined in depth. IMAX adventures are educational and entertaining.

Conversation and dinner to follow at a local restaurant. Meet in the lobby of the Museum at 4:10. Call Chris at 262-786-9584 for reservations or email her at cmzapf@aol.com

Location: Milwaukee Public Museum

When: Sunday, March 20, 4:30 pm

Tuesday, March 29: Eating Green

Green Eats is a dining club for Great Waters Group members of the Sierra Club and consists of monthly outings to restaurants that promote organic, fair trade or vegetarian dining options. It's a great opportunity to meet like-minded Sierrans, too, over casual conversation.

Learn about Alterra Coffee Roasters' commitment to brewing and selling fair trade and organic coffee beans as well as the relationships they have built with sustainable farmers in coffee-producing regions. Al Liu, of Alterra, will give a talk at their roasting facility in Milwaukee. Be sure and grab a coffee beverage from the bar before meeting with the group!

This event is limited to 10 participants only. Please RSVP by March 15 by contacting Kristine at 414-339-0149 or kristineahansen@yahoo.com. (If calling, please leave your phone number or e-mail address so we can reach you if the event information changes.)

Location: Alterra Coffee Roasters, 2211 N. Prospect Ave. Milwaukee.

When: Tuesday, March 29, 7 pm

Saturday, April 23: East Side Neighborhood Trek

Join leader Jane Stoltz for a 4-mile urban hike to explore the history, architecture and culture of Milwaukee's East Side neighborhood. This outing encourages a person to enjoy and be aware of what is close at hand in the city. We will explore homes built at the turn of the century by well-to-do Germans who were considered avant-garde in their day. All participants will be provided with written hike directions. Limited to 10 participants.

Location: TBA

When: Saturday, April 23rd at 9 am for breakfast, with hike immediately following

Leader: call Jane at 414-486-0185 by Friday, April 22 if you plan to attend.

Difficulty: easy

August 6 – 15: Boundary Waters/Quetico Canoe Trip

Re-live the life of the voyageurs when you join guide/trip leader Bill Moore on a trip of a lifetime to experience the silent splendor of Canada's Quetico Provincial Park. Expect to see wildlife and ancient Ojibway pictographs while paddling on crystal-clear waters in true wilderness. Experience is not a requirement but good physical fitness and a good attitude are essential.

Planned trip length is eight days/seven nights with six days on the move and two of rest at layover campsites. Trip start date is Aug. 6. Bill will also lead a 7 or 8 day trip beginning Aug. 23 or shortly thereafter. Shared costs will be \$400, including canoe rental and packs. Call Bill at 262-785-9022.

Milwaukee Loses Its Reptiles

Gary S. Casper, Ph.D. a professor at UW-M, studies snakes, frogs, turtles and salamanders. He talked with Sierra Club members at the January meeting about the changing habitat of these critters. In Milwaukee County around 1860, there were seven species of salamanders; now there are two. Eleven types of frogs thrived back then, today only eight; five kinds of turtles then, now four; and 12 different snakes last century, but today merely five.

What happened? Casper is clear: The land has been developed, the wetlands and meadows have been paved over, and the ponds have been drained. "We have lost about 40% of all biodiversity in the area."

These animals need water for breeding and meadows for living. "In fact," Casper said, "salamanders live in the water only about 5% of the time and on land 95%." So, most of these critters need a pond for breeding and then a thousand-foot meadow (habitat) attached for living. Ideally, developers would then create a buffer at the edge of the meadow. Rarely does that happen. The Smart Growth planning process needs to consider wildlife in its deliberations.

Casper raised the question our generation must answer: "Do we continue developing the land for human use and lose more biodiversity or do we constrain development and keep the reptiles and amphibians?"



Community Shares
of Greater Milwaukee

formerly ACHOICE

A sincere thank you to everyone who contributed through workplace giving to the Sierra Club Foundation and Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee

Executive Committee Selects Three New Members

Chad Thomack: Publicity Chair

Chad Thomack was appointed by unanimous vote of the Executive Committee (Excom) to fill a vacant seat on the Excom for the 2005 GWG board year.

Chad was already serving as our Publicity Chair, so he was a perfect fit for this appointment. Thank you Chad for all the work you did to publicize our 2004 Holiday Dinner and the work you are doing on the *Being Caribou* movie project.

Chad, who grew up in Green Bay, has a BS degree from UW Steven's Point in biology and wildlife studies. He recently moved to Milwaukee to take a job as an Environmental Educator with the Urban Ecology Center. He has also worked for Trees for Tomorrow in Eagle River and Lake County Forest Preserves as an Educator. Chad also enjoys mountain biking, skiing, camping, outdoor photography and most outdoor activities.



A friend hangs out with Chad

If you would like to serve on the Publicity Committee, give Chad a call @ 414-964-8055 or email cthomack123@yahoo.com. He could use some help distributing newsletters to libraries etc. and also volunteers for occasional tabling at festivals and outdoor events.

Meet Dave Hetzel: Fundraising Chair

Dave Hetzel, already an Executive Committee Member has stepped up to serve as Fundraising Chair. Dave generously took over the job of coordinating the silent auction part of our Holiday Dinner last December and has put in many hours helping with the rummage sale, from setting up and selling to pack up and clean up, for several summers. So it was a wonderful surprise when he said he would take over

fundraising. He is easy to work with so please consider serving on his committee and giving him a hand in these endeavors for 2005. In the meantime, save your rummage for early June for our next rummage sale. Call Dave 414-228-9512 or dphetzelplwi@yahoo.com to lend a hand.

Meet Charles Trimberger: Membership Chair

Charles Trimberger is taking on the Membership Chair position. Charlie is interested in getting to know more about how we can serve our members and get more members involved. With recent election results, we need to do things that will keep members involved and excited about the environment more than ever.

Charlie is a psychotherapist and avid amateur photographer whose office happens to be next door to the Sierra Club office. He is looking for a group of people who can help him contact new members to greet them and find out how they want to participate in the Great Waters Group and/or Building Environmental Community activities. Call Charlie at 414-332-7205 or email chuckwood44@earthlink.net. Charlie also needs a Volunteer Coordinator whose role is to contact members who we know are interested in volunteering for various events.

Great Waters Group Looks for Political Chair

We need YOU to step in and become our Great Waters Group Political Chair. This is a position that will keep you close to the action. You will work with our John Muir Chapter Field Office to keep members informed about our representatives' positions on environmental issues and to help the Great Waters Group promote environmentally strong candidates. Ideally, we need a Waukesha County and Milwaukee County Chair. Now is the time to get ready for the 2006 governor's race. Contact Cheri Briscoe, 414-476-4780 or cherib@wi.rr.com.

Autumn Assembly October 7-9 Needs Volunteers

Do you enjoy planning large events? If so, join a group of other outgoing folks who are planning the next Sierra Club State-wide Autumn Assembly, which runs Oct. 7-9 in Milwaukee. We are meeting regularly in March and April to brainstorm ideas and delegate tasks. We will also need volunteers during and a few days prior to the event. In anticipation of housing overflow, we are also asking Sierra Club members to volunteer space in their home or apartment during the Autumn Assembly, Oct. 7-9 in Milwaukee. To help out with this event contact Kristine Hansen at 414-339-0149 or kristineahansen@yahoo.com.

Club Members to Vote on Directors, Immigration Limits

Fifteen Candidates Compete for Five Slots

Another potentially contentious Sierra Club election is upon us. This year, not only are 15 candidates running for the board of directors, there are three ballot measures—two of which would alter rules for future elections, and a third about whether the Club should adopt a policy on limiting immigration into the United States.

The Sierra Club is a democratically-structured organization that depends on members to make important decisions about its governance. "Democracy works," says Club President Larry Fahn, "but only if everyone participates."

Members will elect five representatives to serve three-year terms on the 15-member board which oversees staff and volunteer activities, sets conservation priorities, and approves the annual budget. The candidates are listed below.

The Population Ballot Question asks members: "Shall the Sierra Club policy on immigration, adopted by the Board of Directors in 1999 and revised in 2003, be changed to recognize the need to adopt lower limits on immigration to the United States?" The Club board of directors recommends a "no" vote on this question.

Seven of the board candidates were selected by the nominating committee, an eight-member body that reviews aspiring candidates every year and puts forward a slate of candidates. Eight candidates are running as petition candidates, which means that they have collected signatures supporting their candidacies from one-twentieth of 1 percent of members. (That is 381 signatures for this election.)

Overseeing

The two other ballot measures propose changes to the by-laws that affect the election. Bylaws Change #1 would remove the requirement to provide space for write-in candidates on the ballot. Bylaws Change #2 requires one year of continuous membership in the Sierra Club in order to run for the board. (Currently, members can file a petition to run for office on the same day they become a member.) The board recommends a "yes" vote on the two bylaws changes.

To find out more about the candidates and measures, visit www.sierraclub.org/bod/2005election – which will include a candidate forum where candidates answer questions posted by members.

Club members should receive their ballots in the mail by mid-March. Votes must be cast by noon eastern daylight time on April 25. To vote online, follow the instructions in your printed ballot.

An independent company with long experience in conducting elections for national organizations will count the ballots.

Here are the candidates for director:

- Jim Bensman (petition candidate)
- Joni Bosh (nominating committee candidate)
- Gregory Bungo (petition candidate)
- Jim Catlin (nominating committee candidate)
- Jim Dodson (nominating committee candidate)
- Jim Dougherty (nominating committee candidate)

- Jennifer Ferenstein (nominating committee candidate)
- Richard Fiddler (petition candidate)
- Barbara Frank (nominating committee candidate)
- Christine Garcia (petition candidate)
- Alan Kuper (petition candidate)
- Jim McDonald (petition candidate)
- Chuck McGrady (nominating committee candidate)
- Robert Roy van de Hoek (petition candidate)
- Tony Ruckel (petition candidate)

Environmental Corridor Threatened in St. Francis

Developer Kimball Hill built a 4-unit town house and a clubhouse in the environmental corridor in St. Francis without having the plan reviewed by SEWRPC before submitting it to the Department of Commerce. They called it "a misunderstanding." Now they are requesting a change to take 4.1 more acres out of the environmental corridor. The Great Waters Group has a position statement opposing any changes in the environmental corridor in St. Francis. Letters are needed to Phil Evenson, Executive Director of SEWRPC and the St. Francis City Council reminding them of the importance of our designated environmental corridors. Check our website for contact information. See "Reptiles" p.3 for the importance of environmental corridors. See Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel 2/5/05, "Amended Green Space is Sought" for other details.

Young Sierran On Newspaper Advisory Board

Colleen O'Connor, a 14-year-old high school freshman from Wauwatosa, was recently named to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reader advisory committee. She is helping to start a Sierra Student Coalition at her high school, and last fall worked on the voter education efforts of the Great Waters Group. O'Connor was one of ten citizens chosen to advise the newspaper's editorial board from 150 applicants.

The day after her appointment, the *Journal* published an editorial opposing drilling in the Arctic Refuge and supporting more conservation and fuel efficiency. Quick work by O'Connor on her first day.

Switch to On Line Newsletters and Get Them Sooner

Get your newsletter online by contacting Tom Briscoe, scgwadmin@wi.rr.com with your name, email address, and Sierra Club member number (it is on your newsletter mailing label or membership card), requesting this option.

You'll receive an email notice with an electronic link to the latest newsletter (printable!) as soon as it is posted on the GWG web site. If at any time you wish to switch back to receiving hard copy versions by mail, contact Tom again and he will take you off the online list. The online list is secured by the National Sierra Club and used only for the online list. If you have questions, contact Tom Briscoe.



**Protect America's Environment
For Our Families, For Our Future**

**Great Waters Group of the John Muir Chapter
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2005 Spring General Meeting Schedule

Great Waters Group monthly meetings are (usually) held on the 3rd Monday of the month at Mayfair Mall's Community Room, 2500 N. Mayfair Road in Wauwatosa.
Next Meeting, March 21, 7 pm. Barbara Miner talks on Lakefront Development. Don't miss it.

**For Up to Date Information:
Call our Great Waters Group Hotline
414-297-9846
Or Visit the GWG Website @
www.wisconsin.sierraclub.org/gwg/**

Quick Events Schedule

- March 20** **IMAX Outing, Coral Reef Adventure, 4:30 pm**
- March 21** **Monthly Meeting, Barbara Miner, Lakefront, 7 pm**
- March 28** **Eating Green, Alterra Coffee Roasters, 7 pm**
- April 18** **Monthly Meeting, Michael Frome, 7 pm**
- April 23** **East Side Neighborhood Trek, 9 am**
- August 6 – 15** **Quetico Canoe Trip, Canada**

Volunteer Leadership Committee

Chair	Cheri Briscoe *	414-476-4780
Vice Chair & Conservation	Jim Kerler *	414-774-8005
Chapter Delegate	Bill Moore *	262-785-9022
Secretary	Janet Anderson	414-258-5624
Treasurer	Joelyn Olen	262-255-3628
Membership	C. Trimberger*	414-332-7025
Meetings/Program Coordinator	Chris Zapf	262-786-9584
Publicity	Chad Thomack*	847-910-6068
Webmaster	Jim Ventresco*	414-225-0110
Outings	Alan Friedman *	414-871-9514
Political	Vacant	
Education	Mike McKenna*	414-416-3502
Hot Line	Sierra Club Office	414-453-3127
Newsletter	Dale Olen	262-255-3628
Autumn Assembly Chair	Kristine Hansen*	414-339-0149
Fundraising	Dave Hetzel *	414-228-9512
Hospitality	Mike Sebzda	262-784-8883
* Elected members of Executive Committee		