



Shawnee Trails

News of the Shawnee Group — June 2003

You Can Stop the Latest Backdoor Attack on Our Forests!

The **McInnis/Walden Forest Act** has passed the U.S. House and has been sent to the Senate. Now is the best time to write our Illinois senators and oppose its passage. Use the points below in your letter or go to the Sierra Club national website at <http://www.sierraclub.org> and click on "**Take Action**". Then you can customize your letter online, starting with the sample letter below. Please write or call ASAP to your Illinois Senators Durbin and Fitzgerald to oppose the McInnis/Walden Forest Act! Thanks!

In This Month's Issue:

- [Attack by McInnis/Walden](#) [1](#)
- [Earth Day Volunteers](#) [1](#)
- [Outings Calendar: Adventure Guide](#) [2](#)
- [ALERT: Save Illinois Wilderness](#) [3](#)
- [Volunteers, Web Resources & The Monthly Quote](#) [Back](#)

Dear Senator _____:

Don't open 20 million acres of National Forests to logging, when there's a better way to help communities reduce their risk of fire. Oppose the McInnis/Walden Forest Health Restoration Act, which would erode forest protection, cut out citizen participation, divert resources to commercial logging far from communities, and provide virtually no funding where it would do the most good to reduce fire risk – in the Community Protection Zone adjacent to communities.

Representative Scott McInnis (R-CO) is pushing a bill through the House that, like the Bush Administration's so-called "Healthy Forests Initiative," does not focus scarce federal funding and resources where they would do the most good: in the Community Protection Zone adjacent to communities. Instead, the bill will continue to allow the US Forest Service and Department of Interior to conduct misguided logging projects deep in the backcountry – all in the name of "fuel reduction." The best way to reduce the risk of forest fires to homes and lives is to focus on forest areas immediately around communities. Just Say 'No!' to the McInnis/Walden Forest Health Restoration Act.

Write to Illinois' U.S. senators in their local offices:

- Senator Dick Durbin, 230 S. Dearborn St., Suite 3892, Chicago, IL 60604
- Senator Peter Fitzgerald, 230 S. Dearborn St., Suite 3900, Chicago, IL 60604, or
- Call their Washington offices. Durbin: (202) 224-2152 ; Fitzgerald: (202) 224-2854

Event Calendar

June 14 ~ Membership Party at Boman's residence

June 21 ~ Noon deadline for May Newsletter content.

June 26 ~ Newsletter folding @ Don, Lawrence's at 5:30 PM

Three Cheers for the Earth Day Volunteers

By Ron Schmeck

Earth Day activities in the Carbondale area were very successful. The Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club was able to add several additional pages of signatures to our petitions urging expanded Wilderness designation in Southern Illinois.

In addition, Sierra Club membership applications were distributed, and volunteers at the Sierra Club table engaged visitors in lively discussions regarding the various Sierra Club campaigns both local and national, e.g. Clean Air, Energy, Commercial Logging, Pollution, Sprawl, Wetlands and Wildlands.

We would like to thank the Shawnee Group volunteers who staffed the tables, and thanks to Southern Sustainability for coordinating the day's activities at John A. Logan College, Southern Illinois University, and the City of Carbondale. It was a busy day but well worth the effort.

Thanks again to the Shawnee Group members who volunteered their time, you came through as usual! 🍷

The public is welcome to attend membership meetings and all other Sierra Club meetings and outings.

Outings Calendar

See outing updates at <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>

SHAWNEE GROUP OUTINGS

June 6–8 ~ Indiana Blue River Canoe and Commercial Cave Trip. Contact Bob Pauls at 549-9408 <mailto:sg618@yahoo.com>

June 14; 3 PM ~ Early Summer Membership Gathering and Potluck Meal at the Boman's Residence.

Call 995-9976 or <mailto:billbo@onemain.com>

July 6; 3 PM ~ Mid-Summer Membership Gathering and Potluck Meal at the Harris Residence on Sunday.

Contact Stan at 457-7078 or <mailto:biggrock@aol.com>

July TBD ~ Canoe the Big Muddy River. Contact Bob Pauls @ 549-9408 <mailto:sg618@yahoo> to inquire.

August 2; 3 PM ~ Late-Summer Membership Beach Party Gathering and Potluck Meal at Spring Arbor Lake.

Contact Don at 457-8989 or <mailto:donlaur9@aol.com>

August TBD ~ Illinois Caving Adventure Trip ~ Contact Bob Pauls at 549-9408 or <mailto:sg618@yahoo.com> to inquire.

NON SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS (See disclaimer at website)

June 7 ~ The River to River trails Society will have their last spring outing at Eddyville, IL starting at noon.

The day includes seminars, hikes. Contact John O'Dell at 252-6789.



Adventures with Uncle Bob

See <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/unclebob/>

Your Monthly Guide to Self-Adventure with Bob Tyson

Continuing with our series on wilderness areas, this month I will highlight the **BURDEN FALLS** wilderness. There are two routes for gaining access to the area. The first is from Harrisburg by taking highway 145 to Delwood. Turn right and follow the gravel road about 4 miles. Since the falls is under the road and has no signage, your clue is stream bed over the road on a concrete slab. Note the parking area on the north side. The second access route is via Highway 13 east of Marion to Hwy. 166, then to Hwy. 45. Turn right onto Hwy 45 and after approximately 5 miles look for the Forest Service sign to Bell Smith Springs. You will travel on this asphalt road for several miles that turns into a gravel road. At a "T" intersection, turn right. Traveling further, you encounter a brown sign where you turn left (continuing straight ahead takes you to Bell Smith Springs). It is approximately three miles to the falls.

In late April of 2003, there were four, small, ten-foot falls flowing from the road over the rock shut-ins. If you follow the user-made trail on the west side downstream you will find yet another falls. You will come to cliffs looking down into a canyon about 100 ft. deep. The trail terrain is a glade top surrounded by a variety of ferns, mosses, and prickly pear cactus. The trail stops after roughly a half mile with an easy descent leading under the cliffs. Hike south (go right) under the cliff line with its huge strewn boulders, rock formations, and a 50 foot waterfall on your right. You will arrive at a two tier waterfall. The total falls height is probably about 50 ft. high and at least 20 ft. wide with two streams.

Upon returning to the parking lot you should look for another user-made trail on the east side of the falls. This will give you a little different view of the falls along the cliff. The trail eventually fades away, but you will be able to locate a couple places to descend.

Back in the car again, go about 2 miles east and look for a parking area by a wilderness designation sign. The parking lot will accommodate both cars and horse trailers. I brief exploration of the area on a trail, I did not see any significant geologic features of interest, but I could hear the sound of a waterfall. About 50 feet off the trail, I found a 20 foot cascade of water bouncing off the rocks.

One mile west of Burden Falls is yet another trail. There is only room for parking one car at its opening. Since it was occupied during my visit, I was unable to explore it. Why don't you?

For more information, contact Bob Tyson at 684-5643.

ALERT: PLEASE WRITE TODAY TO HELP SAVE THREE WILDERNESS AREA CANDIDATES

U.S. Representative Costello has indicated in our past meetings that he would support the designation of three new wilderness areas for Shawnee Forest. Now we are planning to ask him to act on that commitment by being the primary signatory of a letter to the Forest Service (FS). The letter would urge the FS to protect the three remaining areas that qualify for wilderness protection at a level that would preserve their wilderness qualities in the new Shawnee Forest Plan.

A delegation of eight Sierra Club members from Illinois Chapter will be in Washington D.C. in mid- June to lobby the Illinois delegation on various environmental issues. One of the issues will be support of wilderness designation for Camp Hutchins, Burke Branch, and Ripple Hollow. In order to support their efforts, we need you to write letters to Rep. Costello.

We need your help NOW to show Representative Costello that there are many voters in his district who DO want more wilderness protection in Shawnee National Forest and DO NOT want to allow motorized vehicles, logging, mining, and construction to ruin Burke Branch, Ripple Hollow, and Camp Hutchins. Even if you have never been to these three areas, it is still YOUR national forest. We are protecting our children's rights to enjoy the peace, solitude and wildness of these areas, and the wildlife, which can be ensured in the long term only through wilderness protection.

We need many individual, personalized letters to make sure Costello follows through with his support of the three proposed wilderness areas. The letter does not have to be long. Below are some suggested points you could use in your own personal letter:

- Camp Hutchins, Ripple Hollow, and Burke Branch are all very biologically diverse areas, and very scenic. It is very important [to me] that these areas be designated wilderness areas to preserve the biological diversity of So. Illinois.
- We need these areas to be preserved as wilderness to provide a refuge from the busy, noisy, manmade world that we live in most of the time.
- Each of these areas is unique and special. Camp Hutchins rounds out the largest block of contiguous forest in Illinois. Ripple Hollow has steep slopes, limestone bluffs, and old growth forest communities next to the Mississippi bottomlands. Burke Branch harbors two Illinois Natural Areas plus Cretaceous Hills State Nature Preserve and many rare plant communities.
- OHVs (Off-Highway Vehicles), including four wheelers and motorcycles, should not be allowed in these three areas, because motorized vehicles can quickly destroy the native vegetation and unique beauty of these special areas.
- Logging, mining, motorized vehicles, and construction should not ever be allowed in these three areas because we must preserve their unique beauty, wildlife, and plant communities.
- I have enjoyed hiking and bird watching (and/or horseback riding, hunting, fishing, etc.) in these areas, and I want to make sure these areas are protected so that my children and grandchildren can also enjoy peaceful recreation in these special areas.

Please call or write before June 13th. Phone: (202) 225-5661 or (618) 529-3791

Please send your letters to Rep. Costello's local office (delivery to parts of the federal government is still very slow in D.C.)
Representative Jerry Costello, 155 Lincoln Place Ct., Belleville, IL 62221

Dear Representative Costello:

I strongly urge you to support the protection of Camp Hutchins, Burke Branch, and Ripple Hollow at the level of wilderness in the new Shawnee National Forest Plan. These are the only three remaining areas in Shawnee Forest that would qualify for wilderness status in Shawnee National Forest (SNF). These three areas comprise less than 5% of SNF. These areas plus the current wilderness areas equal less than 15% of Shawnee Forest. It is not asking too much to preserve 15% of the forest from the destruction caused by logging, mining, motorized vehicles and construction. Wilderness status will ensure that these areas in the SNF will be preserved in a wild state for wildlife and for many forms of recreation, including hiking, hunting, fishing, bird watching, and horseback riding.

These three areas have already been recognized by the public as areas worthy of wilderness designation, as well as in studies conducted at SIU-C and at Sangamon State University. Burke Branch and Ripple Hollow were designated as roadless areas in both RARE studies in the 1970s, and were recognized in the recent Roadless Initiative as candidates for roadless status. Camp Hutchins has been mentioned as a possible wilderness candidate in the Roadless Initiative EIS. I have enjoyed hiking with friends in each of these areas, and can personally attest to the beauty and value of all three of them.

These areas have been recognized as deserving wilderness designation for almost three decades. If these areas are not protected now, they will almost certainly be degraded by logging, mining, and motorized vehicles. Please help us convince the Forest Service to protect the wilderness values of these three areas in the new Shawnee National Forest Plan. ☺

Submitted by Barb McKasson



Shawnee Group
 P.O. Box 117
 Carbondale, IL 62903-0117
 USA, Earth, Milky Way

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Carbondale, IL

Permit 3

"The only solid piece of scientific truth about which I feel totally confident is that we are profoundly ignorant about nature... It is this sudden confrontation with the depth and scope of ignorance that represents the most significant contribution of twentieth-century science to the human intellect."

~ Lewis Thomas



Protect the Wilderness of Southern Illinois

Write _____
ELECTED OFFICIALS

Shawnee Group Executive Committee

Chair	Laurel Toussaint	964-1339	✉ mailto:laureltous@hotmail.com
Vice-Chair	Donna Ayers	985-6917	✉ mailto:dayers@accessus.net
Secretary	Cathie Hutcheson	529-2022	✉ mailto:hutche@siu.edu
Treasurer	Bill Boman	995-9976	✉ mailto:billbo@onemain.com
Conservation Chair	Barbara McKasson	529-4824	✉ mailto:babitaji@aol.com (Ex-Officio)
Membership Chair	Ron Schmeck	529-8387	✉ mailto:rae50@siu.edu
Outings Chair	Bob Tyson	684-5643	✉ mailto:robkay43@webtv.net

Sierra Club Websites

National: <http://www.sierraclub.org> IL Chapter: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org> Shawnee: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/index.htm>
 Subscribe to the Shawnee Trails Newsletter & Access Its Archives: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/il-shawnee-trails.html>
 Subscribe to the Shawnee Forum & Access Archives: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/il-shawnee-forum.html>
 National Sierra Club Listserv Portal (subscribe to other newsgroups): <http://mitchell.sierraclub.org/infosys/Listserv/ListHome.asp>
 National Sierra Club Outings Catalog: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/national/>
 Sierra Club Chapter Outings Catalog: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/>
 Shawnee Group Outings Catalog: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>
 Sierra Club Merchandise: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/fundraising.htm>

Newsletter Editor Bob Pauls 618-549-9408 ✉ <mailto:sg618@yahoo.com>