

Shawnee Trails

News of the Shawnee Group — September 2004

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



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Shawnee Group Event Calendar

September 2nd ~ ExCom meeting @ McClure's, 6 PM
September 9th ~ Member Meeting, Carbondale Township, 217 E. Main, 7:30 PM.
September 25-26th ~ Exhibit @ John A. Logan Hunting and Fishing Days
September 30th ~ Newsletter folding @ Carbondale Township Office, 5:30 PM

Grand Canyon National Park Photo Tour

The September 9th membership meeting will treat participants to a photo tour by Chuck Clemons of Grand Canyon National Park. The Grand Canyon is located on the Colorado Plateau in northwestern Arizona. The park is a World Heritage Site and covers well over a million acres. The land is semi-arid and consists of raised plateaus and basins typical of the southwestern United States. Drainage systems have cut deeply through the rock, forming numerous steep-walled canyons. Forests are found at higher elevations while the lower elevations are comprised of a series of desert basins.

Well known for its geologic significance, the Grand Canyon is one of the most studied geologic landscapes in the world. It offers an excellent record of three of the four eras of geological time, a rich and diverse fossil record, a vast array of geologic features and rock types, and numerous caves containing extensive and significant geological, paleontological, archeological and biological resources. It is considered one of the finest examples of arid-land erosion in the world. The Canyon, carved by the Colorado River, is immense, averaging 4,000 feet deep for its entire 277 miles. It is 6,000 feet deep at its deepest point and 15 miles at its widest.

The Park contains several major ecosystems. Its great biological diversity can be attributed to the presence of five of the seven life zones and three of the four desert types in North America. The Park also serves as an ecological refuge, with relatively undisturbed remnants of dwindling ecosystems (such as boreal forest and desert riparian communities). It is home to numerous rare, endemic (found only at Grand Canyon), and specially protected (threatened/endangered) plant and animal species. Over 1,500 plant, 355 bird, 89 mammalian, 47 reptile, 9 amphibian, and 17 fish species are found in the park. The public is welcome to attend this wine sampling and all Sierra Club functions. Public parking is available and in the Township's private lot behind the building off of South Marion and East Monroe Street. See: <http://www.nps.gov/grca/> #

Annual Yard Sale Fundraiser

Time to clean out the garage for the 2004 Chamber of Commerce Art, Craft and Yard Sale at the Carbondale SIU Arena on Sept. 18th. Anne Hill is once again having open house on both Thursday and Friday night, September 16th and 17th to collect your precious discards. Please tag your salable items with a price. One of the reasons we have succeeded in making over \$800 each year at the yard sale is the incredible bargains we offer by selling good items cheap. To make it even easier to contribute donations, you can also bring any yardsale items to either the next membership meeting on September 9th or to Anne's home any time if you'll please call her in advance at (618) 457-7206. Volunteers are also greatly needed both work nights and for any of several work slots on the day of the sale. Please contact the volunteer yard sale coordinators, Phyllis Beck and Gary Uhlir at 549-9819 and offer your much appreciated help.

Where to bring your stuff: 121 S. Hunt Road is one-half a mile east of Giant City blacktop where Walnut St. (Old 13) east of Carbondale curves to cross Crab Orchard Creek. When you get to the curve at the last house, you'll see an up arrow on the Hunt Road sign. Go straight (not around the curve) and down the asphalt road, around the bend and up the hill to the yellow house on the left at the top. (You'll see the house as you drive in.) #

Safe, happy and inspired

Descriptions of all outings of the Shawnee Group and five other Groups in the Illinois Chapter are available in in one central location making it easy to find a range of outdoor activities by any Sierra Club member or the general public. Plan your summer outings now! Go to the Group website for the link to this new feature: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>

September 12 (Sun) Trail of the Rocks Hikes, Cave-in-Rock, IL

A day of hiking at three locations on both sides of the Ohio River in Southern Illinois. Our first stop is a 1.8 mile loop trail at Mantle Rock Nature Preserve (22 miles from Cave-in-Rock) in Joy, KY. The prominent feature is the 188 foot natural bridge. Back on the Illinois side, we'll explore Battery Rock on the Ohio River. Our last stop, as time permits, will be at the Rimrock Forest Trail, a 2 mile loop. The last two sites are in Shawnee National Forest. Trip leader contact: Bob Tyson, 684-5643. Meet for car pool at Murdale Shopping Center in Carbondale at 8 AM, under the big sign; and at 8:30 AM at the Marion Wall*Mart (near Ryans Restaurant).

October 11 (Mon) Little Grand Canyon Trail Hike, Alternate Route, Murphysboro, IL

This is a 2-3 hour hike in the Shawnee National Forest in SW Illinois along a trail that includes deep ravines, a shelter cave, waterfall, and some interesting rock formations. The trip leader is Bob Tyson, Shawnee Group Outings Chair. The trip will be assisted by Tracy Evans, a naturalist for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Meet at the Shawnee National Forest ranger station in Murphysboro at 9:30 AM. **Note: In the event of rain on the day of or the day before the hike, call to check on the status of the outing.**

November 14 (Sun) Rambarger Trail Hike, Alto Pass, IL

This is a 5 mile hike within the Bald knob Wilderness Area in the Shawnee National Forest. During this Fall leaf-off period, we'll be able to view ravines on both sides of this backbone ridge trail. We will also inspect the results of erosion caused by ATV and horse riders. Meet at the Shawnee National Forest ranger station in Murphysboro at 12:30 PM for carpool arrangements. Contact trip leader, Bob Tyson, Shawnee Group Outings Chair at 684-5643. #

Adventures with Uncle Bob Tyson

Your Guide to Self-Adventure

This month we visit the **CREST TRAIL** located in the Glen O. Jones Lake area, also known as the Saline County Conservation Area.

Directions: Go east on Hwy 13 from Harrisburg to the town of Equality. In town, watch the signs to the area. Upon arrival, you will make a right turn at each intersection and follow until you arrive at a statue. Park here. Despite there being no official trailhead sign, the trailhead is evident because it begins as a wide path. After a quarter mile, a Forest Service sign will be found that says horse travel is prohibited, Despite that sign, there is plenty of evidence of hoof prints. Damage, however, is minimal so far. The trail ascends along a ridge with deep ravines on both sides. In June the trail presents a prolific array of purple, yellow, and white flowers. Near the top, the trail will become steeper and offer a view of long rock walls covered in ferns. Once you reach the top of Cave Hill and continue you'll find numerous overlooks of the plains to the north.

Once the trail finally starts descending you'll be walking on the crest of cliff walls that overlook huge boulders. After 2.5- 3.0 miles, there is a tree downfall and the trail becomes faint. When I last hiked here, I turned around and retraced my steps back to the trailhead. You should take particular notice of the typical plant communities found on glades and cliff tops like these.

I never did find the side trail to the cave itself. Upon consulting John O'Dell from the River to River Trail Society, he indicated that I had not gone far enough beyond the point where the trail grew faint. For those willing to pursue the trail further, one should look for a tree with a double red tape around it. A downhill side trail will lead to the cave. I have not been able to locate any published sources regarding this trail.

For more information, contact Bob Tyson at 684-5643 (<mailto:sh-outings@illinois.sierraclub.org>) or e-mail Mr. O'Dell (<mailto:bridges@accessus.net>) or visit the River to River Trail Society website at <http://www.globaleyes.net/Community/RiverToRiver/>

#

Kerry and Edwards Endorsed by Sierra Club Volunteers and Board of Directors

The Sierra has endorsed Senator John Kerry for President of the United States citing his outstanding leadership in safeguarding America's air, water and public lands. "John Kerry will provide the environmental leadership that has been sorely missing in the Bush White House," said Sierra Club President Larry Fahn. "His commitment to environmental progress stands in stark contrast to the Bush administration's all-out assault on the environment and its record of putting polluting corporations before the American public's health and safety.

"John Kerry has spent his entire career promoting real solutions aimed at ensuring that America's air, water, and natural resources are protected for future generations." Kerry has demonstrated environmental leadership throughout his career in public service, from helping organize Massachusetts' first Earth Day in 1970 to opposing the Bush administration's efforts to dismantle environmental gains made over the last century. Highlights of Kerry's environmental record include:

- ★ Advocated strict enforcement of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act, and opposed Bush administration efforts to weaken the laws in order to let polluters put more dangerous toxics into our air and water;
- ★ Advocated restoration of Superfund's "polluter pays" trust fund to ensure that polluters, not ordinary taxpayers, pay to clean up abandoned toxic waste sites;
- ★ Led the charge against the Bush administration's attempts to allow oil drilling in the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge;
- ★ Championed an energy plan that increases fuel economy to reduce the nation's dependence on oil and supports the development of clean, energy-saving technologies and renewable energy to reduce our dependence on other polluting sources of energy;
- ★ And, advocated for the United States to take the lead in international efforts to cut global warming pollution, reverse ozone depletion, protect tropical rain forests, preserve biological diversity and press for sustainable development.

"John Kerry's record on the environment is impressive by any measure and reveals a sincere personal passion for the issue," Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope said. "He understands that there is a better way than the Bush administration's alliance with corporate polluters. With Kerry as President, we could be sure that America's health and heritage are protected."

The endorsement was decided by volunteer members who serve on the Club's political committee and Board of Directors. Following the announcement, the Sierra Club will mobilize more than 700,000 members to talk to their friends and neighbors about supporting Kerry in November.

Vice-Presidential Candidate Edwards Praised by Sierra Club for Environmental Leadership

John Edwards is a leader on protecting Americans' health and safety. In a 2003 Earth Day release Edwards stated, "our country needs real leadership on many critical issues: safeguarding the water our children drink, preserving our national parks and forests, and achieving energy independence while addressing dangerous climate changes are just a few." In the Senate, Edwards has built a strong record on these and other environmental issues:

- ★ In 2003, Edwards led the Senate in protecting clean air by countering the Bush Administration's attempts to weaken the Clean Air Act (Senate Bill: S20030012).
- ★ He voted to increase funding for environmental programs and enforcement funding (S20030096).
- ★ Edwards is a co-sponsor of the Clean Power Act, designed to require utilities to control multiple pollutants - carbon dioxide, mercury, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides.
- ★ Senator Edwards has consistently voted to protect the Arctic Refuge and to defend America's public lands, national monuments, and coastal areas from damaging oil and gas drilling (S20020071, S20000058, S20010229, S20010231).
- ★ In 2000, Edwards supported an amendment to the Agriculture appropriations bill to increase protections for public lands from the toxic pollution that results from mining operations (S20000224).
- ★ Senator Edwards supported the Clinton Administration's Roadless Rule and took votes to reduce harmful subsidies for commercial logging, to reduce overgrazing on public lands, and against weakening public lands protections in 2000 and 2001 (S20000207, S20000175, S20000208).
- ★ Edwards voted in 2001 to prevent the weakening of Endangered Species Act protections for salmon and other threatened fish species in California's Klamath Basin (S20010232) and voted in 1999 to increase funding for Forest Service fish and wildlife programs.
- ★ In 2000, he supported an amendment to the Energy and Water Appropriations bill to improve water flows and wildlife habitat on the Missouri River (S20000232).

"At a time that the Bush Administration has made unprecedented attacks on environmental protections, Senator Edwards consistently stands up to preserve and strengthen the laws that keep Americans' air, water and public land clean and safe," said Debbie Sease, Sierra Club's Legislative Director. "John Edwards will make an excellent Vice President."

ALERT! Help Save Endangered Species All Across America!

By Barbara McKasson

Endangered species urgently need your help! There must be a loud public outcry against the latest attempt by members of the U.S. Congress and their industry supporters to punch holes in the federal Endangered Species Act. Please write or call your U.S. representative ASAP to oppose Rep. Cardoza's "Critical Habitat Reform Act of 2003" (H.R. 2933), and Rep. Walden's "Sound Science for Endangered Species Planning Act" (H.R. 1662). These two bills have been passed out of committee and could be voted on by the full House in September. If allowed to become law, these bills would be major environmental setbacks.

Rep. Cardoza's "**Critical Habitat Reform Act**" would create loopholes in the Endangered Species Act that could virtually eliminate designation of critical habitat for endangered species. This bill would abandon the goal of helping species to recover. By redefining the term "critical habitat", this bill would save minimal habitat for an endangered species, leaving the species tottering on the brink of extinction. This bill would also require preserving habitat only if the Secretary of Interior decides it is "practicable" to do so. Rep. Walden's "**Sound Science for Endangered Species Planning Act**" would restrict the use of important methods that scientists currently use to assess species' protection. Scientists, not Congress, should determine which scientific methods are best in any given situation. This bill would also cause further delays in designation of a species as "threatened" or endangered."

These two bills would add so many hoops for scientists and agency officials to jump through that over 420 scientists signed a letter to members of Congress expressing strong reservations about this legislation that would undermine habitat protection and change the way science is used in Endangered Species Act decisions.

Shown below is a sample letter to send and on page 7 is the short and simple voice message that can be phoned to your elected representatives. If you do not know the name of your Congressional representative, go to the web and enter your zip code: <http://www.house.gov/writerep>. You can also send an e-mail to your Representative from this web site.

Representative _____

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

The Endangered Species Act is the safety net for fish, plants and wildlife that are on the brink of extinction. This law has successfully prevented the extinction of our nation's majestic symbol, the American Bald Eagle and many other species. However, this law is being threatened by two bills recently passed by the House Resources Committee, Rep. Dennis Cardoza's (D-CA) "Critical Habitat Reform Act of 2003" (HR 2933) and Rep. Greg Walden's (R-OR) "Sound Science for Endangered Species Planning Act" (HR 1662).

Rep. Dennis Cardoza's "*Critical Habitat Reform Act of 2003*"— HR 2933, tries to undermine protections for the places that imperiled plants and animals need to survive and recover. The Cardoza bill creates loopholes by making numerous changes in the definition of critical habitat, thus making it increasingly more difficult for species to return from the brink of extinction. It also excludes large portions of precious habitat from even being considered for protections under the law. Critical habitat is one of the most important protections in the Endangered Species Act. Scientists tell us the main reason species are becoming endangered is loss of habitat.

Rep. Walden's (R-OR) "*Sound Science for Endangered Species Planning Act*" — HR 1662, seeks to undercut the use of the best science. By requiring government agencies to "give greater weight" to some kinds of science over others, it seeks to restrict the use of important methods that scientists currently use to assess species' protection, such as statistical tools that often provide the important insight about species. Scientists, not Congress, should determine which science best addresses any given issue.

The Endangered Species Act already requires the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (U.S. FWS) to use the most rigorous science available in developing balanced solutions to prevent the extinction of endangered fish, plants and wildlife. Even the General Accounting Office in its research has found that the U.S. FWS already uses the best science available in its endangered species decisions. Developers, and the politicians they give money to, are trying to weaken the Endangered Species Act. They are manipulating science to fit their political agenda and working to remove the checks and balances that help protect people and wildlife from special interests.

We owe it to our children and grandchildren to be good stewards of the environment and leave behind a legacy of protecting endangered species and the special places they call home. We have a responsibility to prevent the extinction of fish, plants and wildlife because once they are gone, we cannot bring them back. As a concerned constituent of your district, I urge to actively oppose these two bills that would weaken the safety net provided by the Endangered Species Act.

Sincerely,

Your name

Your address

The text of this letter can be copied from the Shawnee Website, Alerts Section.

(Sample Phone Message continued on Page 7: [Species Protection Calls Needed](#))

Top Ten: You Pick !

Which is the worst environmental abuse of the Bush administration?

1. Allowing the logging of 10% of the trees in the Sequoia National Monument?
2. Allowing the Superfund to run out of money to clean up toxic waste dumps on September 30, 2003.
3. Walking away from the Kyoto Treaty and the entire international effort to curb global warming?
4. Proposing new clean air regulations that would quadruple the amount of mercury old power plants would be allowed to emit?
5. Basing America's energy future on opening up wild lands and wilderness to the oil, gas and coal industries, and giving them tens of billions of dollars in new subsidies?
6. Cutting clean water funding and enforcement so badly that for the first time since the Clean Water Act was passed America's rivers, streams, lakes and beaches actually got dirtier?
7. Decreasing the official value of a human life from \$6 million to \$3.7 million.
8. Denying the public access to the records of the Cheney Energy Task Force and other important public records?
9. Repeatedly distorting the findings of federal scientists on subjects from the impact of oil drilling in the Arctic to the effect on dolphins of tuna fishing?
10. Stripping protective status from natural areas covering 10% of the United States?

Decided? Select the one you think worst and see the national survey results at: <http://www.strategicignorance.com/poll/>



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

Shawnee Group Leaders
(x = ExCom officers with voting rights)

ExCom Chair: Ron Schmeck 529-8387 <mailto:sh-chair@illinois.sierraclub.org> (x)

Vice-Chair, Webmaster/Newsletter Editor and Publicity Chair:

Bob Pauls 549-9408 <mailto:outings@illinois.sierraclub.org> (x)

Secretary: Shelby Seegers 529-5760 <mailto:sh-secy@illinois.sierraclub.org> (x)

Treasurer: Bill Boman 995-9976 <mailto:sh-treas@illinois.sierraclub.org>

Conservation and Political Chair; Chapter Delegate:

Barb McKasson 529-4824 <mailto:sh-cons@illinois.sierraclub.org> (x)

Membership Chair: Donna Ayers 985-6917 <mailto:sh-mem@illinois.sierraclub.org> (x)

Outings Chair: Bob Tyson 684-5643 <mailto:sh-outings@illinois.sierraclub.org> (x)

Program Chair: Sandy Anderson 893-4545 <mailto:sh-prog@illinois.sierraclub.org>

THERE IS A BETTER WAY



BUT ONLY IF YOU HELP

At the Sierra Club, we're committed to protecting America's environment and the progress we've made cleaning up the pollution and poisons in our air, water and land. But that progress is in peril. The Bush Administration is allowing corporations to rewrite and weaken the laws that protect our health and safety and the land we love. Thirty years of progress have taught us there is a better way. Work with us. Together we can leave our children a legacy of clean air, water and wild lands. Please join. With your support, we can do better... together.

Join today and receive
a **FREE Sierra Club
Weekender Bag!**



My Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____

email _____

Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club

Please charge my MasterCard Visa AMEX

Exp. Date ____/____/____

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Membership Categories **INDIVIDUAL** **JOINT**

INTRODUCTORY \$25

REGULAR \$39 \$47

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose check and mail to: **F94Q W 0710 1**

Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Bioneers Conference to be Beamed to Carbondale! Don't Miss It!

By Barbara McKasson

On October 15-17, 2004 Carbondale will be one of only fifteen satellite locations where the world's largest environmental conference will be held — the annual **Bioneers Conference**. The Bioneers Conference is the preeminent annual gathering of environmental visionaries with practical solutions for our most pressing environmental and social problems. Plenary speakers include Amory Lovins, Amy Goodman, Paul Hawken, Terry Tempest Williams, John Mohawk, and many others.

Southern Illinoisans can participate in the Bioneers Conference with other local citizens because the plenary sessions of fifteen speakers will be beamed by satellite to Carbondale, IL. In addition to the plenary sessions, many supplemental workshops will be held at the SIU-C Student Center (See panel below.) Registration is limited to only 350 participants, so register early to assure your spot.

Regular registration for all 3 days of the Bioneers Conference is just \$50. There are Student/Activist/Senior discounts available making the conference very affordable: just \$25 for all 3 days, if registration is made by September 24th. Two day and one day registration cost even less. Postmarked after September 24th, the price goes up \$10 for Regular and \$5 for Discounted registrations. If you register after September 24th and before October 5th, you will pay the Regular Pre-registration Price. After October 5th, do not mail your registration, but register on-site.

What are Bioneers?

According to the official Bioneers organization website at (<http://www.bioneers.org>) "Bioneers are biological pioneers who are working with nature to heal nature and ourselves. They have peered deep into the heart of living systems to devise strategies for restoration based on nature's own operating instructions. They come from many cultures and perspectives, and all walks of life.

Bioneers are scientists and artists, gardeners and economists, activists and public servants, architects and ecologists, farmers and journalists, priests and shamans, policymakers and citizens. They are everyday people committed to preserving and supporting the future of life on Earth. They herald a dawning Age of Restoration founded in natural principles of kinship, interdependence, cooperation, reciprocity, and community.

Uniting nature, culture, and spirit, Bioneers embody a change of heart — a spiritual connection with the living world that is grounded in social justice. Their pragmatic strategies effectively address many of our most pressing ecological and societal challenges.

Above all, Bioneers represent a culture of solutions. Their stories demonstrate that just as people have created the environmental and social problem we face, people can solve them — through a reciprocal partnership with nature. Over and over, they show how great a difference the actions of one individual can make."

For more information, and to register, visit the website of the Southern Illinois Center for a Sustainable Future at <http://www.sicsf.org> or send an e-mail to <mailto:sustain@siu.edu> or Call Kris at (618) 549-7387. If you are interested in some of the limited number of volunteer scholarships available, also call Kris.

Lodging in cabins or tent camping is available at Touch of Nature Environmental Center (TONEC) for \$10 per night. Contact Touch of Nature directly at (618) 453-1121 to register for the lodging. Camping is also available next to TONEC is the Giant City State Park campground. There are also many affordable motels in Carbondale.

Mark your calendar now for October 15-17th and register now! See you there! ☩

Local Bioneer Conference Workshops and Seminars

- ★ A Revolution of One
- ★ Wilderness Designation in the Shawnee
- ★ Deep Ecology & Religion
- ★ Coal Gasification
- ★ Vegetarianism
- ★ Independent Media
- ★ Shawnee in Peril - Unregulated Recreation
- ★ Renewable Energy
- ★ Creating a Green Civilization by Dan Sitarz
- ★ The World According to John Muir by John Wallace
- ★ PLUS special Touch of Nature activities

Species Protection Calls Needed

(continued from Page 3)

Sample Phone Message: Vote NO on Representative Cardoza's "Critical Habitat Reform Act of 2003" (H.R. 2933) and NO on Representative Greg Walden's "Sound Science for Endangered Species Planning Act" (H.R. 1662). These two bills would cripple the Endangered Species Act by greatly limiting the designation of critical habitat for endangered species and by restricting the use of analytical methods used by scientists. The Endangered Species Act has successfully aided the recovery of many threatened species and should not be weakened.

(Calls to the Washington Offices are the most effective)

- ★ **Representative Jerry Costello:**
Washington (202) 225-5661; Belleville (618) 233-8026; Carbondale, 529-3791
- ★ **Representative John Shimkus:**
Washington (202) 225-5271; Harrisburg (618) 252-8271

Engaging Our Members

Volunteers from the Shawnee Group are working in concert with a national program of the Sierra Club called "Engaging Our Members."

The program exists to get local Sierra Club members talking to one another, friends and neighbors about what's going on with air pollution, Bush administration policies that let polluters keep on polluting, the risks of asthma and mercury pollution, and how we can do something about these issues locally.

These are **not** one-way presentations with speakers, forums, or rallies. The sessions are especially for people who are concerned about the environment and what the Bush administration is doing to harm the environment, but don't feel like they know enough to really talk with confidence about what's going on. Interested? Call Shelby for more information: 529-5760

Nominations For ExCom Sought

Would you like to guide the future of the Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club? Nominations Committee Chair, Bob Pauls, is seeking names from the membership for inclusion on the 2005 ExCom ballot. Duties of ExCom officers can be found on our website at:

http://illinois.sierraclub.org/Shawnee/ExCom_Duties.pdf

About 40% of Sierra Club Members Are NOT Registered to Vote! We Can Do Better!

Let's change that! The disturbing truth, according to the National Sierra Club office, is that about 40 percent of Sierra Club members nationally are not registered to vote. Our strength is sadly diluted by not reinforcing our message with our vote. If every member of the Sierra Club in Florida had voted in the last election, presumably for Al Gore because of his strong commitment to the environment, we would now have a different President.

This summer, the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club will send a voter registration form to every Sierra Club member who is not yet registered to vote. We need you to remind your friends, neighbors and fellow Sierra Club members to vote.

Registering every Sierra Club member to vote will increase our strength not only in the coming election, but in elections stretching into the future. This could be big! So, please join our fight to build the power of the environmental vote in Illinois and get every Sierra Club member participating in our democracy. Thanks. ☪

Blagojevich Protected Parks From Off-Road Vehicles

Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich has vetoed two bills passed by the Illinois General Assembly that would have opened the door for off-road vehicle trails through Illinois state parks, and limited the state's authority to police illegal use of ATVs.

"Our state parks are places for quiet recreation and wildlife - not dangerous racetracks for dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles. The Sierra Club applauds Governor Blagojevich for using his veto pen to protect our parks and those who use them from the noise and damage that can be done by off-road vehicles roaring through our woods and prairies," said Jack Darin, Director of the Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter.

Blagojevich vetoed Senate Bill 2272 on August 9th, which would have allowed state funds to be used to build tracks for dirt bikes and four-wheelers in existing state parks. Senate Bill 2273 would have limited the funds available to the state government to enforce existing laws against unsafe off-road vehicle use, and was vetoed by the Governor July 30.

Illegal use of ATVs has caused major damage to many areas in Illinois, including Cahokia Mounds historic site, pristine areas of the Shawnee National Forest, Illinois Nature Preserves, and others. The large tires on the vehicles, combined with their ability to drive off established trails and on steep terrain can rip up large amounts of vegetation and cause major erosion problems. Conservationists oppose allowing the vehicles into existing state parks. Downstate Illinois Representative Mike Bost has repeatedly voted in favor of ATV access to state parks. Both of his opponents in the Fall general election are opposed to their use in Illinois state parks.

"Governor Blagojevich's proposals will help keep our state parks safe, beautiful, and quiet places for family recreation and for wildlife. In addition, the state's efforts to keep people and property safe from illegal ATV use will not be compromised by inadequate funding," said Darin.

A year ago, Blagojevich used his veto pen on very similar measures. ☪

Sierra Club Endorses Tim Bagwell for U.S. House of Representatives



The Sierra Club has endorsed Tim Bagwell, the Democratic challenger to the Republican incumbent, John Shimkus, in the race for the Illinois District 19 seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. Democrat Bagwell pledges to work for the environment. Conversely, John Shimkus has a documented record of repeatedly showing the opposite inclination by joining President Bush in attacking regulations that protect our air, land and water and threaten our safety.

Dr. Tim Bagwell, an information technology consultant, grew up in Southern Illinois, and currently lives in Olney. Bagwell has degrees in Political Science, Radio and Television, and Speech Communication. Tim also completed his Ph.D. in Public Administration at St. Louis University.

Bagwell agrees with most Sierra Club's environmental positions. He is willing to find ways to improve the environment and increase jobs at the same time. His top three environmental issues that he would work on in Congress are federal protection for national forests, wetlands and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He promises to work for designation of the three proposed wilderness areas in Shawnee National Forest. Tim would work in Congress to end the heavily subsidized commercial logging in our national forests, and restore federal protection for isolated wetlands. Tim supports creating an Ecosystem Restoration Authority for the Mississippi and Illinois waterways. He would help family farmers by redirecting Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) subsidies from large corporate livestock facilities to smaller family farms. Tim wants the polluters, not average tax payers, to pay for 100% of the costs to clean up toxic waste sites. He favors requirements to acquire at least 20% of our electricity needs from renewable energy sources by 2020. Bagwell also would vote to restore the U.S. support of the Kyoto Treaty to curb the global climate crisis that the Bush administration refuses to address.

According to the League of Conservation Voters, during Shimkus' entire tenure in the U.S. Congress, despite being afforded numerous opportunities, he has voted to protect the environment only 6% of the time. That means he has voted against the measures to protect the environment 94% of the time. For example, Shimkus has irresponsibly supported President Bush in rolling back numerous environmental regulations, and allowing greatly increased private exploitation of our public land — logging, mining, oil drilling, road building, etc. — even in our national parks and national forests. Shimkus is also the nation's main roadblock to designation of three new wilderness areas in Shawnee National Forest and supports allowing ATV trails in the SNF. To learn more about Tim Bagwell's responsible, pro-environmental positions, go to his website at: <http://www.bagwellforcongress.com>. At the Bagwell website, click on "Tim on the Issues", then scroll down to "Environment", then click on "Read more." You can also donate to Tim's campaign online or call the main campaign office at (618) 392-6039.

If you want to work with Sierra Club volunteers to help with Tim's campaign and put another environmentally concerned representative into office, call Barb McKasson, Shawnee Group Political Chair, at (618) 529-4824, or e-mail to: <mailto:sh-cons@illinois.sierraclub.org> #

"One hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the most skillful.

Subduing the other's military without battle is the most skillful." ~ Sun Tzu, The Art of War



Shawnee Group
P.O. Box 117
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