



# DuPage Sierran

Sierra Club, River Prairie Group of DuPage County

Fall 2010

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## Dam Removal in Warrenville

By Tom Richardson

Constructed of limestone by the Civilian Conservation Corps between 1936 and 1938, the Warrenville Dam is about 8.5 feet high and around 125 feet wide. The impoundment created by the dam is approximately 1.2 miles in length and covers about 17 acres. The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County owns the dam and as part of a continuing effort to improve water quality in DuPage County rivers, they plan to do a notched removal and modification of the dam later this year or in 2011. They will then begin a re-creation of the upstream and downstream channel conditions.

In general, impoundments created by dams adversely affect water quality and aquatic communities. The factors contributing to the diminished habitat in the impoundment are:

A) Dissolved oxygen (DO) is depleted by several factors:

- Water velocity slows behind a dam causing deposits of silt and organic matter. In addition, the water column widens allowing more time and area for bacteria to consume the organic matter, taking up oxygen in the process
- The lack of agitation behind dams means less oxygen is absorbed than in free flowing streams, and the water becomes warmer, decreasing the ability to hold the DO
- Algae thrive in these conditions, creating a severe drop in oxygen during darkness, which may be fatal to some fish and macro-invertebrates.

B) All of the above factors impact fish and bugs, but additional problems impact these organisms as well. The lack of riffles and pool sequences eliminate feeding and breeding habitat for most river fish. The silt behind the dam creates conditions they cannot tolerate. Furthermore, dams block fish movement and muscle dispersion.

Research done by the DuPage River and Salt Creek Workgroup (DRSCW) over the past five years shows that the Warrenville Dam fits the typical dam impact on aquatic life, with significantly fewer species above the

dam than below the dam. As expected, the DO above the dam regularly goes too far below the necessary levels for many species to survive.

Based on the above research, the Sierra Club River Prairie Group has supported the removal of the Warrenville Dam and looks forward to the restored stream bed and the revival of species in the area.

For more information and photos, see the Forest Preserve description at:

[http://www.dupageco.org/dec/generic.cfm?doc\\_id=4222](http://www.dupageco.org/dec/generic.cfm?doc_id=4222). For extensive detail of some of the DRSCW research visit: <http://www.drscw.org/bioassessment/westbranch.pdf>

### In this issue...

Dam Removal in Warrenville.....	1
Elmhurst Greenfest.....	2
Blue Star Energy Earns a Gold Star for Offering Renewable Energy Options.....	2-3
A Walk on the Camino de Santiago in Spain.....	3
The River Prairie Group's Candidate Endorsements.....	4-5
What Journalist Jeff Biggers Wants You to Know About Coal .....	6
2011 Group Executive Committee Elections .....	7
Green Readin' .....	8
Meet Your Ex-Com Members.....	9
Calendar of Events .....	10
Join the River Prairie Group Listserv!.....	10
River Prairie Group (RPG) Outings.....	11-12
Join the Bluestem Network .....	13

### DuPage Sierran

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[Http://illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg](http://illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg)

For activities, legislative action alerts, & outings information

**We are on Facebook!** Check out:

[http://www.facebook.com/pages/River-Prairie-Group\\_of\\_the\\_Sierra\\_Club/96257429851](http://www.facebook.com/pages/River-Prairie-Group_of_the_Sierra_Club/96257429851)

## Elmhurst Green Fest

By Lonnie Morris

*Elmhurst Cool Cities Coalition's third annual Green Fest on July 31 in Wilder Park brought together a wide diversity of exhibitors and vendors offering green activities, entertainment and information on how to save money through energy efficiency. Exhibitors included Bob's Fresh and Local, a community supported agriculture farm in St. Charles, tankless hot water heater and solar energy companies. Fest visitors were provided with an opportunity to recycle electronics, gently used books, bicycles, corks and pet supplies at the Recycling Boutique.*



*Crestview Garden Club provided kids a hands-on gardening experience planting bricks with chicks and hens.*

## BlueStar Energy Earns a Gold Star for Offering Renewable Energy Options

By Jenny Smiechowski

There is a new residential energy supplier in town – one that allows consumers to purchase renewable wind energy. In 2008, Chicago-based energy supplier BlueStar Energy became the first retail electricity supplier in Illinois to serve residential customers. They had already been serving Illinois industrial and commercial customers since 2002. Through BlueStar Energy, customers can choose between a traditional energy plan and a renewable energy plan which sources its energy from 100% wind power. Both plans offer lower energy rates than the current utility rate available from ComEd.

BlueStar Energy is met with excitement from consumers, who until recently haven't had many options as far as their energy supply was concerned. Illinois only opened up the residential electricity market in 2002, and BlueStar Energy is the first alternative supplier to service the northern Illinois area.

Sierra Club member and Illinois Cool Cities Chair, Lonnie Morris has already made the switch to BlueStar. *"I've signed up for Blue Star but haven't actually paid a bill yet. So far, I haven't noticed anything different. I do feel less guilty using air conditioning during this heat wave,*

*knowing the electricity isn't coming from coal fired power plants which would just make the planet hotter with their greenhouse gas emissions,"* said Morris.

According to BlueStar Energy's Director of Residential Solutions, Lon Johnson, BlueStar Energy provides both environmental and financial benefits. *"BlueStar shares in the Sierra Club's interest in protecting the environment. That is why we offer Renewable American Energy, which comes from 100% wind power – at a 7% discount off ComEd's residential electricity supply rate,"* said Johnson.

Johnson emphasizes that BlueStar currently has a very good reputation in the marketplace. *"BlueStar has an A+ rating from the Better Business Bureau, and has never had a complaint filed against it with the Illinois Commerce Commission or any other regulatory body,"* said Johnson.

There are, however, a few important details for Illinois consumers to know as they consider changing energy suppliers. First of all, even if you switch to BlueStar Energy, your electricity but it will still be delivered to your home by ComEd. This is because ComEd owns the power lines, power stations, and overall electrical infrastructure.

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*January Program  
with the River Prairie Group:*

## A Walk on the Camino de Santiago in Spain

By Connie Schmidt

On January 10, 2011, the River Prairie Group is presenting a talk by Rick McKay about his walking trip in Spain on the Camino de Santiago de Compostella. This trail is best known as a Christian pilgrimage route dating back to the early Middle Ages, although it was used prior to that as a Roman trade route and even before that as a Celtic pilgrimage trail.

It has seen a resurgence in popularity during the past few years, and today thousands set out to traverse its picturesque course. Although there are many points of origin, most paths converge in eastern Spain for the last 400+ miles of the journey.

Rick walked nearly 200 miles of the famed trail with two college buddies, from Astorga to Santiago, and then continued on by car to the final pre-Christian destination of Finisterre (which literally means land's end), a rocky point jutting out into the seemingly endless vastness of the Atlantic Ocean. A slide show depicting the scenery, lodgings, and historical sites along the route will bring his two week journey to life.



*From left: Rick McKay, Jack Karolewski, and Joe Masonick at Finisterre (land's end) in northwestern Spain, looking west over the Atlantic Ocean.*

Rick McKay is a retired 5th grade teacher from Bower School in Warrenville. He is an adventurer and has traveled extensively with his two college buddies, both here in the United States as well as to exotic destinations such as Egypt, Afghanistan, China, and Kashmir in northern India. He lives in Naperville with his wife, Marsha, another retired school teacher. This talk will take place at the Helen M. Plum Memorial Library in Lombard beginning at 7:00pm.

### *BlueStar Energy, continued*

This means that no matter who you buy your electricity from, you will still pay the traditional delivery charges.

It is also important to clarify how the renewable energy plan works. According to BlueStar's website, "It is not physically possible to route electrons from a specific generation source to specific physical address." In other words, the energy you use may not actually come from wind power. But BlueStar Energy will purchase renewable energy certificates (RECs) from a wind power company which equals the amount of energy you consume. The

wind power company will then deliver this energy back into the electricity system. Furthermore, BlueStar Energy does require that customers sign a 12 month contract.

All that said, BlueStar Energy is a compelling option for those concerned about the environmental implications of our current energy practices. For the first time, consumers can vote with their dollars for clean energy sources while also saving money on their monthly utility bills. Those interested in learning more about BlueStar Energy can visit: [www.bluestarenergy.com](http://www.bluestarenergy.com).

## The River Prairie Group's Candidate Endorsements

By Connie Schmidt

The River Prairie Group spends hours of time researching, scheduling, and meeting with prospective candidates for endorsement each election. It is a testament to the value of our endorsement that so many candidates request these interviews and fill out our detailed questionnaire. Initially a committee meets to write the interview questions and caters them specifically to the issues pertinent to each office being sought. Deadlines are established and then interviews schedules with in-district Sierra Club members as well as activists involved in issues governed by the office for which they are running.

After the committee meets with each candidate, the committee votes on recommendations to be submitted to the Executive Committee of the RPG. If the vote passes, the recommendation is then passed up to the Political Committee of the Illinois Chapter for a vote. Then the vote is sent to the Executive Committee for final approval. The vote must pass with a two-thirds majority threshold at all levels. In each case, information on the candidate must be presented and an appropriate waiting time for members of the committees to investigate any questions involving the candidates. In the case of federal endorsements such as Congressmen or Senators, the vote is then passed along to a national team where it must receive a two-thirds vote there also.

The process can take weeks, and many dedicated Sierra Club volunteers help by serving on these committees. Bonds are forged as a result of the endorsements which are instrumental tools in efforts to pass our keep bills or for favorable votes on our issues.

The following candidates from DuPage County have passed the rigorous process for endorsement and are presented for you below. We hope you will encourage others to join you in voting for them in the upcoming election.

### Sandra Pihos – (R) for IL House – 42

Sandra Pihos is one of the most reliable votes for the environment in Springfield. Last year she was one of only a handful of legislators to cosponsor our solar bills. She also voted for our phosphorous in lawn fertilizer ban. In 2009, she cosponsored the Sierra Club's Clean Cars bill; she voted for the energy efficient building codes bill, the natural gas efficiency bill and against the hated STAR Bonds bill, all top Sierra Club priorities.



In her very first year as a representative, Pihos has cosponsored our bill to save isolated wetlands. She said she was most proud of the work she did lobbying her colleagues for that bill. *"I worked along side (Rep.) Karen May on that bill and really learned what lobbying is all about,"* she said.

In past years, Pihos voted for our bill banning mercury switches and limiting diesel truck idling. She was one of only 17 representatives out of 118 to vote against both bad ATV bills that would have allowed all-terrain vehicles to wreak havoc in our state parks.

Pihos summed up her attitude: *"Unlike many issues where there really are two sides, when it comes to the environment, there really is a right and wrong way."*

### Michael Fortner – (R) for IL House – 95

*"Michael Fortner has been an incredibly strong voice in Springfield for the environment,"* said Jack Darin, Illinois Sierra Club director. *"His science background and willingness to speak up has made him very influential and a great plus for the Sierra Club's issues."*



Last year, Fortner was an early cosponsor and strong voice for the Sierra Club's solar bills. He voted for our phosphorous in lawn fertilizer ban. In 2009, Fortner cosponsored our Clean Cars bill and our Energy Efficient Building codes bill; he voted for our Natural Gas Efficiency bill and against the hated STAR Bonds bill, all important priorities for the Sierra Club.

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*Michael Fortner, continued*

Fortner began as a citizen activist fighting to hold Kerr McKee Corporation responsible for contaminating the rivers and groundwater of West Chicago and surrounding communities with thorium. He provided crucial leadership as he progressed from citizen to West Chicago alderman to West Chicago mayor in getting the multi-group thorium cleanup agreement with Kerr McGee.

His membership on the House Energy and Environment Committee and the Transportation Committee bespeak his environmental priorities and position him to be the powerful help to the Sierra Club that he is. Few have fought harder for mass transit than Fortner.

### **Chris Nybo – (R) for Il House – 41**

Nybo is running for an open seat formerly held by Bob Biggins. Although Nybo is new to state office, he came to our interview with an inch-thick stack of research on the endorsement questions and impressed us with his command of our issues, especially solar and coal.



We were also impressed with his eagerness to work with the Sierra Club. With great conviction, he told us that the laws of Illinois have to stop favoring fossil fuels. He said he will vote against all subsidies for coal and for our attempt to raise the net-metering cap, should we bring it back. He said he would have no problem standing up to power companies on net-metering or anything else since as an alderman in Elmhurst, he has tangled with ComEd many times.

Nybo will be a pro-business legislator, but he seemed very sincere in his belief that moving Illinois into a green economy and away from subsidizing fossil fuels is a pro-business stance. We believe an endorsement of Chris Nybo is an essential first step in what we hope to make a productive relationship.

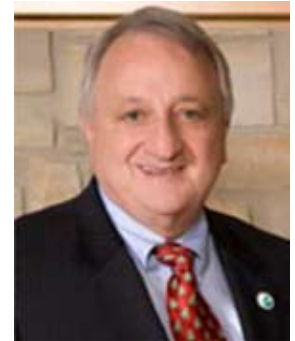
### **Roger Kotecki – DuPage Forest Preserve Commission – District 6**

Roger Kotecki has served this County for over 19 years and has developed a keen understanding of the importance of land preservation for plant and animal habitat, for the historical significance and the benefits to the human spirit. Roger himself works at numerous sites in the district as a volunteer which helps guide his decision making when sitting in the board room making decisions affecting these parcels of land. Roger is a Sierra Club member and frequently attends our events supporting our mission. He has been a consistent voice for sound management of the forest preserves based on science. *“He speaks for the trees for the trees that have no tongues.”* (The Lorax by Dr. Seuss)



### **Dewey Pierotti – President of DuPage Forest Preserve Commission**

As president of the Forest Preserve for 15 years, Dewey Pierotti has been the primary driving force in many outstanding land acquisitions. He was the principle driver of the purchase negotiations of St. James Farm (estate of Brooks McCormick), Wayne Grove Forest Preserve and Dunham Forest Preserve. He is a strong supporter on all Sierra Club issues. He provides essential leadership to keep the forest preserves of DuPage managed for wildlife diversity when they are under attack by people who are anti-science. He takes a strong pro-environment stance on healthy river/ healthy watershed practices.



## What Journalist Jeff Biggers Wants You to Know About Coal

By Jenny Smiechowski

The Sierra Club is working hard to create a clean-energy, coal-free future – and so is journalist Jeff Biggers. Biggers' book, **Reckoning at Eagle Creek**, leaves no coal unturned, so to speak, when outlining the dirty truth about this fossil fuel.

*"If there are two things my book debunks about coal, it's that it is clean and cheap," said Biggers, "Coal has been the deadliest and costliest resource over the past 200 years if we include the human and environmental costs in the equation."*

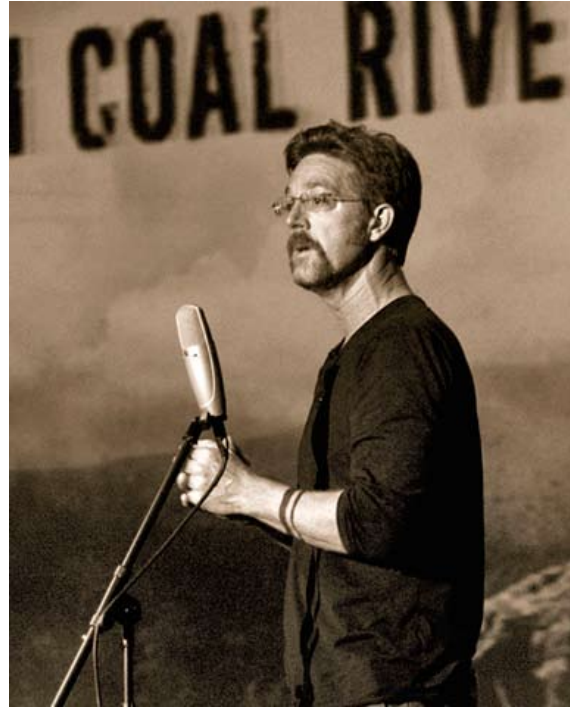
And, as Biggers vividly depicts in his book, coal's history is a minefield of brutality, pollution, and industry irresponsibility. Perhaps it is this history, and how it intertwines with Biggers' own personal history that makes him a perfect advocate for a coal-free future.

When Biggers' family was pushed out of their 150 year old log cabin in Eagle Creek, a coal town in the Shawnee Hills of Southern Illinois, he undertook a ten year journey into the underbelly of the coal industry – the fruits of his labor being his book **Reckoning at Eagle Creek**.

*"My family was faced with living in a war zone. The coal companies were allowed to detonate explosions of ammonium nitrate fuel oil and literally not only destroy the watershed in the area and pollute water, but also make life unlivable for people in the region. Eagle Creek has been wiped out," said Biggers.*

In addition to losing this important part of his family's history, Biggers also witnessed the suffering of his grandfather, a coal miner who was afflicted with black lung disease. *"Three people die every day from black lung disease. That's one of the most overlooked costs of coal. Ten thousand coal miners died in the last decade from black lung disease," said Biggers.*

One of the biggest challenges Biggers faces in his crusade against coal is the plethora of misinformation swirling around in the collective consciousness – the most touted and inaccurate being the myth of "clean coal." Clean coal, according to Biggers, is nothing but industry propaganda. Unfortunately, public belief in clean coal propaganda has only been amplified by the support of Obama Administration. *"Clean coal doesn't exist," said Biggers, "It's a marketing phrase that's been around for*



*Jeff Biggers will speak on the myth of clean coal at an RPG program, 7:00 pm Oct. 20, Helen Plum Library.*

*100 years now. We need to stop using the two words together. If you've seen your grandfather get black lung, using the two words together is offensive."*

In addition to the attention Biggers has attracted to the costs of coal via his book, he is also a member of a performance group called Coal Free Future Project. *"Coal Free Future Project is made up of artists, actors, writers and musicians coming out of coal field communities. We've created a play, 'Welcome to the Saudi Arabia of Coal' and we'll be touring it across the country," said Biggers.*

According to Biggers, the title of the play refers to the motto of the Illinois mining industry and can be traced back to Barack Obama's days as a state senator. During his first visit to the coal fields in Southern Illinois, Obama described Illinois as the "Saudi Arabia of Coal."

Biggers says the goal of the Coal Free Future Project is to drive home the truth that coal adversely affects us all, not just those living in coal mining communities. *"Our attitude is, until people in San Francisco and Los Angeles – places that normally don't have any connection to coal fields, – see the cost of lights and electricity on our communities, you will never understand what is happening and understand the true cost of coal. It's as much a human rights issue as an environmental issue. Our nation needs to have a reckoning with our dirty coal policy and come to grips with the true costs of coal."*

## 2011 Group Executive Committee Elections

### *Candidate Statements*

#### **Linda Sullivan:**

I am committed to the Sierra Club because of its grassroots structure that empowers ordinary people to make a difference. I believe the River Prairie Group should build on this strength, reaching out to its members, finding new ways to draw them into active participation and improving channels for all members to make their voices heard.



As lobby chair for the RPG and Illinois Chapter of Sierra Club and as political chair for the RPG, my focus is on finding channels for our members to make democracy work for them instead of for large corporations and to raise the profile of environmental issues and hold legislators accountable.

If I am elected, I will bring enthusiasm and a positive attitude toward empowering all of us who care about conservation in Illinois.

#### **Joe Pokorny:**

I am a 20+ year life member and RPG Outings Leader with a love of the outdoors and a need to protect it. I became involved with the RPG ExCom as the liaison to the Outings Committee and that continues. I also have a knack for managing and using databases and email listservers and for updating web info due to many years in data manipulation and I use this to assist the Group. As one of our many new issues, I see communicating with our many internet-challenged and email-adverse members now that print newsletters have been suspended due to budget constraints.



#### **Bruce Blake:**

I have been involved with the River Prairie Group since 1999. I have a sincere belief that everyone should be responsible for the environment around them. As an Executive Committee member, I have helped plan programs, promote conservation issues and handle the group's treasury needs. I will continue to help us enjoy and improve our environment.



#### **Connie Schmidt:**

My name is Connie Schmidt and I am running for the River Prairie Group Ex-Com in 2010. I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1990 and have been an activist for the past 13 years. Currently I am the Vice Chair of our group. I also serve as the DuPage County Liaison for local issues and since initiating that role have watched the enthusiasm for local activism steadily increase in our territory. I have helped plan 5 major fund raisers for our group, lobbied local and state elected officials, and served on numerous endorsement committees. One special interest of mine is multi-use trails here in DuPage County.



### River Prairie Group Executive Committee Ballot

- Vote for a candidate by checking off the box next to his/her name
- Vote for up to four candidates.
- Print your full name and address on the outside of the envelope for membership verification, and mark it to the attention of the Elections Committee, n/c Joe Pokorny 1627 Buckingham Ave, Westchester, IL 60154 by 12/15/10.
- Joint members may use a xerox copy for a second ballot. Indicate "joint" on the outside of the envelope and list both joint members' names.

- Linda Sullivan
- Joe Pokorny
- Bruce Blake
- Connie Schmidt

## Green Readin'

By Lonnie Morris

Add some color to the winter months by joining a discussion of current environmental issues at Green Readin', a book group co-sponsored by the River Prairie Group and the Helen Plum Library. We will meet at the Helen Plum Library, 110 West Maple, Lombard.

For more information, visit <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg>  
or contact **Lonnie Morris** [herbdove@comcast.net](mailto:herbdove@comcast.net) 630.627.3982

February 27 2:00 pm

### A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail

*Bill Bryson*

The three month Green Readin' series will begin by taking a look at the state of one of America's remaining wildernesses through the eyes of Bill Bryson as he hikes the 2,100 mile Appalachian Trail, stretching from Georgia to Maine. Bryson's laugh-out-loud writing tells of more than a hike. His acute eye is a wise witness to the trail's majesty along with the threats to America's wildernesses from resource extraction, land use pressures and changing climate.

*"If you were to cross John Muir's writings with Dave Barry's, you'd end up with something along the lines of.....A Walk in the Woods."*

- *National Geographic Traveler*

March 27, 2:00 pm

### In Defense of Food

*Michael Pollan*

In month two, we leave the woods to explore the American diet where the major social issues of health, agricultural practices, food science and climate change intersect. In recent years, Michael Pollan has emerged as one of America's most respected food writers, taking on topics from the meat industry to national food policy. As the follow up to *Omnivores Dilemma*, *In Defense of Food* offers simple advice: Eat Food. Not Too Much. Mostly Plants. At the heart of this book is the author's concern for how food science in the service of the food industry has destroyed the American diet.

April 17 2:00 pm

### Eaarth

*Bill McKibben*

The final book in the series provides a careful examination of the evidence for global warming with the conclusion that it is presently well underway with effects evident from the arctic to the tropics. McKibben suggests renaming the planet Eaarth, as current conditions no longer resemble the peaceful, stable period mankind has enjoyed for the past ten thousand years. The book ends on an upbeat note as McKibben identifies the ways we can adapt to these new conditions by creating richer, more democratic and civil communities.

*"Bill McKibben is the most effective environmental activist of our age. Anyone interested in making a difference to our world can learn from him."*

- *Tim Flannery*

## Meet Your Ex-Com Members Connie Schmidt *RPG Vice Chair*

I became a member of the Sierra Club about 15 years ago when an issue involving power lines along the Illinois Prairie Path in Warrenville was consuming my life. I thought perhaps the Sierra Club would add some weight to our local concern; I was right. Members rallied and some wrote letters, and I met people from other groups whose names continue to be active at the chapter level and in their own groups.

I have been on the RPG Ex. Com. since about that time, and because of the 'education' I got in local politics at the county level, I helped to make the River Prairie Group more responsive to some local issues. Although the Sierra Club has weighed in on many issues in the dozen or so years I have been active, I do not think we can claim responsibility for the victory of their resolution. Instead, I believe that we offer support to local activists and elected officials who are furthering environmental goals of conservation of land, air or water.

One of the most important things that we do as a group is aggressively interview candidates and endorse within the chapter by-laws, state as well as local candidates. Maintaining these relationships helps to advocate for environmentally-friendly decisions at the local level.

One of my greatest passions is trails and multi-use trail advocacy. Since DuPage County is a premier example of this concept, I have given talks on it in other parts of our state. My family walks and rides bicycles on the Illinois Prairie Path across from our home and on the many regional trails threaded throughout our Forest Preserves. I also have a horse and ride her along these paths as well. I have always felt that the equestrian community needs to be concerned about conservation issues for land and water so that these beautiful riding areas will remain.



Lastly, I must mention my love of gardening. Over 20 years ago, I was fortunate enough to meet a wonderful aging woman in Warrenville who shared some native spring wildflower plants with me. I moved them to my yard where I continue to cherish my early May display including bits of bloodroot, trilliums, and lungwort. As soon as the ground allows me to dig, I also prepare the vegetable bed for one of 3 plantings during the summer. Early lettuce is soon followed by broccoli, beans, onions, basil, spinach, squash, tomatoes, and potatoes (to name a few) which is then followed by another planting of lettuce and beans. The joy of eating out of my yard including the eggs from our own chickens is very special to me.

Over the years as a Sierra Club member my interests have been nurtured by other members with similar passions. By belonging to our Group, I come into contact with like-minded people and am enriched by their ideas. Whether it be from informal book selections, suggestions for travel destinations near and far, or ways to manage my own home more responsibly for the environment, membership in the River Prairie Group has enriched my life and that of my family.

## Calendar of Events

General programs are held at the Glen Ellyn Public Library approximately six times a year. Times/days for general programs may vary, check with [www.illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg](http://www.illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg) for detailed information about general programs and other activities sponsored by the group.

Glen Ellyn Public Library is in downtown Glen Ellyn at 400 Duane St. Duane runs east/west and is the first street on the south side of the Metra tracks. From Highway 53 or I-355, exit at Roosevelt Rd., go a few blocks west on Roosevelt, then turn right (N) at Main St. in Glen Ellyn. Head north a few blocks on Main to just before the railway tracks; turn left (W) on Duane. The library is on the right (N) side of Duane. Committee meetings are usually held in Sierra Club activist's homes. For times and locations, call the Sierra Club activist listed.

### PROGRAMS AT THE GLEN ELLYN LIBRARY:

Call Bruce Blake at 630.629.2520 or email [RIInstns1@aol.com](mailto:RIInstns1@aol.com)

#### Wednesday, October 6 – RPG Book Discussion Reckoning at Eagle Creek: The Secret Legacy of Coal in Illinois

7:00 pm, Helen Plum Library Board Room,  
110 West Maple Street, Lombard

Jeff Biggers, author and co-founder of the Coal Free Future Project, was inspired to investigate the true environmental and social costs of coal when his family's history was erased from the southern Illinois landscape by coal mining. Join a discussion of Reckoning at Eagle Creek as we explore the true social and environmental cost of coal. Everyone welcome. This event is not sponsored or endorsed by the Helen Plum Library.

#### Wednesday, October 20 – Reckoning at Eagle Creek: The Secret Legacy of Coal in Illinois with Jeff Biggers

7:00 pm, Helen Plum Library,  
110 West Maple Street, Lombard

Jeff Biggers, author of Reckoning at Eagle Creek will present a program on the secret legacy of coal mining in Illinois. Open to the public, no registration required.

*This event is not sponsored by or endorsed by the Helen M. Plum Memorial Library.*

#### Monday, November 8 – Sierra Club New Members Meeting

7:00 pm, Glen Ellyn Public Library, 400 Duane, Glen Ellyn  
Join us to learn about the extensive outings program and numerous volunteer opportunities available with the River Prairie Group.

#### Monday, November 8 – A Walk on the Camino de Santiago in Spain

7:00 pm, Helen Plum Library,  
110 West Maple Street, Lombard

Rick McKay, a retired 5th grade teacher from Bower School in Warrenville, will talk about his walking trip in Spain on the Camino de Santiago de Compostella, a trail best known as a Christian pilgrimage during the early Middle Ages.

*\*\*Indicates activities that are not sponsored nor administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision, or management of such activities. They are published only as a reader service because it may be of interest to the readers of this publication.*

## Join the River Prairie Group Listserv!

We encourage everyone to sign up so you do not miss out on any of our news and activities. Stay up-to-date on the River Prairie Group's latest activities by joining our listserv. The listserv is open to anyone interested in finding out more about our group. The purpose of this list is to announce the activities, meetings, news and special events of the the Sierra Club's River Prairie Group, located in DuPage County, Illinois. The format of the list is for announcement and news distribution only, so members will receive but not be able to post messages.

Anyone interested in subscribing to this list can join in either of two ways:

Go to: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/IL-RPG-NEWS.html> and click on "Join or leave the list."

or send an email to: [Listserv@lists.sierraclub.org](mailto:Listserv@lists.sierraclub.org)

Leave the subject line blank, in the message area type: **SUBSCRIBE IL-RPG-NEWS Firstname Lastname**  
(substitute your first and last names)



## River Prairie Group (RPG) Outings

Note: All local Group outings are offered at cost. Longer and more expensive outings require deposits (ask leader about refund policy). Including updates on those below, new RPG listings, and offerings from other local Groups, current listings are on the internet at: [illinois.sierraclub.org/outings](http://illinois.sierraclub.org/outings). Contact the Leader or Assistant indicated for more information and outing requirements.

*For up-to-date information, visit: [illinois.sierraclub.org/outings](http://illinois.sierraclub.org/outings)*

### Oct 2 (Sat) Biking the Sugar River Trail, Southwest WI

Join us for an early fall bike ride along the Sugar River Trail from Brodhead to New Glarus, Wisconsin. We will cover 46 miles along this limestone surfaced trail. Lunch will be at one of the fine establishments in New Glarus, "America's Little Switzerland". Limit 15. Leader is **Mark Ginger**. Co-Leader is **Mike Davis**. Cost is \$3. To sign up, call Mark at **847-699-0329** or email [bubbleman@earthlink.net](mailto:bubbleman@earthlink.net)

### Oct 2-6 Canoeing Ozark's Current River, Salem, MO

This is a National Sierra Club trip down the Current river in the Ozark's of Missouri. The Ozark National Scenic Riverways were established by an act of Congress in August 1964. The Current River flows across the southeastern flank of the Ozark Plateau. The plateau is mostly limestone and when the glaciers came down the land was thrust upward. The acidic water formed sinkholes, underground lakes, caverns, caves and a spring system that feeds the river today. The river is mostly spring fed which makes this river crystal clear, great for swimming, soaking, fishing or just lounging. Contact the national office or leader **Ed Gacek** at [backcb@indianvalley.com](mailto:backcb@indianvalley.com)  
Note: National Sierra trip number 10241A

### Oct 10 (Sun.) Day Hike at South Kettle Moraine State Forest, LaGrange, WI

Join us in a fall-color hike in the South Kettle Moraine State Forest, located in southern Wisconsin, north of Lake Geneva. We will describe how this area of special natural beauty was formed during the glacial age. Our pace will be moderate over hilly and forested trails in one of the nearby Midwest's prettiest locations. Limit 25 per hiking group. Cost is \$3. Leader is **Mike Davis**. Co-leaders are **Berni Kolasa**, **Steve Turner**, and **Donna Turner**. Call Mike at **815-331-3042** or email [mikemd5600@comcast.net](mailto:mikemd5600@comcast.net)

### Oct 15-18 Shawnee National Forest Fall Color Hikes, Harrisburg, IL

Day hikes and fall colors in the spectacular wilderness areas in Shawnee National Forest southeast of Harrisburg, IL: Garden of the Gods, Lusk Creek, Indian Kitchen and Heron Pond on the Cache River. For photos of the area: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/shawnee/recreation/photo/east/> and <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/parks/r5/cachervr.htm> The mix of trees can provide an unequalled autumn spectrum of color. Maple, gum and dogwood produce brilliant reds, beech dress in yellow, oaks are scarlet, and pines sprinkle the palette with green. Learn "Why Leaves Turn Color". We'll be staying at a local motel. Cost is \$135 and includes lodging and three breakfasts. Limit 10. Leaders: **Paul Silverman (847-392-3433)** and **Joe Pokorny**. Assistant leaders needed.

### Oct 16 (Sat.) Fall Colors on the Rock River and Jay's Car Hop, Oregon, IL

Join us in Oregon, Illinois as we canoe down the beautiful Rock River on a warm fall day. We will identify lots of birds and possibly see an eagle that has its nest at the point. Hopefully, we will see lots of color in the trees. After the canoe trip, we go to Jay's Drive Inn for a root beer float, ice cream or a bite to eat. Just the perfect way to end a beautiful canoe day on the river. It will be a "Fun Day" for all of us. Deposit of \$31 covers fees, costs, and canoes. Limit 20. Please call **Jan Bradford**, leader, at **847-455-2947** after 7PM or e-mail [jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net) Co-leader is **Mike Way**.

### Oct 17 (Sun.) Fall colors of White Pines State Park and Nachusa Grasslands, Oregon, IL

Come join me for fall hiking at White Pines State Park which is one of the most beautiful state parks in the Oregon area-bring your camera. We will forge over river (on stepping stones), bridges, stairs, enjoy/explore, and learn about this protected area. Later we will go to Nachusa Grasslands for a guided tour. Becky and Hank will tell us about prairie restoration, seed collecting, and much more that is going on at Nachusa. We may even collect some seed. Please contact leader **Jan Bradford** at **847-455-2947** after 7PM or [jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net). Limit 20 Cost \$3 Co Leader **Mike Way**

### Oct 21-24 3-Day Backpack at Hoosier National Forest, Story, IN

A moderately paced fall color adventure of backpacking, camping, and hiking through the forested hills of south-central Indiana. Learn how this area of early settlement was converted over the years into a vast national forest. We arrive Thursday evening and camp in the area. Covering about 8 miles on each of 3 days (Fri-Sun), we'll backpack into the National Forest on Friday, camp by a stream, spend the middle day hiking and exploring this vast wilderness area and backpack out on Sunday. Suitable for beginners in good physical condition and for experienced backpackers too. Limit 14. Cost is \$50. Leaders are **Fred Weber** and **Paul Saindon**. Assistant leader needed. Call Fred at **630-469-6826** or email [FredAWeber@hotmail.com](mailto:FredAWeber@hotmail.com)

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*River Prairie Group (RPG) Outings, continued*

**Oct 22-24 Weekend Camp/Hike at Governor Dodge State Park, Dodgeville, WI**

Join us for a weekend of camping and hiking at this "island" of hills and valleys that the receding Wisconsin Glacier bypassed. We will camp Friday and Saturday nights at a nearby private campground. Saturday will be spent hiking 10 to 12 miles on some of the trails at Governor Dodge State Park. We will return on Sunday for another 6 mile hike. Limit 20. Cost is \$40. Leader is **Mark Ginger**. Co-Leader is **Paul Saindon**. To sign-up call Mark at **847-699-0329** or email **bubbleman@earthlink.net**

**Nov 6 (Sat.) Sandhill Crane and Migrating Bird Hike and Viewing, Jasper- Pulaski, IN**

Join us in early November for an exciting nature adventure to see the migrating sandhill cranes & other migratory birds as they wing their way through northwestern Indiana. FAMILIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND! We will start our Saturday with guided shorebird-watching hikes in the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore area, have lunch on the beach, and learn about the sandhill cranes and the Fall migration. We will then drive 45 minutes south to the Jasper-Pulaski State Fish & Wildlife Area in the afternoon to watch as thousands of sandhill cranes return at dusk to bed down for the night. For those interested and able to stay, we may have dinner at a local restaurant. Fee: \$5. Co-Leaders: **Floyd Bednarz** and **Catherine Bogacz**. Sign-ups taken until Nov. 4th. Contact Floyd Bednarz at **847-933-9340** or email to **floydsoutings@gmail.com** Note: FAMILIES WELCOME! Sign-ups taken until November 4th, 2010.

**Dec 4 (Sat.) Cool Weather Hike at Danada/Herrick Forest Preserves, Wheaton, IL**

Come join us on a cool weather hike. See the horses and barns at Danada, learn a little history on the farm, look for the hawks, owls, and deer that live there year round, and just enjoy this area that is close to home for a lot of us. We will hike about 8-10 miles. Limit 20. Cost \$3. Please contact leader **Jan Bradford** at **847-455-2947** after 7pm or e-mail **jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net**. Assistant leader **Mike Way** Optional dinner get together after hike.

**Jan 15-16 Beginner Cross Country Ski Workshop, Delafield, WI**

Do you want to learn to cross country ski? Do you know how but want to improve your skiing techniques? If so, join us in nearby Delafield, WI. Participants will learn basic skills in a controlled area and then improve their skills on the trails with instructors. The \$25 cost includes a donation to support cross country ski trails. Meals and lodging costs are not included. Limit 20 participants, intermediate skiers are welcome, but priority will be given to beginners.



*Sierra Club members learn about migratory birds during a hike at Indiana Dunes National Seashore before traveling to Jasper-Pulaski State Park to see hundreds of migrating Sandhill Cranes. The next Sandhill Crane Outing is November 6th.*

Trip leaders are **Teresa** and **Dave Barnard** and **Donna** and **Steve Turner**. To sign up, call Teresa and Dave at **847-255-9982** beginning December 15 to reserve your spot.

**Jan 29-30 Cross Country Ski Trip, Stevens Point, WI**

Dust off those skis and join us for cross country skiing at its best. We will stay in Stevens Point, about 4 hours drive from Chicago and ski Saturday and Sunday on groomed trails in the area. The trails are suitable for skiers of all abilities however true beginners should attend the Beginner Cross Country Ski Clinic Jan 15 and 16 which will get you ready for this trip. The \$135 cost is for lodging (double occupancy) and trail passes but does not include food or transportation. If the conditions in Wisconsin are not good this trip may be moved to the Cadillac MI area. To register, call the leaders **Donna** and **Steve Turner** at **(630) 782-5865** or email **sdtturner@gmail.com**.

**Feb 11-14 Cross-Country Ski Outing in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and Northern Wisconsin**

Enjoy a 3-day cross-country ski trip in the great snow country of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Stay in fully-equipped deluxe cabins on the shore of a (frozen) lake near the town of Watersmeet in the Upper Peninsular of Michigan. Three excellent areas with groomed trails will be skied (classical skiing). Trip fee of approximately \$150 includes 3 nights lodging, two home-cooked dinners, and Sierra Club fees. (S.C. members get \$5 discount.) \$75 deposit due Jan 7th. Limit 18. Leader is **Mike Davis**. Calls taken beginning December 13 by Mike at **815-331-3042** or email **mikeyd5600@comcast.net**

*For up-to-date information visit: [illinois.sierraclub.org/outings](http://illinois.sierraclub.org/outings)*

## Join the Bluestem Network, *The Official Lobbying Network of the River Prairie Group!*

You'll receive a call whenever the Sierra Club Phone Tree Network is activated with an environmental action alert. Bluestem is generally activated on a monthly basis. Upon receiving the phone call notification, members can access the environmental action alert by two ways: receiving it at an email address or by checking the RPG Web page. The action alert instructs members how to place a call to elected representatives and the position that the Sierra Club has taken. A phone call to elected officials has proven to be the most effective way to have an impact on public policy. To join, clip and mail the application to Linda Sullivan, 302 W. Windsor Ave, Lombard, IL 60148.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

IL County \_\_\_\_\_

Sierra Club Member? Yes  No

Home phone number \_\_\_\_\_  
(required to join)

Answering machine? Yes  No

Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
if you wish to receive action alerts via email