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**Voice of the Kansas Sierra Club**

## **Citizens Ask State to Factor in Global Warming to Coal Plant Decision**

*The following is a press released issued on May 18 by Sierra Club and Earthjustice.*

Last month the Supreme Court in the landmark case Massachusetts v. EPA ruled that carbon dioxide and other global warming pollutants are regulated under the Clean Air Act. The Court also ruled that the EPA cannot refuse to regulate these pollutants for political reasons. In the first challenge since the ruling, the Sierra Club and Earthjustice are asking the state of Kansas not to issue a permit for the massive coal-fired power plant proposed in Western Kansas unless it requires substantial controls for carbon dioxide.

“The Supreme Court sent a clear message- it’s time to take action on global warming,” said Nick Persampieri, Earthjustice attorney. “We need to be looking to cleaner energy, not the same polluting World War II era technologies.”

The proposed 1400 MW Sunflower plant near Holcomb Kansas, would emit about 10 million tons of carbon dioxide a year, the equivalent of 1.75 million cars per year on Kansas

**See Decision on page 4**

## **2007 Legislature: Little Progress on Global Warming**

**By Tom Thompson, Kansas Chapter Legislative Coordinator**

The Kansas Legislature began on January 8, 2007. The last day of the session was April 3. On April 25th the legislature reconvened for the veto/omnibus bill session and lasted until May 2nd. The 2007 legislative session will officially end with sine die on May 22nd. Typically sine die is the ceremonial end of the session at which few legislators attend. This year legislators are being asked to attend sine die so that some resolutions and legislation concerning the Greensburg tornado can be passed.

Most of the activity concerning bills takes place during the first two months of the session. The last month including the veto session becomes a waiting time. Some bills might get reheard during this time especially if they are held up in a committee or are amended into other bills. At times issues arise during the conference committee process and have little chance for input in a hearing process. It is amazing what differences arise between the House and Senate not just the Democrats and Republicans.

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[www.kansas.sierraclub.org](http://www.kansas.sierraclub.org)



# FAQ ABOUT WIND POWER

By Joe Spease,

The wind energy industry is one of the largest new sources of power generation in the country. That growth couldn't come at a better time as the world is starting to see the effects of global warming. Wind power development could be one of the biggest contributors to eliminating the greenhouse gases from coal-fired and natural gas electricity generating plants. Here are some FAQ's that will help you to better understand wind power.

## 1. We always hear about Megawatts. How much is a megawatt?

A megawatt is 1,000,000 watts. When describing the capacity of a power facility, a one megawatt power plant, at 100% capacity, can run about 875 homes. No power plant operates at 100% capacity.

Wolf Creek Nuclear Power Plant is a 1,200 megawatt power plant and can power about 840,000 homes. Wolf Creek operates at about an 80% capacity factor, meaning that it is not at full capacity all the time due to maintenance and down time. At an 80% capacity factor, the layman could call this a facility with 960 megawatts of average capacity.

Elk River Wind Farm in Butler County is a 150 megawatt facility, can serve 53,000 homes, and is the largest wind facility in Kansas. Elk River operates at about a 40% capacity factor due mostly to wind factors, meaning that average winds blow at less than maximum capacity. At a 40% capacity factor, the layman could call this a facility with 60 megawatts of average capacity.

In Kansas, total electric generating capacity is over 10,000 megawatts.

## 2. What happens when the wind doesn't blow?

The biggest problem with wind is that the wind doesn't always blow. Wind power at this time isn't dispatchable (available on demand) like the electricity from coal plants that run about 80% of the time when electricity is needed. The solution to that problem is called "firming" the wind. There are things that can be done to provide electricity on demand from the wind farms, which is what is called "firming." Here are some good ways to firm the wind:

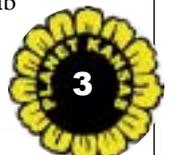
- a) use new, high-efficiency, utility-size biodiesel generators;
- b) store wind energy blowing at night in new, utility size Vanadium batteries, which can be scaled up to 100 megawatts (MW);
- c) make hydrogen at night with wind power and waste water,

**See Wind FAQ on page 6**

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# What to Do if a CFL (Compact Fluorescent Lightbulb) Breaks

One Billion Bulbs ([www.onebillionbulbs.com](http://www.onebillionbulbs.com)) has noted the emerging concern that consumers have about CFL mercury, CFL disposal issues and what to do if a CFL bulb breaks.

“While CFL bulbs are normally very safe, people should use extra caution if a CFL bulb happens to break, especially in a closed living space,” said Brian Huyser, founder of One Billion Bulbs. “The EPA’s recommendations are the best to follow in that eventuality.” EPA Fact Sheet Compares CFL Mercury Emission to Incandescent Lamps According to a June 2002 EPA Fact Sheet, over a five-year period the coal emissions in the air needed to power a normal light bulb would be 10.0 milligrams of mercury compared to a total of 6.4 mg with a CFL (4.0 used in CFL and 2.4 mercury air emissions to power the CFL)

**CFL Disposal Sites** Many people want to know how to dispose of the CFL bulbs when they need to be replaced. Earth911 (<http://www.earth911.org>) provides information on site across the nation. A person can supply their zip code and Earth911 will show them the nearest CFL disposal locations.

## So, If You Break a CFL...

How should I clean up a broken fluorescent bulb? EPA recommends the following clean-up and disposal guidelines:

1. Open a window and leave the room (restrict access) for at least 15 minutes.
2. Remove all materials you can without using a vacuum cleaner. -- Wear disposable rubber gloves, if available (do not use your bare hands) -- Carefully scoop up the fragments and powder with stiff paper or cardboard. -- Wipe the area clean with a damp paper towel or disposable wet wipe. -- Sticky tape (such as duct tape) can be used to pick up small pieces and powder.
3. Place all cleanup materials in a plastic bag and seal it. -- If your state permits you to put used or broken CFLs in the garbage, seal the CFL in two plastic bags and put into the outside trash (if no other disposal or recycling options are available). -- Wash your hands after disposing of the bag.
4. More -- The first time you vacuum the area where the bulb was broken, remove the vacuum bag once done cleaning the area (or empty and wipe the canister) and put the bag and/or vacuum debris, as well as the cleaning materials, in two sealed plastic bags in the outdoor trash or protected outdoor location for normal disposal.

The information above is also noted in the One Billion Bulb web site.

About One Billion Bulbs One Billion Bulbs is an initiative that encourages people to conserve energy by replacing

one billion standard incandescent light bulbs with more energy efficient bulbs such as CFL or LED bulbs. In addition people and groups can register how many bulbs they have changed. Groups such as high schools, colleges, alumni organizations, bloggers, community groups, etc have registered groups in order to motivate their members, readers, friends and neighbors to be pro-active in changing bulbs. In April, One Billion Bulbs became part of Pajamas Media, an internet media organization that is working on a broad energy conservation initiative. <http://www.onebillionbulbs.com>

*Editor’s Note: By Googling “clean broken CFL”, I found a thorough response at:*

[www.treehugger.com/files/2007/05/ask\\_treehugger\\_14.php](http://www.treehugger.com/files/2007/05/ask_treehugger_14.php) 

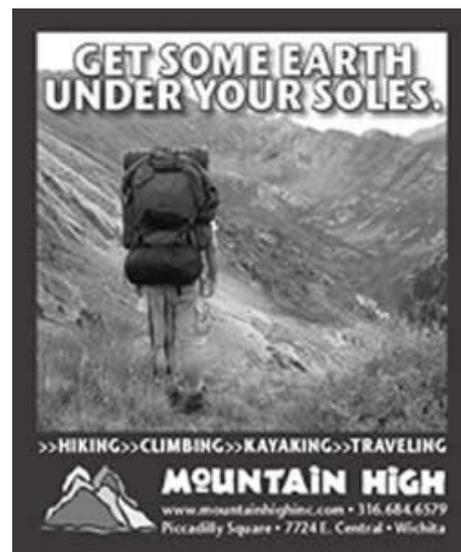
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## Decision, continued from page 1

highways- and over 90% of the power produced would be sold out of state. This single coal plant would offset almost half of the carbon dioxide cuts being made by northeastern states as part of their Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Sierra Club and Earthjustice are pushing the coal plant developers, Sunflower Electric and Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, to invest in Kansas’ abundant wind resources and efficiency instead of investing in more dirty coal plants.

“Ranked third in the nation for wind resources, Kansas has a remarkable opportunity to be part of the solution and become a leader in clean energy,” said Craig Volland of the Kansas Chapter of the Sierra Club. “Scientists tell us that we need to reduce our global warming emissions 80% by 2050- that’s a do-able 2% reduction per year. Investing in wind energy can help get us there.” 





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# New Developments on Sunflower Electric's Holcomb Expansion

## Permit Decision Still Pending

By Craig Volland

As this article goes to press the permit application for Sunflower Electric's huge coal plant expansion is still pending. However several new developments have the potential to change the outcome of the proceedings.

Club files suit. The Sierra club has filed a motion in state district court against KDHE stating that the concerned parties are entitled to a contested hearing where experts can be called to testify under a quasi-judicial, administrative hearing. This hearing would closely examine numerous deficiencies in the draft permit cited by the Club in comments filed in November. KDHE has responded with a motion to dismiss the Club's action. KDHE's motion is supported by both Sunflower and their main partner in the project, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association of Colorado. A hearing date has not been set. The Club is being represented in this and other Sunflower matters by Earth Justice of Denver, Colorado.

Sunflower Shrinks the Project. In April Tri-State announced that they were placing one of their two boilers on hold, thereby reducing the Holcomb expansion from three to two 700 MW boilers. The second boiler would be used by Sunflower and Grand Prairie, an electric co-op in Oklahoma. Still, ninety percent of the production from the Holcomb expansion is scheduled to go out of state.

US Supreme Court Regulates CO2. In an earth shaking decision, the Supreme Court ruled that carbon dioxide should be regulated under the Clean Air Act. This raised a substantial, additional concern about the processing of Sunflower's permit application. Accordingly the Club on May 18 sent a supplemental comment to KDHE asking them to require Sunflower to submit data on the process they intend to use to control carbon dioxide and asking that KDHE establish emission limits for that pollutant. This is called a Best Available Control Technology (BACT) Analysis. The club cited several processes that could substantially reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Secondly, the Club's letter asked that the permit application be revised reflect the elimination of one of the three boilers and that KDHE set a new hearing for the public. Please see the press release accompanying this article for more information.

Finally the Club hired experts to comment on the permit application for Sunflower's huge combustion waste landfill. See also the Fact Sheet on this subject in the April-May issue. The solid waste permit is also still pending.



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## Wind FAQ, continued from page 3

store the hydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>) in depleted natural gas wells, then run the stored H<sub>2</sub> through large fuel cells to make electricity when the wind isn't blowing;

- d) use Compressed Air Energy Storage (CAES), where forced air made by the turbines at night is stored under pressure and then used to run generators during the day to make electricity as needed.

The goal with these methods to firm the wind is to use clean power as much as possible so that the full environmental benefit from wind power is realized. The good thing about most of these methods to firm the wind is that the end cost of the firmed electricity is still below the cost of electricity from coal power or natural gas once the costs of the environmental damage, subsidies, and increased health care costs are added to those fossil fuel sources. The Stern Report (Google it) goes even farther to explain why we can't afford coal power or natural gas anymore. Wind power, when considering the staggering information about how much fossil fuels will cost us in the near future, is easily the best option for providing our future electricity.

### 3. How much does wind powered electricity cost?

The biggest variable for large turbine wind farms is the quality of the wind resource. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory has produced wind resource maps for a large part of the United States and the world too. The map of the USA shows where the better wind resources are located. If you put the same 2 MW turbine in a Class 4 wind area and a Class 6 wind area, the electricity from the Class 6 area wind would be lower-cost than the electricity from the Class 4 area. It's likely that the electricity from the Class 4 site would still be less expensive than the electricity from your local coal plants or natural gas plants!

You get my point. Now, the Department of Energy uses an average cost of electricity from wind of \$0.05 per kilowatt hour (kWh) which reflects the costs from many different wind class sites around the country, averaged together. Based on the cost of electricity coming from the FPL site in Oklahoma, which would be closer to the cost of wind power from western Kansas, our electricity would cost closer to \$0.04 per kWh,

probably a little below that. The electricity cost figure used by the companies that own old coal plants, with little or no pollution capture equipment installed, is about \$0.02 per kWh. That sounds like a good price until you add in the cost to remove the highly toxic mercury emitted by those plants from

our fresh water in Kansas: the cost to remove that mercury is about \$1 billion which we should include with our bills. Then add in the healthcare costs created by coal plants for respiratory and cardio-vascular problems, and many other crippling diseases, plus the costs associated with global warming, and coal power is many times more expensive than wind power.

The more important cost figure is the cost of electricity from coal plants (new or remodeled) that have added pollution reduction/capture equipment for mercury reduction, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), carbon sequestration, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and other pollution equipment, which they should all be required to have or be forced to shut down. Once coal plants are forced to remove the toxins that threaten everyone, their cost of electricity grows to \$0.08 per kWh and higher. Wind power is far lower than that even in lower wind Class sites.

### 4. What good is wind power if there are no high-voltage power lines to transmit the electricity from the wind farm to our homes?

There is another important hurdle, at least in Kansas. As luck would have it, the good wind sites in western Kansas don't have access to the high-power electric transmission lines needed to connect to the rest of the electrical grid lines in our state and

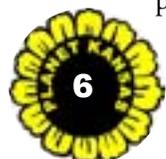
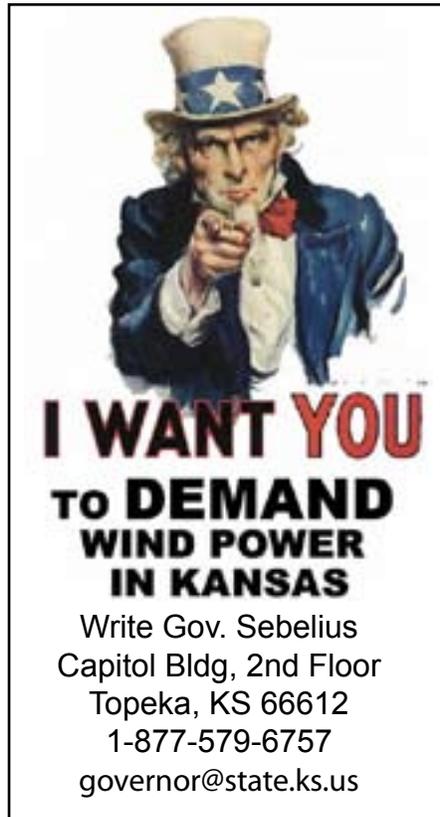
neighboring states. The only solution is to build them.

So who pays for building them? The Kansas legislature established the Kansas Electric Transmission Authority (KETA) to figure out who will build them, where they are needed most, and how they will be paid for. It won't be cheap. Efficient new high voltage lines cost around \$750,000-\$1,000,000 per mile. We need several hundred miles of lines. There are investment groups who have pooled billions of dollars for just such work. They will want their profit. It may be necessary to set a tariff, like a turnpike fee on the highway, to pay them off.

### 5. Isn't wind power highly subsidized?

The only subsidy available to wind developers is the Production Tax Credit (PTC) from the Federal government. The PTC amounts to \$.019 per kWh. The PTC has come and gone since about 1994 making it difficult to sustain any development. The current Congress looks like it wants to set the PTC in place through 2012 which should be all the time needed to give wind power a chance to develop against the highly subsidized fossil fuel companies.

It is difficult to understand how the rumor got started that wind power is subsidized so much, or even wouldn't exist without subsidies. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Compared to the gigantic subsidies available to the fossil fuel



## Wind FAQ, continued from page 6

companies (tens of BILLIONS of dollars each year) wind developers in 2005 received less than 1% of the total subsidies received by their fossil fuel competitors.

### 6. Don't wind turbines kill birds, ruin landscapes, and harm other wildlife?

Wind farms today won't get built unless they have proven that they won't cause undue harm to birds and other wildlife. Most states have adopted rigorous siting standards that wind developers must follow before receiving permission to build wind farms.

There is still a certain number of people who will never want wind turbines anywhere near them. Some think the turbines are horribly ugly and are an offense to nature. Others believe that all nature should be undisturbed and that any turbine will be one turbine too many for the habitat near them. The best that can be done to appease people with these preferences and attitudes is to hope for a compromise of some sort.

The one argument against wind farms/turbines that doesn't make much sense anymore, given that siting standards are followed as most states prescribe now, is the concern for birds. Wind farms built in good wind areas in Kansas will cause bare minimum harm to birds. The Butler County wind farm in Kansas was opposed strongly by bird lovers. That wind farm was monitored weekly for a year to check for bird kills, and they didn't find any. The new wind turbine blades spin so slowly, are made of smoother composite materials, and are designed without sharp edges so that harm to birds is carefully minimized. The grounded Prairie Chicken population hasn't been measurably harmed either. It is quite likely that the Prairie Chickens have adapted to their new, environmentally friendly neighbor.

This brings up a point that the bird-loving opponents of wind power must consider. There are a few bird lovers in Kansas who would prefer that wind farms be banned in our state because they believe that the turbines harm birds, even though they don't have the evidence to support that claim. That is a position that is causing great harm to birds globally. Only a very few areas in the world have a quality wind resource like the one in Kansas that has the potential to greatly reduce greenhouse gases. If the bird lovers truly want to protect birds they should support wind power, just as National Audubon club supports responsible wind development. Wetlands International is a group that monitors the habitats of birds around the world that depend on wetlands for their lives. Their report this year tells of how global warming in the equatorial regions of the planet is destroying and drying up the wetland areas for millions of birds. A dozen species of wetland birds are now threatened with their very existence because of what global warming is doing to them. Tens of thousands of birds are dying

because of global warming. Does it make sense to oppose the wind power that could help to save these birds?

### 7. Since wind power is so good, why don't we all just put up wind turbines?

Random installation of wind turbines would create more problems than benefits. Wind farms, just like manufacturers of widgets, benefit from economies of scale: the larger the wind farm in a single, good wind resource area, the lower the cost of electricity from that site. The more widgets that can be manufactured in one place, the lower the price for the widget. Efficiencies follow cost effective production.

That brings up another important point: WE DON'T HAVE A NATIONAL ENERGY POLICY! Wind power, even more than other sources of electricity would benefit from a coherent policy that established the most efficient strategy to build our renewable energy plants and high voltage transmission lines.

A national energy policy DOES NOT mean wind and solar plants would be built with tax dollars! It means that development would occur within a plan to maximize assets and minimize waste. That would result in the lowest cost for consumers and the quickest way to stop harmful global warming emissions. We don't just build a highway anytime and anywhere we want. Why should we allow for inefficient construction of energy sources? We need a national energy policy. Please, please write your U.S. Senators and Representatives and tell them we must do this. 



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# Kanza Group Silent Auction Breaks Last Year's Record

By Craig Wolfe, Auction Chair

The Kanza Group (Kansas City) held its major fundraising event on May 5 and broke all previous fundraising records for a single event with its effort. The event adopted the theme "Global Warming: Kansas at the Crossroads" to draw attention to the threat to the planet of global climate change, and the solutions provided by our yet unrealized potential for wind energy in Kansas.

But the real story is about the volunteers who worked,

and sometimes slaved, to make the Silent Auction a record breaker. I won't attempt to name them all, but the volunteers' efforts have made it possible for the Kanza Group to expand its conservation efforts. And, of course, a super thank you to the companies and individuals whose contributions insured our success (see following page).

Below are winners of our environmental awards and other photos.



Jonathan Chester provided a stunning photographic depiction of his travels to study Antarctica and the penguins who live there. See more at [www.ExtremelImages.com](http://www.ExtremelImages.com)



Tim Liebert, Dewey Ziegler, Craig Lubow, and Steve Baru were among the browsers at the Silent Auction.



**Tim & Peg Lieber receive the Activist of the Year Award from Frank Drinkwine...** *To this husband and wife team who have brought a new perspective and energy to the Kanza Group. As we move Kansas to a new awareness, their understanding of business, and solid commitment to our efforts are proving to be a vital and winning combination.*



**Jennifer Byer and Kim Hanson receive the Eco-Advocacy Award...** *To both Kim Hanson and Jennifer Byer for their leadership of True Blue Women. This new environmental organization has provided and will continue to provide a vital role as we educate and lobby the hearts and minds of Kansans to win the battle against Global Warming.*



**Margaret Thomas receives the Protecting Our Wild Places Award...** *This recipient is an excellent representative for our environmental causes. Her eloquence of thought, passionate and sincere presentation always carries the day. Our ideals for the value of all creation are always shared with dignity.*



**Bob Wilshire receives the Dan Fuller Environmental Service Award...** *This is the first presentation of this award in memory of our past Kanza Group Chair. This recipient embodies a love for the environment that comes from the heart, as well as the qualities of servant leadership where all voices are heard and honored.*

# Thanks to all who made our Silent Auction a Success!!

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## Legislature, continued from page 1

### Energy Bills

One big success this year was HB 2526 known as the Mercury Monitoring Bill. It establishes at least 6 sites in Kansas where Mercury deposition will be measured. Rep. Vaughn Flora pressed for this bill after HB 2219, which provided for a moratorium on building coal-fired power plants, failed. Flora also led efforts to pass this bill. Measuring mercury deposition is important but it is time that the legislature realizes that putting Mercury into the air needs to stop. The cost for this program was included in the Omnibus Bill (House Substitute for Senate Bill 357).

A bill supported by the Sierra Club that ended up in another bill was HB 2127 that increased irrigators ability to use wind for generating electricity to run pumps and assisted Cloud County Community College in setting up a wind generator for educational purposes. Rep. Tom Sloan was instrumental in steering this bill through the legislature. This became part of HB 2145, which has been signed by the governor.

SB 128 easily passed the Senate and then the House Energy and Utilities Committee. It was placed on General Orders (GO) in the House to be debated about 2 weeks before the end of the session. However, the House Republican leadership did not like this bill so it stayed at the bottom of GO never to be considered. SB 128 said that utilities needed to provide ratepayers with conservation programs and set up an advisory board for overseeing conservation education.

Two bills providing incentives for people to buy hybrids did not make it out of committee. Rep. Anthony Brown proposed HB 2222, which was tabled in the House Utilities Committee and State Senator Chris Steineger proposed SB 140 in the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee where it remains.

HB 2037, proposed by Rep. Tom Hawk, would have provided incentives for landlords to provide energy efficient

House. However, it remains in the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee awaiting further consideration perhaps next year.

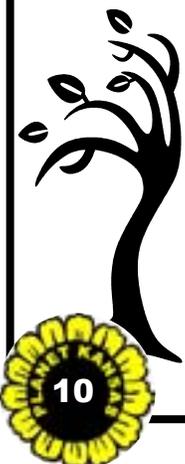
Since 2222, 140 and 2037 have fiscal notes (meaning they would take money out of the state general fund without creating a compensating new tax) their chances of being added to this year's Omnibus Bill were diminished because they would be competing with many other bills. They will need a lot of support next year to be passed.

Two bills that moved Kansas in the wrong direction and were opposed by the Sierra Club were HB 2038 and 2033. 2038 gave tax incentives for building additional nuclear generating capacity at Wolf Creek. 2033 often referred to as the CWIP (construction work in progress) bill helped all but nuclear power plant construction by allowing utilities to pass along the cost of constructing power generating plants to consumers before they were completed thus passing on the risk for building them to consumers instead of stockholders. This could already be done after asking the Kansas Corporation Commission. However, the word "may" was changed to "shall" in statute. Now utilities "shall" charge consumers for construction work in progress without the KCC's permission. This will help utilities construct new coal-fired power plants. 2038 and 2033 both passed overwhelmingly and have been signed by the governor.

The siting of wind farms became a concern in the House Energy and Utilities Committee with HB 2406. The Sierra Club supported the concept of providing incentives for utilities if they used certain siting guidelines when they built wind generation facilities. My testimony said the Sierra Club supported this but that the guidelines in the bill were too vague and did not appear to be scientifically based. It was recommended that the writing of siting guidelines be given to a more deliberative body to develop perhaps in an interim committee. A few days later, another siting bill, HB 2492 was heard which set up siting guidelines for wind farms. The Sierra

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Club opposed 2492 because it too was considered too vague and could have inhibited the development of wind energy in Kansas. Both of these bills were tabled effectively stopping their progress for the session.

HB 2419, which the Sierra Club supported, gives income and property tax incentives for storing CO2 underground. This would primarily be done in oil and gas wells in Kansas and could be part of using CO2 to force oil out of wells. This bill passed both houses and was signed by the governor.

Other energy bills that did not pass were HB 2479, 2485 and SB 120. HB 2479 remains in the House Energy and Utilities Committee. It would have created a RPS (Renewable Portfolio Standard) for Kansas. The Sierra Club supported the bill but indicated that the standard set in the bill was inadequate. 2485 required that government buildings being built use life cycle costs methods or procedures or use International Conservation Codes for 2006. It also required that LED lights be used in traffic signals. This was passed by the House then gutted and replaced with a bill concerning oil drilling in the Senate Utilities Committee. Many felt that these two bills were not necessary because the Governor had announced plans for Kansas to use 10% renewable energy by 2010 and 20% by 2020 and that state buildings would be built using energy efficient construction similar to what was found in 2485. Another bill, SB 120, that adopts thermal efficiency standards for new commercial and industrial buildings plus requires the disclosure of energy efficiencies for new

homes when they are being sold, was discussed at length in the Senate Utilities Committee but will have to wait till next year for further action.

### Nature

Senate Bill 123 was debated heavily in the Senate and had the support of Senate Natural Resources Chair Sen. Carolyn McGinn. SB 123 was supported by the Sierra Club and involved the establishment of a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). This program was intended to decommission irrigation pumps attempting to restore the Upper Arkansas River Aquifer. McGinn worked hard to find compromise wording on this bill so that it would get passed. The debate in the Senate lasted about two hours was successfully led by McGinn. Unfortunately, it did not progress in the House. A smaller version of the CREP was put into the Omnibus Bill where it was downsized but remained and passed.

There were two bills, opposed by the Sierra Club, designed to impair the ability of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks to manage wildlife. HB 2052 would have removed the Department from being involved in the permitting process for small ponds being built in conservation districts. The other, HB 2311, would have done away with the Kansas Endangered Species Act. Both bills were by Rep. Otto and were heard in the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Luckily neither bill was passed from the Committee chaired by Rep. John Faber.

Sen. Marci Francisco worked to make a number of bills more environmentally friendly. One in particular was SB 145 that establishes regulations for the siting of landfills near rivers and lakes. This bill did not appear to have enough support to be passed out of the Senate Natural Resources Committee and will hopefully be worked next year.

### Kansas Energy Council

On April 13 I attended a meeting of the Kansas Energy Council with Frank Drinkwine the Kansas Chapter Conservation Chair. Ron Hammerschmidt, from KDHE Division of Environment, reported on the newly formed Climate Registry. Since then, Kansas has become a charter member of the Climate Registry. The Registry is a multi-state collaboration aimed at developing and managing a common greenhouse gas reporting system.

Also reporting at this meeting was Tom Peterson from the Center for Climate Strategy who gave an overview of what states can do about managing greenhouse gasses. On June 18th the Kansas Energy Council will meet again. It has been reported that Tom Peterson will be presenting a proposal for the Center for Climate Strategy to help Kansas develop a plan for managing greenhouse gases. Hopefully these actions will help Kansas be a more active participant in the war against global warming.

### Thanks

I would like to thank all those who came to testify on bills this past year or made

**See Legislature on page 13**



June / July 2007



# KCC Hearing on Westar Gas Fired Power Plant

By Phil Morse

The KCC held a public hearing on the proposed Westar 300MW gas fired power plant in Emporia on April 30th. This plant is touted to be peak load backup facility which the Sierra Club feels might be a proper facility to smooth out the ebbs and flows of wind power generation. Westar has included a meager 89 MW of proposed conservation measures with this proposal.

## We asked the following questions.

- 1) Based on KCPL adding another 300 MW of energy efficiency, doesn't the 89 MW of energy efficiency portion look rather anemic in comparison? Could this energy efficiency plan be expanded or accelerated?
- 2) Westar is going to close 8 small peaking units when they build the two larger ones in Emporia. How many MW are the 8 smaller units in total? Does Westar foresee a net reduction in emissions from the replacement of these plants by the Emporia facility?
- 3) We also quizzed Westar and the KCC about extending net metering to Kansas. Westar representatives were very affable, but really didn't answer any of our questions. The KCC seemed to feel that most of our proposals were outside of their regulatory authority.

## Our oral and written testimony was the following.

The Sierra Club of Kansas supports Westar Energy's proposed 300 MW electric generation facility in Lyon County. While we remain concerned with continuing reliance on non-renewable energy sources that also contribute to already dangerous levels of global warming gases, we believe this natural gas fired peaking facility offers a medium term resolution of some of the inconsistencies in current wind power generation. We hope and expect the Westar Emporia Energy Center will allow Westar to more aggressively pursue clean, renewable wind energy generation within the state of Kansas.

The Sierra Club of Kansas is also pleased that Westar has included in this filing proposals to support 89 MW of energy efficiency development. Energy efficiency, with the support of utility companies and regulating agencies, will likely be the centerpiece of national and global efforts to reduce additions to greenhouse gas emissions. Westar and KCC recognition of the crucial role of energy efficiency technologies will be critical. We do question, however, why it will take nine years to achieve 89 MW of energy efficiency, and wonder, especially in light of KCP&L commitment to 300 MW of energy efficiency, why Westar does not seek to achieve a much higher level of energy efficiency.

We all know the technologies to achieve substantial energy efficiencies are available. Those myriad energy efficiency technolo-

gies can also assist the utility provider by shaving peak loads, as well as, reducing the financial risks posed by likely carbon taxes as our nation seeks to shrink CO2 emissions. Across the country net metering is encouraging clean, renewable energy generation that lightens the load on energy producers. These and many other creative technologies are poised to meet the challenges of the present while providing abundant opportunities for today and tomorrow. We can meet America's present and future energy needs without expanding our dependence on climate altering fossil fuel power generation. Realization of this absolutely essential objective requires that energy producers like Westar and public regulators like the KCC work together to insure the integrity and viability of energy providers while protecting the long-term interests of energy consumers and their progeny.

We are entering an exciting time of challenge and opportunity. Westar's proposed gas-fired Emporia Energy Center is an important response to this challenge. The Sierra Club of Kansas expects that Westar will now seize the opportunity to invest in reliable, clean, Kansas wind as the fuel for future energy generation. We also expect that Westar and the KCC will select a path to much greater energy efficiency. What Westar has proposed is an important step in the right direction, but Westar, with the help of the KCC, can and will do much better. 

## Looking for a speaker on the Environment?

Contact Elaine Giessel,  
Education Chair, at  
[elaine.giessel@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:elaine.giessel@kansas.sierraclub.org)



# Great Day, Great Birds, In My Backyard.

By Steve Baru, ExCom Member

Some say that bird-watching is the world's number one sport; some argue that it's a hobby and not a sport. Whatever it is, I do it, and I enjoy it. I keep a bird log of every bird species I see the first time. Between 10:00 AM and noon today my backyard was full of colorful streaks and splashes.



The first thing my eyes focused on was red cardinal, but there was something different about it, so I studied it a little longer than usual and to my surprise it became a summer tanager. I've seen them before but never by myself. It counts for a new bird in my bird log.

At that same time, hopping along under my backyard deck was another bird to new my log. After hurriedly fumbling through my Peterson's Guide, I determined it was an oven bird.

Here at Baru's Bird Bed and Breakfast we pride ourselves on providing a five-star resort experience for the feathered traveler. We're located next to a wooded area featuring a cornucopia of plant life including burr oaks, walnuts, a flora of undergrowth, all high on a ridge overlooking Indian Creek. We never put up a no-vacancy sign; thus, visitors are welcome anytime day or night. Our guest registry is a who's who of the diurnal and nocturnal, as it includes coyotes, bobcats, deer, raccoons, possums, ground hogs, reptiles and chipmunks. Evening entertainment currently features the loud and raucous hootenanny by the swinging owl barbershop singers. Facilities include a heated bird bath, three bird feeders containing a choice of sunflower hearts, finch mix or peanuts. Every other day corn chips are tossed into the air and float down to rest, waiting for those guests who prefer ground floor dining. Usual feathered guests at this time of year include most of our local woodpeckers, including the yellow-shafted and red-bellied. Dozens of white-throated sparrows can be seen relaxing on premises at almost any sunny time.

But today's guest list was unusually colorful. Moments after registering the summer tanager and the oven bird, a Baltimore oriole decided to check in. Although not new to the Baru Resort, he last checked in with us over five years ago. After regaining my composure, I decided to check on the brunch guests at the bird feeders, and to my surprise I found a rose-breasted gross beak taking advantage of our hospitality. He, too, is not new to our lodge, but this is only his second appearance with us in the last seven years. Seated at the next feeder was the beautiful, iridescent, blue indigo bunting. My backyard was full of red, orange, and blue, darting flashes.

As the colors of the prism danced around my yard, a new couple arrived at the other end. Prancing around with each other in the branches of trees and sticks of bushes, this was a new couple to our premises and definitely to my log. He was orange on top and flame red under his throat, wore a black mask around his eyes and a black cape upon his back with white shoulder patches. It took me a while to identify him as he cavorted about from place to place, but his stay lasted about 45 minutes. He was a Blackburnian warbler and his mate must have been his female companion.

Although we at the Baru Bird Bed and Breakfast Resort are mostly frequented by returning satisfied clients it's not uncommon for us to register completely new guests, but three in one day, in one hour, made this day truly significant. And then sitting in the burr oak, looking down upon all the action, was another new guest decked out in a bluish-grey hood, yellow vest, and black eyes with no eye ring. He must have been expecting to dine with us because he wore a black bib under his throat. He was a mourning warbler and he made my fourth entry into my bird log.

Thousands of species disappear everyday. I feel obligated to see as many of them as possible, whenever possible. This has been one lucky day, in May 2007. 🌻

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## Legislature, continued from page 11

phone calls supporting the Sierra Club's position. The largest crowd came for HB 2219, the moratorium on coal-fired power plants. This bill did not pass but the hearing did make an impression.

I would also like to thank two other people who were of great assistance to me. I was lucky enough to have an intern named Alex Zadina, a Political Science major from the University of Kansas. Furthermore, I want to thank Paul Johnson who provided friendship and information about issues as the session wore on. Paul lobbied on issues for the Catholic Conference and the League of Women Voters and was very knowledgeable about environmental issues. Furthermore, Joe Spease, the Legislative Chair for the Kansas Chapter and the Legislative Committee were great to work with. 🌻



June / July 2007

# The Owl and the Oak: The Climate Change Novel - Review

By Robert Emmett Morris

*A note from the author: This novel is a part of my grassroots outreach to effect cultural change. In it I attempt to bring human scale and sense to this overwhelming and complex issue, taking it out of the realm of policy wonks and political partisans and into the hands of the public. I am honored that your newsletter is helping me get the word out to your chapter activists with a review or notice of the book. It is available to all booksellers now, but stores normally won't stock a new first novel unless someone calls or stops in and asks them for it. The more stores that stock the book, the more people will be exposed to the need for activism to address climate change and other issues.*

## Review

By Russell Edwards, DC School Teacher and Cool Climate Action Team Leader

Grassroots activism in America has been bogged down in a marsh of apathy for the three decades since both the left and right exhausted themselves in the conflict over Civil Rights, the Vietnam War and Feminism, losing their leaders to assassination or impeachment. There have been some semblances of popular unrest and action, but for the most part these were either isolated local reactions or they were centrally controlled by political/governmental/religious/corporate ideologues who used public furor on trigger issues to obtain and hold the levers of power and wealth.

Robert Emmett Morris, known to many as an indefatigable promoter of decentralized action in service of environmental protection and social justice, has signaled with publication of *The Owl and the Oak: The Climate Change Novel* that the time is ripe for a resurgence of individual uprisings, bound together by a pervasive and profound anger at the cultural preoccupation with material indulgence that has muffled the rough but honest best parts of the American character. Earthy and irrepressible Aaron Woods is the catalyst for the growth of a movement to “move our culture away from wasteful consumption and towards thoughtful conservation”, but this book is populated by a full cast of characters who are unafraid of taking action to change, or defend, the world in which they live. The Henry James quote, “what is great about a life is doing something that will outlast it”, not only hangs over the desk of Tony Albritton, the manipulative environmental leader who seizes on Aaron as a tool to further his own

ambitions, but it also drives the main protagonists on both sides of the central issue of climate change.

And rightly so. This is a novel about Washington DC by someone who knows it from homeless shelters and local gang disputes to the inner workings of Congress, the White House and K Street. Those who come to pursue careers in the nation's capitol do so in order to be part of the major issues of their time and beyond. Climate change certainly fills that criteria and readers will enjoy the way that the characters that people the pages of this book bring human scale and sense to this huge and complex concern. The strong, true strokes that define the characters of *The Owl and the Oak* make us aware that government, corporations, lobbying groups and non profits, no matter how large and powerful, are defined by the people who fill those offices and those people are subject to the same faults and weaknesses as every one of us.

*The Owl and the Oak* engages readers in a strong narrative, introducing characters through their words and actions, with a minimum of explanation. The prose is direct, pressing a wealth of well paced action into a spare 260 pages, although in truth it seems the publisher has been overly frugal by squeezing the maximum words into the minimum of space. The cover, however, is attractive and engaging. *The Owl and the Oak: The Climate Change Novel* is Bob Morris's first novel, and readers will come away with an appreciation for a new writing talent, a deeper understanding of the way power is wielded in our nation, and a sense of what drives those who commit to an ideal beyond what is considered reasonable or prudent. Most of all, however, readers will enjoy the pleasure of meeting characters who will last in their memory and a good story well told.



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June / July 2007

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*Groups are the local body of the Kansas State Chapter*

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# General Meetings

**General public is welcome to attend**

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## **Flint Hills Group (Manhattan)**

### **General Information**

For information please call Scott Smith at 785-539-1973 anytime or email wizard13@cox.net.

## **Kanza Group**

**July 24. 7:00 pm.**

### **Global Warming - Al Gore & Sierra Style**

**7:00 pm.** Come early and have snacks with friends.

**7:30 pm.** Program. Mary English is a volunteer who was trained by Al Gore's "The Climate Project" to spread the word about Global Warming. Mary will show us this version of Gore's presentation, and we will also have Sierra Club experts to discuss where we are now, and what we can all do to "do our part" in stopping global climate change. Our meetings are at the Overland Park Lutheran Church, 7810 W. 79th Street. Park on north side. Directions at [www.kansas.sierraclub.org/kanzadirections.htm](http://www.kansas.sierraclub.org/kanzadirections.htm). Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, [info@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:info@kansas.sierraclub.org)

## **Southwind Group**

**June. 6:30 pm.**

### **Southwind Annual Potluck Picnic**

Join us at the north shelter in Chisholm Creek Park. Dave Kirkbride, (316) 945-0728, [dave.kirkbride@knea.org](mailto:dave.kirkbride@knea.org)

## **Topeka Group**

**June 26. 7:00 pm.**

### **Global Warming in Kansas**

Don Worster, Hall Distinguished Professor of History at the University of Kansas will speak on "Global Warming in Kansas," and will discuss the significance of global climate change for the southern Great Plains. Dr. Worster won the Bancroft Prize for his book, "Dust Bowl -- the Southern Plains in the 1930's". He is the author of "Rivers of Empire," "Under Western Skies," "The Inhabited Prairie" and "The Wealth of Nature." Topeka and Shawnee County Public library, 1515 SW 10th Street. Paul Post, (785) 354-1972, [paulpost@paulpost.com](mailto:paulpost@paulpost.com)

**A "no host dinner** at Annie's Place will be before the meeting at 5:30.

## **Topeka Group**

**July 24. 7:00 p.m.**

### **Living as if the Future Matters**

Ken Warren, Managing Director of The Land Institute, Salina, Kansas: "Living as if the Future Matters." The mission of the Land Institute is to develop an agricultural system with the ecological stability of the prairie and a grain yield comparable to that from annual crops. Institute scientists have researched, published in refereed scientific journals, given hundreds of public presentations here and abroad, and hosted countless intellectuals and scientists. Their work is frequently cited, most recently in Science and Nature. In 2005, Land Institute founder, Wes Jackson, was listed by Smithsonian Magazine as one of 35 people who had made a difference in our time. Topeka and Shawnee County Public library, 1515 SW 10th Street. Paul Post, (785) 354-1972, [paulpost@paulpost.com](mailto:paulpost@paulpost.com)

**A "no host dinner** at Annie's Place will be before the meeting at 5:30.

## **Wakarusa Group**

**(Lawrence)**

### **General Information**

The Wakarusa Group is limiting its general meetings in order to concentrate on holding special events. Contact Mike Campbell at (785)542-3885 or [shamsoup@yahoo.com](mailto:shamsoup@yahoo.com) for more information. To get the most up-to-date announcements on our events, please add your name to our e-mail list. You can add your name to the list by contacting Carey Maynard Moody at [careymm@sunflower.com](mailto:careymm@sunflower.com).



# Sierra Club Outings

*General public is welcome to participate*

Below is the combined list of all outings by the Kansas Chapter and Groups. The number in [brackets] indicates the area of the outing as shown on the map. Please contact the outing leader listed after the description by phone or e-mail before attending any of these activities. For trips requiring physical exertion, leaders need to know your ability and condition. Sierra Club policy also requires participants to sign a liability waiver or acknowledgement of risk prior to departing the trailhead.



## [4] Jun 2. Call for time.. Lakeside Nature Center in Swope Park, KCMO

Come see displays of Missouri native wildlife, hike the 2 1/2 mile Fox Hollow Trail and relax afterwards at a picnic at a nearby shelter.. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, eileenm@missouri.sierraclub.org

## [2] Jun 9. 9:00 am. Walk with Wildlife

Learn about the flora and fauna of the area by observing wildlife in Chisholm Creek Park. Southwind. Tom Kneil, (316) 744-1016, thomas.kneil@kansas.sierraclub.org

## [1] Jun 30. Call for Time. Day Hiking, Parkville, MO.

Parkville has two great walking venues: the English Landing trail along the Missouri River and the Nature Sanctuary. We'll do one or both on a lovely day in May. \$5 donation requested.. Kanza. Anne McDonald, (913) 384-6645, anne.mcdonald@kansas.sierraclub.org

## [4] Jul 7. Call for Time. Day Hiking at Weston Bend State Park, Weston, MO.

Join us as we take in some of the scenery along the Missouri River bluffs. \$5 donation requested.. Kanza. David Anderson, (816) 678-4359, david.anderson@missouri.sierraclub.org

## [4] Jul 28. Call for Time. Day Hiking at Burr Oak Woods CA, Blue Springs, MO.

Join us as we hike along some of the scenic trails Burr Oak Woods has to offer. \$5 donation requested..

Kanza. David Anderson, (816) 678-4359, david.anderson@missouri.sierraclub.org



June / July 2007

## Urban Farms Tour

Hello all,

I'd like to invite you to a wonderful event we've organized to showcase some of the amazing urban farms that are popping up all over the KC metro area. The Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture's Second Biennial Urban Farms Tour takes place Sunday, June 24, from noon to 5. Eleven unique farms all over the metro area will be featured, along with great music, kids' activities, cooking demonstrations, and plenty of fresh produce!

From Lew Edmister's art-filled farm on the Westside; to Ericka Wright's Troostwood Gardens in midtown Kansas City, where neighborhood youth are growing food and learning valuable work skills; to Paul Huns' KCK farm that specializes in Asian vegetables and herbs with medicinal benefits; to Bev Pender's seven lots of vegetables and fruit in KCK; these farms and seven others reflect the unique vision and specialties of each farmer.

Tickets are \$5 per person or \$12 for families and may be purchased at the Farmers' Community Market at Brookside, the 39th Street, City Market, Minor Park or KCK farmers markets or at the tour the day of. For more information and a description of the farms, see [www.kccua.org](http://www.kccua.org) or call 913-831-2444.

Thanks, KC Community Farm

# Committee Meetings

## **Kanza Group (Kansas City)**

### **Executive Committee**

**Jun 28, Jul 26 - 7:00 pm,**

Frank Drinkwine, (913) 385-0385,  
frank.drinkwine@kansas.sierraclub.org

### **Joint Action Committee**

**Jun 28, Jul 26 - 7:00 pm,**

Conservation, legislative, and political  
Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620,  
craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org

## **Southwind Group (Wichita)**

### **Executive and Fundraising Committee**

**Jun 3, Jul 1 - 6:00 pm**

2935 S. Seneca, Wichita.  
Dave Kirkbride, (316) 685-2397,  
dave.kirkbride@knea.org

### **Conservation Committee**

**June 19 & TBA - 6:00 pm**

5825 Memphis St, Wichita.  
Ellie Skokan, (316) 744-0033  
ellie\_skokan@yahoo.com

## **Wakarusa Group (Lawrence)**

### **Executive Committee**

**1st Sunday of month, 7:00 pm,**

Location TBA. Mike Campbell,  
(785) 542-3885,  
mike.campbell@kansas.sierraclub.org

### **Conservation Committee**

Contact Carey Maynard-Moody,  
(785) 842-6517,  
careymm@kansas.sierraclub.org.

## **Topeka Group, ExCom meets quarterly, date and time announced by email**

Paul Post, (785) 354-1972, paulpost@paulpost.com

## **Kansas Chapter: (State), Executive Committee, July 21 (time & location TBA)**

Yvonne Cather (316) 522-4741, yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org

## **Special Upcoming Outings Events**

National and local outings leaders Paul and Melody Gross will teach Backpacking 101, an all day backpacking school for beginners and novices on October 13, 2007 followed by an overnight beginning backpacking trip the weekend of October 27 and 28.

Backpacking 101 will cover the basics skills of backpacking, including equipment, food, clothing, safety, route planning and places to go. This is an opportunity to learn from real outdoors people with over 30 years of experience between them. In addition to leading local trips to the Missouri and Arkansas Ozarks, the Grosses have lead National Sierra Club outings to the Grand Canyon, the Canadian Rockies and the Wind River Range in Wyoming.



# Calendar of Events

## Summary of all Kansas Chapter Events

Below is a listing of all General Meetings (GM), Outings (Out), and Committee Meetings (CM) for the Kansas Chapter and Groups. For specific information, see General Meetings page 17, Outings page 18, and Committee Meetings page 19. For the latest update on events, go to [www.kansas.sierraclub.org/EventsSearch.htm](http://www.kansas.sierraclub.org/EventsSearch.htm).

Out Jun 2. Call for time.. Lakeside Nature Center in Swope Park, KCMO. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, [eileenm@missouri.sierraclub.org](mailto:eileenm@missouri.sierraclub.org)

CM Jun 3. 6:00 pm. Executive Committee Meeting. Southwind. Dave Kirkbride, (316) 945-0728, [dave.kirkbride@knea.org](mailto:dave.kirkbride@knea.org)

GM Jun 8. 6:30 pm. Southwind Annual Potluck Picnic. Southwind. Dave Kirkbride, (316) 945-0728, [dave.kirkbride@knea.org](mailto:dave.kirkbride@knea.org)

Out Jun 9. 9:00 am. Walk with Wildlife. Southwind. Tom Kneil, (316) 744-1016, [thomas.kneil@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:thomas.kneil@kansas.sierraclub.org)

CM Jun 14. 7:15 p.m.. Committee meeting . Topeka. Phil Morse (785) 273-3614, [p.morse@sbcglobal.net](mailto:p.morse@sbcglobal.net)

CM Jun 19. 6:30 pm. Conservation Committee Meeting. Southwind. Ellie Skokan, (316) 744-0033, [ellie\\_skokan@yahoo.com](mailto:ellie_skokan@yahoo.com)

GM Jun 26. 7:00 p.m.. Global Warming in Kansas. Topeka. Paul Post, (785) 354-1972, [paulpost@paulpost.com](mailto:paulpost@paulpost.com)

CM June 28. 7:00 pm. Conservation and Joint Action Committee. Kanza. Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, [craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org)

CM June 28. 7:00 pm. Kanza ExCom meeting.. Kanza. Frank Drinkwine, (913) 385-0385, [frank.drinkwine@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:frank.drinkwine@kansas.sierraclub.org)

Out Jun 30. Call for Time. Day Hiking, Parkville, MO.. Kanza. Anne McDonald, (913) 384-6645, [anne.mcdonald@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:anne.mcdonald@kansas.sierraclub.org)

CM Jul 1. 6:00 pm. Executive Committee Meeting. Southwind. Dave Kirkbride, (316) 945-0728, [dave.kirkbride@knea.org](mailto:dave.kirkbride@knea.org)

Out Jul 7. Call for Time. Day Hiking at Weston Bend State Park, Weston, MO.. Kanza. David Anderson, (816) 678-4359, [david.anderson@missouri.sierraclub.org](mailto:david.anderson@missouri.sierraclub.org)

CM Jul 12. 7:15 p.m. Committee meeting . Topeka. Phil Morse (785) 273-3614, [p.morse@sbcglobal.net](mailto:p.morse@sbcglobal.net)

CM Jul 21. 9:00 am. Kansas Chapter ExCom. Chapter. Yvonne Cather, 316-522-4741, [yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org)

GM Jul 24. 7:00 p.m.. Living as if the Future Matters. Topeka. Paul Post, (785) 354-1972, [paulpost@paulpost.com](mailto:paulpost@paulpost.com)

GM Jul 24. 7:00 pm. Global Warming - Al Gore & Sierra Style. Kanza. Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, [info@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:info@kansas.sierraclub.org)

CM Jul 26. 7:00 pm. Conservation and Joint Action Committee. Kanza. Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, [craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org)

CM Jul 26. 7:00 pm. Kanza ExCom meeting.. Kanza. Frank Drinkwine, (913) 385-0385, [frank.drinkwine@kansas.sierraclub.org](mailto:frank.drinkwine@kansas.sierraclub.org)

Out Jul 28. Call for Time. Day Hiking at Burr Oak Woods CA, Blue Springs, MO.. Kanza. David Anderson, (816) 678-4359, [david.anderson@missouri.sierraclub.org](mailto:david.anderson@missouri.sierraclub.org)



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Deadline for the next issue is July 1

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