State Ups Warning for Mercury in Fish

By Craig Volland, Air Quality Chair

New samples from fish in Kansas waters have prompted KDHE to issue a strong new warning on mercury contamination in largemouth bass. The problem of mercury contamination in fish in Kansas is not new. However, a new technique in retrieving samples from fish in Kansas lakes and streams has better delineated the risk related to larger, “predator” fish most likely to be kept by anglers and eaten at home.

The primary source of mercury in streams and lakes is actually deposition from air. Inorganic forms are transformed by bacteria into highly toxic methyl mercury which moves up the food chain. Predator species like walleye and largemouth bass at the top of the food chain tend to have the highest levels of contamination and, on average, the larger the individual, the higher yet will be level of contamination.

Previously, the standard protocol was to collect three to five individuals of a particular species and obtain filets that were blended together. This gave an average value for the chemical of interest that can mask much higher levels in the component individuals. In the past couple of years, though, KDHE has taken small “plugs” of flesh from the fish, usually largemouth bass, and had these analyzed separately. The fish is returned to the water body. This has revealed a number of alarmingly high mercury values in larger individuals from certain lakes and streams, mostly in eastern Kansas.

In last year’s “general advice” KDHE warned that women who are pregnant, may become pregnant, or are nursing; and children under twelve years should restrict consumption of locally caught fish to one meal per week. KDHE told other people who regularly eat locally caught fish that they could lower their intake of mercury by limiting their consumption of large predatory fish such as largemouth bass.

This year, however, KDHE issued a state-wide advisory warning sensitive populations to restrict their consumption of largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass to just one meal per month, and other people are specifically advised to limit their consumption of these fish to one meal per week.

See Mercury on page 7
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www.kansas.sierraclub.org 888-7-SIERRA

GOING, GOING... GONE?

Sea turtles date back nearly 90 million years and are among the Earth's oldest surviving species. All 6 species of sea turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Sierra Club has mounted a major effort to defend and preserve threatened habitats before their inhabitants are gone forever.

Help protect our animal friends; because once they're gone, they're gone. Join Sierra Club now.
It’s Not Dark Yet, But…

Michael Brune, National Sierra Club Executive Director

I’m knee-deep in reading the draft version of the U.S. National Climate Assessment, released last Friday. If last year’s record number of wildfires, droughts, and extreme heat days, not to mention the devastation of superstorm Sandy, didn’t convince you of the dangers of a destabilizing climate, then perhaps this several-hundred page report from 240 of the country’s top climate scientists will.

To quote one of Barack Obama’s favorite singer/songwriters: “It’s not dark yet, but it’s getting there.” Fortunately, although the science of climate disruption is undeniably scary, there’s still time to turn the corner and put this nation on a path to meet the emissions reductions we need to avoid catastrophe.

Here’s the challenge. In his first term, President Obama did more than any other president to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and scale up clean energy. But his administration is far from realizing its potential for strong action. In fact, the president has considerable authority that he has not yet fully used to help our country build a clean energy economy.

That’s why today the Sierra Club is launching the Obama Climate and Clean Energy Legacy Campaign -- a joint effort across our campaigns to demand that the president tackle climate disruption with all the authority, determination, and ambition he can muster. Between now and Earth Day, we’ll focus on 100 Days of Action to set the tone for this term’s critical first year. We and our allies will host events across the country calling on the president to lead in this fight. The biggest of these, in Washington, D.C., on February 17, is shaping up to be the largest climate rally in American history.

You’ve been a part of the Sierra Club’s biggest successes. Find out more about how we’re going to succeed.

At this point, there’s no longer any question what President Obama should do. He should do everything he can. It is fair to ask, though, exactly what we think that is.

It’s a lot. Here are five ways the president can lay the foundation today for a lasting legacy of climate action and clean energy:

- Hold fossil fuel polluters accountable for their pollution.
- Reject proposals to import dirty fuels like tar sands and stop

See Brune on page 13
Kansas Legislative News #1

By Zack Pistora, Legislative Director

The Kansas statehouse is buzzing again as the 2013 legislative session is now underway. With conservative supermajorities in both chambers and Governor Brownback leading the way, Kansas Sierra Club will have its work cut out for them in convincing the Republicans that environmental protection and improvement is smart policymaking. Of course, conservatives should be for conservation, as the true meaning of “conservative” is to preserve things as they traditionally are. Preserving our Kansas homeland when it comes to saving our water, keeping our environment free from corporate pollution, and demanding a clean energy infrastructure is not only at the heart of conservatism, but of anyone who cares about our health, our economy, and our future. I am so excited to be back as your Kansas Sierra Club lobbyist and voicing the advantages of going green in the statehouse.

New Faces, New Opportunities

There are plenty of new faces in our Kansas legislature, but that could present new opportunities to advance an environmental agenda in the capitol. Forty percent of the House are brand new, first-time legislators. While they may not have the institutional experience of state legislating, they do bring with them new ideas and energy as well as their own personal experience and thoughts on environmental issues. We all count on the environment for our well-being, so we hope we can count on them (and all state legislators) to work to protect our precious state from more environmental damage. I will be working intently on forming relationships with these new politicians and persuading them to make our concerns part of their agenda.

We need Governor Brownback to Step Up

There could not be any more important partner the Kansas environment than Governor Brownback. While he may not be popular with left-leaning environmental supporters, he wields great power of leadership in our state, but he needs to prove to Kansans that he cares about our land, air, and water by standing up for better oversight and smarter policymaking when it comes to energy production, water usage, pollution rules, and homegrown Kansas jobs. Kansas endured the worst heat of any state for one of worst droughts we have ever seen in our country.

As our climate worsens with more extreme weather events, Kansas continues to carry the burden of billion-dollar losses in agriculture, suffering people and animals, and dried-up or algae-filled water bodies. Meanwhile, we import and burn dirty coal, allow new oil and gas exploration without comprehensive safeguards, and continue to let out-of-state companies control the market with corporate farming. Governor Brownback realizes our water is our most precious resource and that our lands are a place of enjoyment and utility – but he needs to put money where his mouth is. At a time where drought and water supplies have worsened, the Governor’s budget reduces program funding for the State Water Plan Fund, as well as key water programs through the Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment and Dept. of Agriculture.

In his State of State Address, Governor Brownback inspirationally stated, “Our forefathers and mothers sacrificed to provide for us. Now we must prepare, and in some cases, sacrifice, so our children and grandchildren will be provided for. We will go forward by simply doing the right things for our children.” Governor, the Kansas Sierra Club agrees. And here are just a few ideas we have to offer.

Key Issues for 2013

• Water Conservation

There might not be a bigger issue facing all of Kansas than the drought. 104 of 105 counties have been declared drought disaster areas. The drought is devastating our crops, drying up water sources, causing rise in disease of horses and deer, and is bankrupting our small farmers. Meanwhile, Governor Brownback’s best idea put forth in his State of the State speech is that Kansas needs to dredge out our reservoirs more? That’s ridiculous. We need much stronger efforts than that. Conventional agriculture uses around 85% of our total water usage each year – so why not start by employing smarter, water-saving agriculture techniques and plant more drought-resistant crops like sorghum. We also should make sure our water goes to our families and food production first, not for hydrofracking. Hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” is a process in which millions of gallons of water are pressurized, mixed with chemicals and sand, and then injected underground to allow buried fuels to be pumped to the surface. Because the enormous amount of water used in hydrofracking becomes so contaminated with chemicals, the water cannot be cleaned or recycled... lost forever. Furthermore, hydraulic fracturing poses an even greater risk to our public health and environment as it may contaminate the water supply underground as the chemicals as well as the methane from the natural gas gets dispersed into our water table through well-casing failures and gas migration. As natural gas companies obtain more gas leases from Kansas landowners, the right to abundant, clean water belonging to our people ends up in the hands of the gas industry.

• Safeguards and Oversight for Fracking

Certainly, a very good way to preserve our water and reduce pollution in Kansas is to regulate new techniques of extracting natural gas and oil called “fracking”, a term that references horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing. You might be familiar with fracking with the new Matt See Legislative News on page 5
Legislative News, continued from page 4

Damon movie, *Promised Land*. Big energy companies, much like what Matt Damon works for in the film, have come to Kansas seeking to capture oil and natural gas from the shale deposits in our Mississippian Lime formation. Currently, 140 horizontal drilling rigs are set up in south-central Kansas and more are filing for intent-to-drill permits as we speak. All the while, the state is lacking both rules and regulations and staff to oversee this activity to make sure the drilling minimizes the threat to our scarce water supplies and health. Many other states, like Pennsylvania, Ohio, Colorado, Wyoming, and Louisiana have already faced wide-ranging problems associated with fracturing, including water contamination, water loss, air pollution, truck traffic, community safety issues like violence against women, noise problems, and earthquakes. While natural gas and oil from our state may provide some level of economical and environmental gains, we must demand that we develop the proper capacity to make sure we do not suffer the consequences extracting fossil fuels by sending blasts of water and toxic chemicals down into our earth and capturing an explosive and heavy-greenhouse gas that is natural gas. Kansas Sierra Club has produced a list of rules and regulations that will help protect our communities, our ranchers and farmers, and oil and gas industry alike.

- **Supporting Clean, Kansas Energy**
  Kansas finished second in the nation in wind energy built in 2012. Last year alone, we doubled our total wind energy capacity and attracted over $3 billion in investment. There is no doubt that Kansas wind is a great source of clean energy and quality jobs. A new report by Polsinelli-Shughart and the Kansas Energy Information Network shows the economic advantages of wind energy in being the best energy for Kansas in terms of overall leveled costs, keeping consumer rates down long-term and bringing income into communities. Yet, right-wing fronts like Americans for Prosperity and the Kansas Policy Institute—which are largely funded by oil industry executives like the Koch Brothers, are scheming to freeze our Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) which would reduce our goal to get renewable energy to a 20% level by 2020. These groups claim that renewable energy mandates are costing us jobs and creating substantially higher costs for consumers, when in actuality they are not. If Kansas were to eliminate our RPS, they would be the first state in the country to do such a thing. While the RPS keeps our “open for business” clearly signals to new investors of clean energy, these industry-policy groups are suggesting taking that sign down because of “market freedom.” Shouldn’t there be market freedom for clean energy—when fossil fuels have dominated our energy market for years? Shouldn’t cleaner air, more water, and cheaper energy long-term be more important than that anyway? Kansas Sierra Club will be working hard, along with many allies, to make sure our Governor and state legislators understand this.

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**Kansas Chapter to Sponsor Environmental Grants for Primary and Secondary Educators with a Climate Change Focus**

**By Bob Sommer**

The Kansas Chapter of the Sierra Club is pleased to offer a limited number of grants to K-12 teachers in accredited Kansas schools who undertake projects, activities, and lessons to enhance student understanding of climate change. Grants may be used to attend conferences, prepare special lessons, experiments and projects, or purchase materials needed for lessons on climate change.

Grants may range from $100 to $1,000. Licensed K-12 teachers in Kansas school districts in any field of study may apply. The purpose of the grant is to enhance teachers’ abilities to educate students on the nature of climate change and to illustrate by experiment or demonstration how human activity accelerates climate change. Further, through these projects teachers should be able to suggest solutions to slow the process of climate disruption.

Grant recipients will agree to present their projects or activities and any measurable results at a regular Sierra Club General Meeting of one of the five Sierra Club Groups in Kansas. General Meetings are open to members and the general public.

Members of the Education Grants Committee include Gary Anderson, Dave Kirkbride, Craig Lubow, Craig Wolfe, and Bob Sommer (Chair). Applications will be available by mid-February, with an April 30th deadline for submission.

Please contact Bob Sommer, Education Committee Chair, for more information: rsommer@kc.rr.com or 913-681-5211.

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**Follow What’s Happening in Topeka and Contact your Legislators**

These issues, and more, are important to our state’s well-being. As the legislative session continues, I will be listing the latest bills relating to ecological preservation. I encourage everyone to follow the state’s legislation and join the Kansas Sierra Club in being active in the political process this year. Contacting your state representatives and expressing your advocacy for the environment is a great way to support our efforts in Topeka. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions. Also, thank you for being apart of Kansas Sierra Club and caring for your planet!
Choosing Qualified Judges: A Defense Of The Kansas Merit Selection Process For The Appellate Courts

By Lee Cross

Kansas has a unique plan for selecting upper court judges. This system is often referred to as “Merit Selection.” However, Governor Sam Brownback and some of his allies have expressed a desire to replace the Nominating Commission with an appointment and consent system modeled on the federal system.

The current process was created after back room deal making and corruption in the executive branch undermined the will of Kansans in the 1950s. This process for selecting judges has worked well for over half a century.

Kansas was first admitted to the Union in 1861, at a time when elected judiciaries were the general rule. However, dissatisfaction with the power of political parties over judicial selection led to a series of reform efforts to transform judicial selection into a nonpartisan process. These efforts succeeded in 1958 when Kansas voters approved a constitutional amendment authorizing merit selection of Supreme Court justices. The amendment’s success can be attributed to the public’s response to the political scandal aptly titled the “triple play of 1956.”

The infamous “Triple Play” involved Chief Justice Bill Smith, Governor Fred Hall, and Lieutenant Governor John McCuish. Governor Hall was defeated in the Republican primary by Warren Shaw, who then lost the general election to Democrat George Docking. Chief Justice Smith, a strong supporter of Hall, was seriously ill and contemplating retirement. However, Smith was concerned that if he retired after Docking took office in January 1957, Docking would appoint a Democrat to replace him.

Smith, Hall, and McCuish devised a plan to prevent such an appointment. Chief Justice Smith resigned on December 31, 1956, followed by the resignation of Governor Hall on January 3, 1957. Lieutenant Governor McCuish was then sworn in as governor. The first and only official act of his 11-day tenure as governor was to appoint Hall as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

In the wake of the “Triple Play,” Kansas citizens’ outrage led to the merit plan for Supreme Court justices. The merit plan was later extended to the Court of Appeals and the District Courts, with individual districts having the option to move to merit selection or maintain partisan elections. The majority of judicial districts in Kansas have chosen merit selection.

Today, the Supreme Court Nominating Commission provides an invaluable service to both the state government and Kansas citizens. In Kansas’ existing Merit Selection system, a panel of nine citizens (known as the Nominating Commission) screen applicants for vacancies on the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals in open, public meetings. Similar to a job interview, the Nominating Commission conducts interviews of applicants, studies their qualifications, checks references and sends the three most qualified finalists to the Governor, who makes a final decision.

Merit Selection is the best process for hiring the most qualified appellate court judges in Kansas. Judges and justices must stand for a vote of the people every six years with a mandatory retirement age of 75. Voters have a voice in the retention election process.

Every governor has the power to appoint judges, as well as select members of the Nominating Commission. Proposed changes to Merit Selection would put too much power in the hands of one person. That might be okay with the current governor, but what about the next?

Judges should be chosen based on their qualifications, not partisan politics. Kansans want judges to make fair decisions based on the law, reason, and fact, and not what is politically popular.

Recent studies have shown that Kansas voters support the current Merit Selection process. In fact, 61% of Kansas voters oppose rewriting the state Constitution to change the process for choosing Kansas Supreme Court justices. This percentage is based upon a 20/20 Insight poll of registered Kansas voters on January 13-14, 2013. The poll is available at http://www.justiceatstake.org/media/cms/2013_Kansas_Poll_d8d19b1C-C59dC.pdf (last visited January 22, 2013).

Politics must be kept out of judicial selection in Kansas. The system proposed by Governor Brownback would directly inject politics into judicial appointments, thereby weakening judicial independence by ensuring that candidates “politic” during both the appointment and confirmation process. Such a system would inevitably lead to judges being selected based upon political ideology and connections (and possibly partisan campaign contributions) rather than qualifications. In a lecture to the University of Missouri School of Law, former United States Supreme Court Associate Justice Sandra Day O’Connor

See judges on page 7
Mercury, continued from page 1

So, where is all this mercury coming from? Mercury gets into water bodies by wet deposition in precipitation and by dry deposition to soil and vegetation in watersheds. From there it may eventually be washed into streams. The principal local sources of mercury emissions to the air are coal-fired power plants and cement kilns, especially those that burn hazardous waste. The largest coal-fired power plants in the state are at La Cygne and at the Jeffrey Energy Center near St. Marys. Kansas has three cement kilns. Two of these at Chanute and Fredonia burn hazardous waste.

KDHE took samples in July, 2011, from Village Creek that runs near Ash Grove’s cement kiln at Chanute and found elevated levels of mercury in some half-pound largemouth bass. Duane Schrag developed a model from the national mercury database capable of normalizing these values to a fish size at the third quartile of the size-range of that species. The projected values were among the highest yet found in the state among those fish samples where the length and weight of the individuals were known.

It’s too early to come to any conclusions. The number of cases in Kansas where fish size was recorded is still limited, and our model uses national rather the local data. Also the majority of mercury deposition typically comes from regional (out of state) sources, and long distance transport from the global atmospheric mercury pool. Nonetheless the new fish consumption advisory does indicate that Kansas has a significant problem with mercury pollution, and we will continue to research this matter.

To read the complete January, 2013 fish consumption advisory for Kansas go to:
http://www.kdwpt.state.ks.us/news/Fishing/KDHE-issues-fish-consumption-advisories

Judges, continued from page 6

championed the benefits of merit selection in upholding the independence of and respect for the Judiciary among the citizenry. Moreover, as we have seen with the federal system, contentious and partisan confirmation hearings are divisive and tend to lead to a lack of respect for the judiciary.

The importance of an independent judiciary cannot be overstressed in our system of checks and balances. The gravity of a constitutional change requires much thought and reflection and of course the need for a supermajority is evidence of that fact. There is no evidence that the Governor’s proposal will lead to a more careful review of a nominee’s qualifications or search of integrity than can be accomplished with the Nominating Commission. We have a good working, merit-based system which has responsibly chosen judges and justices and it does not deserve to be radically reformed from what the People of Kansas chose in 1958.
Kanza Group ExCom Gathers for Annual Retreat

The Kanza Group ExCom gathered on Sunday, January 13th, for its annual planning session. The topics of the day included ratifying the recent Kanza elections, selecting officers, assigning committees, and developing priorities for the year ahead.

After years of service as the ExCom Treasurer, Richard Voss will be handing the ledgers over to Mike Kozisek, who will do double duty as both Treasurer and Secretary. Craig Lubow will continue as Vice Chair, and Bob Sommer continues as Kanza Group Chair for 2013.

A lengthy discussion focused on developing a plan to seek out speaking opportunities in the regional community. ExCom members felt it was important to engage not only our regular constituencies but to meet with members of the business community and other groups for the purpose of discussing renewable energy, climate change, and other pressing environmental issues.

Joe Spease and Craig Wolfe are also looking into the possibility of using real-time video technology to bring environmental speakers with national reputations into general and special meetings during the year.

The ExCom worked on regular programming for the year. Ken Schefter has spent the past couple of months planning a program on organic lawn care, which should be of special interest to our suburban members. Outings Chair Bob Fritsch was on the tail end of a bout with flu (which he mercifully spared his comrades from sharing), but he mustered the energy to join the meeting on the speaker phone to discuss promoting Sierra Club outings throughout the region with posters and flyers.

Committee members were well-fed, sharing their potluck contributions and enjoying Heather Sommer’s white chicken chili and way-too-good brownies.

One of the Committee’s biggest challenges is getting the Kanza Group’s 1,700 members to participate in more activities. If you’d like to get active in the Kanza Group and join a committee, get in touch with Bob Sommer at rsommer@kc.rr.com or 913-681-5211.
Chasing Ice is the story of one man’s mission to change the tide of history by gathering undeniable evidence of our changing planet. Within months of his first trip to Iceland, the photographer conceived the boldest expedition of his life: The Extreme Ice Survey. With a band of young adventurers in tow, James Balog began deploying revolutionary time-lapse cameras across the brutal Arctic to capture a multi-year record of the world’s changing glaciers.

We will be having a Bucket Auction!

Sierra Club Items will be available for purchase!

DATE: Friday, April 19, 2013
TIME: 6:30 - 9:30 pm
LOCATION: Fellowship Hall, College Hill United Methodist Church
2930 E. 1st, Wichita, KS 67214

! Come and have a great night!

All funds collected will be used to develop the group’s outings and general meeting programs.

For information contact Dave Kirkbride: david.kirkbride@kansas.sierraclub.org or (316) 945-0728.

Please Print checks or money orders only
Name: _____________________________________
Address: ____________________________________
City: __________________ State ____ Zip_________
Deadline: April 5, 2013

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Amount Enclosed: ______________

Mail to: Sierra Club Southwind Group, 4114 W. 9th St. N., Wichita, KS 67212-2007
Topeka Group Visits Westar’s Jeffrey Energy Center

By Paul Post, Topeka Group Outings Chair

On Saturday, November 17, 2012, 15 Sierrans visited the Jeffrey Center north of St. Marys, Kansas, for an outing sponsored by the Topeka Group and organized by Group Chair Gary Anderson. Members of the Topeka Group and the Wakarusa Group attended. Westar Green Team Leader Brad Loveless was the host for the day and began the tour with a PowerPoint presentation concerning the history of the plant, its current operational parameters, and recent pollution control upgrades which were the result of a 2010 settlement with the EPA. This settlement was part of the EPA’s enforcement initiative to control harmful emissions from coal-fired power plants under the Clean Air Act’s New Source Review requirements. The agreement, filed in federal court in Kansas, resolved violations of the Clean Air Act’s New Source Review requirements at the company’s Jeffrey Energy Center. The total combined sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emission reductions secured from the settlement is more than 2 million tons each year, once all the required pollution controls have been installed and implemented. Part of the tour included the new emissions control center, which monitors those emission controls now online, and those which remain under construction.

Jeffrey Energy Center is a sub-bituminous coal-fired power plant located seven miles northwest of St. Marys, Kansas, and is jointly owned by Westar Energy, Topeka, Kansas and Aquila Corp., Kansas City, Missouri. Jeffrey Energy Center is composed of three separate 720-MW units providing a name-plate energy center capacity of 2.16 gigawatts. Unit 1 began operation in 1978, unit 2 in 1980 and unit 3 in 1983. The center was originally designed for four generating units, but was scaled back when the anticipated growth in demand for electricity did not materialize.

The steam turbines and generators were imported from Germany. The unit 2 intermediate pressure turbine had to be replaced by the unit 3 turbine when the original unit was lost on a ship that sunk during the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. As of December, 2007, Foundation Coal has shipped approximately 220,000,000 tons of Powder River Basin Coal to Jeffrey Energy Center.

Jeffrey Energy Center burns the coal delivered by about 11 miles (18 km) of coal train cars each week. The heating value of this coal is about 8,400 BTU/lb. (19.5 MJ/kg) and at full load Jeffrey Energy Center burns about 3,000,000 pounds (1,400 metric tons) of coal per hour. Coal is delivered to Jeffrey Energy Center by a unit train. A unit train contains about 110 cars, constructed of aluminum to conserve weight, and is approximately 1 mile (1.6 km) long. Jeffrey Energy Center has the capacity to generate 1,857 MW of electrical power.

In 1987, Western Resources Energy (now Westar Energy) formed a joint venture with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism to assist in the management of their property adjacent to the power plant. The property surrounding Jeffrey Energy Center, consisting of ponds and wetlands, has been divided into three management units. These units, now known as the Jeffrey Energy Center Wildlife Area, have been developed to better manage the resources, with public hunting and fishing allowed.

In addition to the presentation by Brad Loveless, John Bridson, Vice President of Generation, provided further information on the plant operations. This was followed by a tour of the inside of the plant generation area, and then a trip to the wetlands area.
Get Ready for the
Kanza Group Silent Auction
May 4, 6:00 pm
Lenexa Conference Center
11184 Lackman Road

Guest Speaker
Jim Hightower

“I’m an agitator, and an agitator is the center post in a washing machine that gets the dirt out.”
... Jim Hightower

National radio commentator, writer, public speaker, and author, Swim Against The Current: Even A Dead Fish Can Go With The Flow, Jim Hightower has spent three decades battling the Powers That Be on behalf of the Powers That Ought To Be - consumers, working families, environmentalists, small businesses, and just-plain-folks.

Twice elected Texas Agriculture Commissioner, Hightower believes that the true political spectrum is not right to left but top to bottom, and he has become a leading national voice for the 80 percent of the public who no longer find themselves within shouting distance of the Washington and Wall Street powers at the top.

Hightower is a modern-day Johnny Appleseed, spreading the message of progressive populism all across the American grassroots.

He broadcasts daily radio commentaries that are carried in more than 150 commercial and public stations, on the web, on Armed Forces Radio, and on Radio for Peace International. He also does a weekly video blog that is carried on many popular websites.

Each month, he publishes a populist political newsletter, “The Hightower Lowdown,” which now has more than 135,000 subscribers and is the fastest growing political publication in America. The hardhitting Lowdown has received both the Alternative Press Award and the Independent Press Association Award for best national newsletter.

A popular public speaker who is fiery and funny, he is a populist road warrior who delivers more than 100 speeches a year to all kinds of groups.
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***Group Representative to Chapter, ****Officer/Committee Chair

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Southwind Group (Wichita)
Stuart Bolt*, Chair, Fundraising Chair, Communications Chair, (316) 682-4722, StuartBolt1@kansas.sierraclub.org
Ron Morris*, Vice Chair, (316) 777-4130, Ronnmorris@cox.net
Tom Kneil*, Secretary, Chapter Rep, (316) 744-1016, Thomas.Kneil@kansas.sierraclub.org
Deborah Gafvert*, Legislative Chair, Communications Chair, (913) 777-4130, Deborah.Gafvert@kansas.sierraclub.org
Yvonne Cather*, Treasurer, (316)522-4741, Yvonne.Cather@kansas.sierraclub.org
Dave Kirkbride*, Political Chair, Outings Chair, (913) 945-0728, David.Kirkbride@kansas.sierraclub.org
Bruce Fuelling***, Conservation Chair, (316) 682-0340, bfuelling@cox.net

Topeka Group
Gary Anderson*, Chair, Program Chair, (785) 246-3229, ganderson1963@gmail.com
Jim Tuchscherer*, Vice Chair, (785) 272 5633, jmtuch@earthlink.net
Bill Cutler*, Secretary, Treasurer, (785) 379-9756, spudspa@yahoo.com
Leonard Biggs*, ExCom Member, (620)437-7319, dipaul@madtel.net
Anita Frank*, Conservation Chair, Chapter Group Rep, (785) 273-5305, afrank16@cox.net
Nancy Kirk**, ExCom Member, (785)234-8806, nak8842@sbcglobal.net
Paul Post*, Membership Chair, Outings Chair, (785) 354-1972, paulpost@paulpost.com

Wakarusa Group (Lawrence)
Jason Herin*, Chair, (785) 341-4911, jasonforjustice@gmail.com
Lynate Pettengill*, ExCom Member, (785) 331-0625, LynatePettengill@yahoo.com
Carolyn Binns*, Treasurer, (785) 841-3238, carolynbinns@sunflower.com
Susannah Neal*, ExCom Member, (785) 760-6633, susannahneal@sunflower.com

Steve Lopes*, Secretary, (785)842-7137, slopes3688@aol.com

Chapter & Group Leaders

Groups are the local body of the Kansas State Chapter

Jan 2013
General Meetings

Kanza Group (Kansas City)
February 12. 6:30 pm
Monarch Conservation: The Challenges Ahead
6:30 pm - Come early, and we will have goodies, along with good conversation followed by our program.
7:00 pm - Orley R. “Chip” Taylor is a Professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Kansas. Taylor is very concerned about the impact higher temperatures will have on monarchs.
Where - Overland Park Lutheran Church, 7810 W. 79th St. 8 blocks west of Metcalf at Lowell. Park on north side.
Contact - Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, info@kansas.sierraclub.org

Kanza Group (Kansas City)
March 12. 6:30 pm ??
A Chemical Reaction
The March 12th Kanza Group general meeting will begin with a discussion on the impacts of our continued use of synthetic chemicals on our lawns, gardens, and sports fields. This will be followed by a screening of the documentary “A Chemical Reaction”, about a town’s battle to ban toxic synthetic pesticides from both public and private property. The meeting will wrap up with information on what you can do to make a difference and a brief Q & A.
Where & When - Depending on final details, we will either show the film at the Glenwood or at the Overland Park Lutheran Church. Time will then be determined. Watch for your postcard or email for final details for this March 12 General Meeting.
Contact - Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, info@kansas.sierraclub.org

Southwind Group (Wichita)
February 8. 6:30 pm.
The Kansas Legislature
6:30 pm – Social Hour. Pizza and pop are available.
7:30 pm – Zack Pistora, Legislative Director for the Kansas Chapter Sierra Club, will give his insights to what will be happening in the state legislature.
Where - Great Plains Nature Center, 29th St. N. & Woodlawn, Wichita.
Contact: Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Southwind Group (Wichita)
March 8. 6:30 pm.
A Real Solution: Citizens Climate Lobby
6:30 pm – Social Hour. Pizza and pop are available.
7:30 pm – Lynate Pettengill will present on a brilliant idea to gain a legislative agreement on climate change by Citizens Climate Lobby with their “Carbon Fee and Dividend” solution.
Where - Great Plains Nature Center, 29th St. N. & Woodlawn, Wichita.
Contact - Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Topeka Group
February 26. 6:00 pm
Legislative Update
Zack Pistora, our Kansas Chapter Legislative Coordinator who will bring us up to date on the Kansas Legislature concerning energy and conservation issues.
Contact - Gary Anderson, (785) 256-3229; gjanderson1963@gmail.com
Where - Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Topeka, 4775 SW 21st Street

Wakarusa Group (Lawrence)
Discussion on Pricing Carbon
Feb 2, March 2, April 6. 11:30 am.
We’ll listen to a national conference call, then plan what to do locally.
Contact - Lynate Pettengill (785) 331-0625, LynatePettengill@yahoo.com

Brune, continued from page 3

...the rush of fossil fuel exports, including liquefied natural gas export facilities and new coal export terminals.
• Double down on clean energy, with innovative financing and investment avenues for energy efficiency and renewable energy.
• Protect communities from future climate disasters and plan a robust and just response for those that do happen.
• Protect our lands, water, and wildlife from the impacts of fossil fuel development and climate disruption.

In the first months of his second term, President Obama will make many decisions that affect the climate future of this nation and the rest of the planet. We cannot afford to let him make the wrong ones. Join us in demanding that he take a stand and make tackling climate disruption a top priority of his second term.

Read more: http://sierraclub.typepad.com/michaelbrune/#ixzz2JOziN46t
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.

Outings organizers have a webpage for the latest outings updates at: http://www.meetup.com/KC-Sierra-Club-Outings:

Have you wanted to try backpacking or at least learn more about it? We’ll cover gear from head to foot and everything in between. This is the first 5-hour classroom session. The second is Mar 2. Participation in both ensures a place on the backpacking trip (Mar 22-24). Cost is $50 per person with participation limited to 25 people. http://www.meetup.com/KC-Sierra-Club-Outings/events/95504562/.  Kanza. Paul Gross, (816) 985-2339, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

[2] Feb 16. 9:00 am. Southwind’s Valentine Day Hike
We will meet inside the Great Plains Nature Center, 29th St. N. & Woodlawn, Wichita. The hike will be around Chisholm Creek Park and will take about 3 hours. This hike requires moderate exercise. Please dress warmly, bring water, and bring gloves as we might pick up some trash (Service Outing). No pets allowed. We are asking for a donation of $5.00/person. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Help get the trail ready for the spring hiking season. Bring a lunch, water, and bow saws or loppers if you have them (we do have extra). http://www.meetup.com/KC-Sierra-Club-Outings/events/96486362/. Kanza. Steve Hassler, (913) 707-3296, hassler@planetkc.com

Tour one of the best antebellum homes in MO that was at the center of a bloody three-day Civil War battle in 1861 as well as the battle ground itself. Bring a sack lunch and afterward spend time viewing exhibits at the visitor’s center with an afternoon presentation optional. $5 donation requested. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, eileen4250@sbcglobal.net

About 2 miles. $2 donation requested. Kanza. Michael Reed, mereed@runbox.com

Spend St Patrick’s weekend looking for leprechauns. $10 donation requested. Kanza. Michael Reed, mereed@runbox.com

Explore a wide diversity of natural and cultural resources. Some of Missouri’s finest examples of karst topography, restored grasslands, forests and streams rest within park boundaries. Bring a sack lunch to eat on the trail. $5 donation requested. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, eileen4250@sbcglobal.net

This will be a round trip bike ride that will start at the Corporate Woods trail head and go east on the Indian Creek Trail and will cross into Missouri. From there, we will connect to the Greenway Trail and will end at Blue River Road. We will eat lunch at the park by lakes close to Blue River Road. Total time for this outing will be approximately 4 hours. Kanza. John Haynes, (913) 742-0100, jhaynes5018@everestkc.net

Hike the interpretive Coakley Hollow Trail, Spring Trail and Natural Bridge trail to see woodland wildflowers and spring ephemerals. Bring a sack lunch to eat on the trail. $5 donation
### Committee Meetings

**Kanza Group**  
(Kansas City)  
Feb 28, Mar 28 - 7:00 pm,  
Bob Sommer, (913) 681-5211, rsommer@kc.rr.com

**Joint Action Committee**  
Feb 28, Mar 28 - 7:00 pm,  
Conservation, legislative, and political  
Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org

**Southwind Group**  
(Wichita)  
Executive Committee - 6:00 pm  
Feb 3, Mar 3  
Location TBA  
Equity Bank Building  
Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

**Conservation Committee**  
TBA - 6:30 pm  
Bruce Fuelling, (316) 682-0340, bfuelling@cox.net

**Wakarusa Group**  
(Lawrence)  
Executive Committee Planning  
Contact Jason Hering, (785) 341-4911, jasonforjustice@gmail.com

**Topeka Group**  
TBA.  
Topeka Shawnee County Public Library  
Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229, ganderson1963@gmail.com

**Kansas Chapter;** (State), Executive Committee, Mar 16, Topeka  
Yvonne Cather, (316)522-4741, Yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org

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**requested.. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, eileen4250@sbcglobal.net**

As the name states, there are three creeks running through the area. The features include limestone bluffs, small glades and old eastern red cedar trees. The area has many characteristics of a karst landscape, including caves, sinks and losing streams. We will camp two nights. We will hike approximately 8 miles.. Kanza. John Haynes, (913) 742-0100, jhaynes5018@everestkc.net

Music & fried catfish at Emma Chase Cafe on Friday night, backcountry hike at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve on Saturday.. Kanza. Renee Andriani, (913) 488-4445, randri@kc.rr.com

A casual walk through a variety of habitats. 3-3.5 miles. $2 donation requested.. Kanza. Michael Reed, mereed@runbox.com

Cycle 25 miles of rolling hills & rural settings from Blue Springs to Powell Gardens. We will lunch at Cafe Thyme, followed by a hike through the gardens. A trailer for bikes and car rides will be available for our return. $5 donation requested.. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816) 985-2339, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

Join us on a less traveled stream within a 4-6 hour drive from KC. Enjoy the campfire as we camp along the river Saturday night. Some experience required. Canoe rental may be available, depending on the river. Water conditions at trip time will determine the river.. Kanza. Terry DeFraties, (913) 385-7374, theerustbucket@aol.com
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 13. Outings page 14, and Committee Meetings page 15. For the latest update on events, go to www.kansas.sierraclub.org/EventsSearch.htm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>11:30 am. Discussion on Pricing Carbon. Wakarusa.</td>
<td>Lynate Pettengill (785) 331-5556, <a href="mailto:LynatePettengill@yahoo.com">LynatePettengill@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Feb 3 . 6:00 pm. The Executive Committee will meet at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the home of Stuart Bolt. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, <a href="mailto:stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org">stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>Feb 8. 6:30 pm. The Kansas Legislature. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, <a href="mailto:stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org">stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>Feb 12. 6:30 pm. Monarch Conservation: The Challenges Ahead. Kanza. Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, <a href="mailto:info@kansas.sierraclub.org">info@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>Out</td>
<td>Feb 16. Backpacking 101 Class Series, Kansas City, MO. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816) 985-2339, <a href="mailto:wildwoodp@hotmail.com">wildwoodp@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Out</td>
<td>Feb 23. Perry Lake Hiking Trail Maintenance, Perry KS. Kanza. Steve Hassler, (913) 707-3296, <a href="mailto:hassler@planetkc.com">hassler@planetkc.com</a></td>
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<td>Out</td>
<td>Feb 24. Wildlife Walk - Eddy-Ballentine and Blue River Glades trails. Kansas City, MO. Kanza. Michael Reed, <a href="mailto:mereed@runbox.com">mereed@runbox.com</a></td>
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<td>GM</td>
<td>Feb 26. 7:00pm. Program: Zack Pistora, SC Lobbyist legislative update. Topeka. Gary Anderson, (785) 256-3229; <a href="mailto:ganderson1963@gmail.com">ganderson1963@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>CM</td>
<td>Feb 28. 7:00 pm. Conservation and Joint Action Committee. Kanza. Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, <a href="mailto:craiglubow@kansas.sierraclub.org">craiglubow@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>Out</td>
<td>Mar 15-17. Backpack Irish Wilderness. South Central MO. Kanza. Michael Reed, <a href="mailto:mereed@runbox.com">mereed@runbox.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Mar 16. 6:30 pm. Chapter ExCom Meeting. Chapter. Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, <a href="mailto:info@kansas.sierraclub.org">info@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Mar 28. 7:00 pm. Kanza ExCom meeting. Kanza. Bob Sommer, (913) 681-5211, <a href="mailto:rsommer@kc.rr.com">rsommer@kc.rr.com</a></td>
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<td>CM</td>
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<tr>
<td>GM</td>
<td>Apr 6. 11:30 am. Discussion on Pricing Carbon. Wakarusa. Lynate Pettengill (785) 331-5556, <a href="mailto:LynatePettengill@yahoo.com">LynatePettengill@yahoo.com</a></td>
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