KDHE Approves Massive Hog Factory in Water Short Area

The following is a Sierra Club press release of March 11, 2014, which received considerable media attention.

Despite acknowledging in October that fresh water was scarce at Seaboard’s Greeley County hog feeding site, KDHE has approved a 50% expansion to as many as 396,000 hogs.* Seaboard’s Ladder Creek operation will be the second largest in the US and generate roughly twice as much waste as the city of Wichita. Last Fall KDHE allowed Seaboard to skip a permit requirement to fill their lagoons to a certain level with fresh water to reduce odor.

When the Sierra Club commented that KDHE should require Seaboard to show there is sufficient water to ensure proper operation of the waste treatment system, KDHE responded:

• “The Department is not required to verify that sufficient water is available at the subject site.”
• “Nothing in the statutes or regulations makes it incumbent upon the Department to ensure the permittee has access to enough water to properly operate the waste management system.”
• “It has not been determined that the amount of water is insufficient; only that it is scarce.”

KDHE also said Seaboard need not address a recent Kansas Geological Survey report noting that the aquifer at the site is “effectively exhausted.”

Sierra Club also objected that KDHE has not taken into account the odor generated by such a massive hog operation. After noting that anaerobic treatment lagoons are “acknowledged as causing fewer odor issues than a simple waste storage pond,” KDHE responded:

• “As Seaboard has met the separation distance requirements . . . , the Department does not require the

See Hogs on page 9

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**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.

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**Sierra Club info**  
www.kansas.sierraclub.org  
888-7-SIERRA
Hydraulic Fracturing Poses Real Threats to Public Health and the Environment

By Yvonne Cather, Chair of Sierra Club – Kansas Chapter

A recent article in this space by Edward Cross, president of the Kansas Oil and Gas Association, suggests that concerns about the safety and environmental threat of hydraulic fracturing are unfounded. (Wichita Eagle, “Business Perspectives: Don’t give into fear tactics; get the facts about fracking,” Feb. 19, 2014).

Mr. Cross and other proponents of hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, or fracking, claim it is a harmless and reliable technology.

We in the Sierra Club have looked closely at this issue and believe public concern about the impact of fracking is justified.

Here are several arguments often made by supporters of fracking and facts that everyone should consider about this increasingly widespread practice.

Claim: Hydraulic fracturing is not new.

While hydraulic fracturing was first employed over 65 years ago in Grant County, Kansas, there have been many technological advances since then. Early fracking was conducted in vertical wells at pressures between 2,000 and 3,000 pounds-force per square inch (psi). Pumps powered by less than 300 horse power (hp) forced fluids into the wells. Today’s fracking utilizes horizontal drilling at pressures of over 13,000 psi, with 2,400 hp pumps forcing an average of 5 million gallons of water per frack. This is not your grandmother’s fracking. And do we in Kansas have this much water to spare?

Claim: Hydraulic fracturing does not cause earthquakes.

According to a June 2012 report by the National Research Council, “Hydraulic fracturing has a low risk for inducing earthquakes that can be felt by people, but underground injection of waste water produced by hydraulic fracturing and other technologies have a higher risk of causing such earthquakes” (my italics). The National Academy of Sciences echoes this concern. Recent instances of earthquakes in Texas, Arkansas, Ohio and elsewhere have been connected to fracking.

Claim: Hydraulic fracturing has never caused groundwater contamination.

See Fracking on page 7
Solar PV Can be Zero Money Down in Kansas!

By Bill Griffith, Energy Chair

Like many of you I have been following the rapid decline in price of photovoltaics (PV) over the last few years. This has galvanized the PV market in many states with tax incentives and high electricity rates. Now that Kansas has net metering and both Westar and KCPL have raised rates considerably, a nascent market has begun gaining momentum in the Sunflower state.

At the capitol in Topeka, these two utilities have attempted this year to roll back the net metering standards so I dusted off my notes from the net metering fight of a decade ago and started exchanging e-mail with folks and was heartened to see a coalition of sorts forming to fight to keep this important solar incentive. The net metering fight is another story you can follow in our legislative updates. This article takes a slightly different turn.

As I took part in this informal ListServe of net metering supporters one piece of information really jumped out at me. We can now put solar PV on our house and eliminate our electric bill with zero out of pocket expense and no maintenance costs. Whoa. My first thought was, “The fellas over at Westar and KCPL probably looked like they were sucking lemons when they found this out. Solar leasing has not occurred in a state that does not have any state incentives—but it does now through Cromwell Solar.

So I journeyed to Lawrence to interview Aron Cromwell, former mayor of Lawrence, and owner of Cromwell Solar to have him explain this in further detail and talk about where things stand in general with regards to solar in the heartland now and in the near future.

BG (Bill Griffith): Aron, can you give me your background and how long your company has been in business?

AC (Aron Cromwell): I have a Bachelor of Science with a concentration in Ecology from the University of Kansas and a Masters Degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Michigan Tech. I am a NABCEP certified solar installer and before that spent several years building Energy Star homes. I have also been mayor and a member of the city council and am proud of helping Lawrence get curb-side recycling. In 2000 I bought out an environmental service company and re-oriented it more towards solar, although at that time we concentrated more on solar hot water, as that was more economical at the time.

BG: Describe Cromwell Solar’s growth.

AC: In 2009 we only had 5 full-time employees and by 2011 we were up to over 20 and this was due to the sharp drop in the price of PV panels. No one really saw how quickly the price of the panels would plummet.

BG: While Kansas does not have any state tax credits there is a federal tax cred for solar, please describe it.

AC: There is a 30 percent federal tax credit good through the year 2016. That is significant and add net metering on top of it makes it even more intriguing in Kansas.

BG: On top of that you have an exciting new lease program, how does it work?

AC: The bank we use actually purchases the system, receives the federal tax credit and can depreciate the equipment and the homeowner or business leases the solar array at zero money down and the lease payment is guaranteed to be up to 20 percent less than what the electric bill was. Also, the bank takes care of any maintenance and the installation costs as well. The lease is 15 years and at the end of the lease the homeowner can buy the system at a very nominal cost and enjoy free electricity from that point forward.

BG: So folks can immediately get rid of dirty electricity that is contributing to global warming and save money each month plus add value to their home?

AC: Correct.

BG: That is absolutely amazing to me. This really breaks open the market in your service area.

AC: It does, in fact, we are looking to expand to Topeka and Manhattan as well as continuing our presence in Lawrence and the Kansas City area.

BG: Can you go over the permitting process that is needed?

AC: It varies in each city or town but a week to a month are normal wait times we see. As cities see more of us the permit costs and approval time both seem to be improving.

BG: How long does it take from the time you analyze a home and the owner gives the green light until they have their new solar installation?

AC: 2-3 months basically waiting on permits and the paperwork and inspection by the utility.

BG: Some of our audience are interested in electric cars. See Solar on page 5

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Let's say they get a PV installation and then in the future acquire an electric car and it adds to their electric load. Can you come back out and add some panels? Sure, we would size the load and make a recommendation—it would not take long to make the addition.

BG: As we speak, there is an attempt by Westar, with KCPL’s tacit agreement, to roll back the net metering statute in Kansas, what would be the effect of this on the state’s solar industry?

AC: We would size systems to be smaller rather than to push clean energy back out on the grid. It would also stop growth and maybe contract it a little bit in the state. So some jobs would be lost. On the other hand if we win this battle we are looking at 100s of new jobs in the state and we have two vocational colleges wanting to train solar installers.

BG: I was at a utility conference in Chicago a couple of years ago and could sense the unease within the industry. Do you see a paradigm shift within the utility industry or just changes around the edges?

AC: Absolutely. They are at a crossroads and really need a different model than the one created 70 years ago.

BG: Any advice for the utilities on how to work with your industry?

AC: They are going to have to work with the solar industry. As you mentioned there is a paradigm shift and we need to discuss how to move from a centralized power model to more of a distributed system. They have an opportunity to help shape this rather than just oppose it.

A Potemkin Village Named Denial

Field Notes from the DD…

By Robert F. Sommer, Director of Development, Kansas Chapter

“Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.” —Martin Luther King, Jr.

Editor’s note - I had to look it up. Potemkin village: Any construction (literal or figurative) built solely to deceive others into thinking that some situation is better than it really is.

There are so many quotes from Martin Luther King, Jr., that apply to our current environmental crisis that I could fill this space with them. It’s surely true that our issues as environmentalists overlap with many others we face, including social injustice, poverty, racism, war, militarism, the extremes of both isolationism and globalism, our corporate media, elections driven by money (“the best democracy money can buy”), and more. You can name others, too, and most of us participate in affinity groups that work on these issues. I do. Most Sierra Club members I know do. We’re busy and active people.

But I continue to find the ravaging of our planet at the center of all—whether it’s the environmental consequences of war or the ways in which pollution and environmental degradation create victims that range from indigenous peoples to anyone with the misfortune to live downwind of a pig farm or coal plant.

The oceans are being destroyed. Glaciers are dying. Hundreds of species join the infinity of extinction every year. Island countries will (not may) be inundated by rising waters. Rivers and streams are being poisoned by pollutants that range from lawn chemicals to fracking fluids.

And in the effort to turn all this back, here’s what we’re up against. Let me share a few thoughts on climate change by our very own Kansas legislators:

“…not only is CO2 NOT a pollutant, but it…is beneficial to all human, animal and plant life on this planet.” —State Rep. Dennis Hedke (R-Wichita) (his caps)

“I cosponsored a resolution overturning an EPA rule that says man-made greenhouse gas emissions are a danger to public health.” —Rep. Lynn Jenkins (R-KS-2nd Dist.), Twitter, 3/3/10

“There are scientists who think lots of different things about climate change. There’s some who think we’re warming, there’s some...
Law Suit Challenges Missouri River Environmental Restoration

By Caroline Pufalt

A lawsuit filed by over 200 individuals from 5 states along the lower MO River represents a brazen but baffling challenge to virtually any environmental restoration and endangered species protection along the lower MO River.

The suit is brazen because it claims that by following existing laws and guidelines the Army Corps of Engineers caused flooding which resulted in a “taking” of their land and properties. If successful the suit would jeopardize existing and future environmental legislation and cost taxpayers dearly.

The suit claims that through alleged actions such as a “spring rise” in water flow, adjustments in reservoir water levels and creation of shallow water habitat along limited segments of the river, the Corps caused or aggravated flood damages.

But the suit is baffling because it appears disconnected from the facts of recent river management and hydrology. Recent years of damaging flooding, such as 2011, were accompanied by uncommon volume of spring rainfall and snowmelt. Most years in contention did not include a spring rise or reservoir retention for that purpose. Habitat creation along the river has been very minimal, and such areas often ameliorate flooding instead of increasing it. The Corps has thoroughly and vigorously explained and justified its management decisions each year.

The unlikelihood of success on the merits of the lawsuit raises questions about what other goals its backers seek. The suit clearly aims to weaken environmental laws, especially the Endangered Species Act. Based on federal laws going back decades, the MO River has been managed for several purposes including flood control, navigation, recreation, water supply, fish and wildlife and more. This suit may be an effort to reopen that historic “multiple purposes” approach and drop environmental values as part of the mix. The suit of course provides grist for those who want to politicize and traffic in misinformation.

The 2011 flood caused damage and hardship to area farmers and communities. But the arguments put forth in this suit are misplaced. Absent from their analysis is the real impact of unprecedented weather patterns, combined with levees, new development, roads, floodplain farming and the typography and force of the MO River itself. Living and working along the river will always be a risk until these realities are faced.

Also at risk is the modest but important restoration work being carried out along the river by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the Army Corps of Engineers. These efforts, authorized by Congress but limited by budget cuts, are surely also a target of the forces behind this suit.

For more information about the Missouri River contact:
Bill Griffith, bgriffith6@kc.rr.com

KKFI Airs Eco Radio Weekly

By Craig Lubow, Kanza Group Chair

KKFI, Kansas City Community Radio, airs a weekly environmental show on Mondays at 6:00 p.m. central. Sierra Club members Elaine Giessel, Richard Mabion, and myself are rotating hosts for the show. Eco Radio is the only all environmental show on radio and none exist on television. You can listen on the radio at 90.1 FM You can also listen to the livestream at www.kkfi.org. If you miss the show, you can listen to the podcasts, which are posted on line within one week of the air date.
Fracking, continued from page 3

The oil and gas industry fiercely guards as “trade secrets” information about chemicals used in the toxic cocktail of fluids thrust into the ground with every frack. Thus drillers can claim no connection between thousands of instances of groundwater and stream contamination all over the country and fracking operations that have recently moved into these areas. Additionally, victims of such contamination are generally bound by gag-orders when oil and gas companies settle claims with them for the sudden occurrence of diseases like cancer, and for polluted water, sick livestock, and withered plants and crops.

Currently there are more than 78,000 wells in Kansas with a staff of only 90 people to oversee their safety. What could possibly go wrong? And what recourse will residents and landowners have when it does?

Claim: Hydraulic fracturing fluids are 98 percent water and 2 percent chemicals.

Tons of chemicals are used in every frack job. Some fracking chemicals are so potent that just a few parts per million may cause severe disease from continued exposure, such as in well water used for drinking or washing. Yet specifics about these chemicals are kept from the public. Do we want to put the Ogallala Aquifer and other water sources at risk? Are we willing to rely on claims that fracking is harmless to humans and wildlife while they pump toxic chemicals into the ground?

We need full disclosure of fracking fluids, including their Chemical Abstract Services (CAS) numbers for each compound in fracking fluid. At present, Kansas only requires drillers to disclose a general description of fluids to be injected (such as saying it is a lubricant).

Claim: Hydraulic fracturing is effectively regulated by state governments and oversight agencies since its inception.

Kansas does not adequately regulate the extraction of oil and natural gas. How can fracking be regulated when the chemicals used are not even disclosed? And what of accountability for the condition of water after it is mixed with these chemicals to fracture stratified shale and limestone deep in the ground. Drilling for natural gas is highly toxic to air, as well as water. But there are currently no regulations in Kansas to monitor, minimize and capture methane gas and other air pollutants as they’re released. If hydraulic fracturing is safe, why does the oil and gas industry need exemptions from the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and the Clean Air Act to deploy this technology?

In last year’s legislative session, the Sierra Club’s Kansas Chapter supported a bill known as the Frack Act that would hold drillers accountable for the impact of hydraulic fracturing on our health and environment. A copy of the bill can be found at the Kansas Sierra Club website, along with more information about the dangers of fracturing.

While the petroleum industry insists that hydraulic fracturing is safe, both scientific research and anecdotal reports provide overwhelming evidence that more information and regulation are needed.

50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act Events

By Elaine Giessel

Bell Mountain. Devil’s Backbone. Hercules Glades. Piney Creek. Rockpile Mountain. Paddy Creek. Irish Wilderness. Mingo Wilderness. These are the eight magnificent areas in Missouri Protected by the Wilderness Act, passed 50 years ago. Come to the Anita B. Gorman Conservation Discovery Center, 4750 Troost Ave., between May 6 and June 20 to see a stunning photographic tribute to these beloved wilderness areas put together as part of a nationwide celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Accompanying the display are three events stressing the importance of the Wilderness Act and continuing protection.

On May 6 from 5 to 8 p.m., join us for an opening reception for “50 Years of Wilderness Through the Lens of Missouri’s 8 Wilderness Areas” at the Gorman Discovery Center showing in the months of May and June. These photos will inspire your Tuesday’s happy hour - light appetizers and punch will be served. In addition, a slideshow “50 Years of American Wilderness” will tell the story of the wilderness movement from the 1500’s to today.

On May 20 at 7 p.m. at the Discovery Center, John Hickey, Missouri Sierra Club Chapter Director, will give an overview of federal wilderness areas in our state. During the 1970s, a grassroots citizens’ campaign identified and ultimately resulted in the protection and designation of eight tracts of federal land in Missouri under the National Wilderness Preservation System. Now, citizens are once again organizing to expand wilderness protection here in places like Big Spring on the Current River. Learn about opportunities to “explore, enjoy and protect” Missouri's wilderness areas.

On June 7 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., join us for “Wilderness Day” at the Discovery Center. Lots of fun family activities are planned, and starting at noon, Sierra Club outings leaders will guide you on a 2 mile urban walk through beautiful gardens, ponds, creeks and parks starting at the Discovery Center. Learn about the 10 Essentials for Hiking and Leave No Trace Guidelines. After this “Walk for Wilderness”, enjoy dulcimer music and refreshments as you walk through the photo exhibit of Missouri’s 8 Wilderness Areas. To sign up for the walk go to Meetup.com/KC-Sierra-Club-Outings or call Eileen at 816-523-7823.
Cultivating Diversity, Freedom and Hope
A Lecture by Dr. Vandana Shiva. The Sierra Club – Kanza Group is a sponsor

Dr. Vandana Shiva, an internationally recognized leader in food and sustainability issues, will speak April 17-18 in Kansas City. The events, sponsored by Cultivate Kansas City and the University of Missouri-Kansas City, include a keynote address and a farm-to-table dinner and discussion with Dr. Shiva.

Dr. Shiva, who is headquartered in Delhi, India, is one of the world’s most dynamic and provocative thinkers on issues of sustainability, development and agriculture. A physicist, ecologist, activist, and author, she and her non-profit organization – Navdanya – are leading the global battle against the chemical breeding of seeds by large corporations for global food production and changing the way the world thinks about seeds, agriculture and food. She truly embodies the phrase “think globally, act locally,” and will bring her wealth of knowledge and experience from around the world to inspire action in Kansas City.

“The Environmental Studies Program is very excited to host Dr. Shiva because food is essential to living and to how well we live,” says Molly Davies, Director of UMKC’s Environmental Studies Program. “How food is grown significantly impacts our environment, health, and communities. Dr. Shiva brings a wealth of expertise and deep out-of-the-box thinking to these issues.”

Dr. Shiva’s lecture, “Cultivating Diversity, Freedom and Hope” will address the value of diversity in nature and society, as well as how the monoculture of our minds can destroy that diversity at every level. She will share what’s happening to seeds and food, and how “Gardens of Hope” protect seed freedom and food democracy.

“We are excited about the wealth of wisdom and experience from around the world that Dr. Shiva will bring to our community and region,” said Ami Freeberg, Communications and Outreach Manager of Cultivate Kansas City. “We encourage you to learn more about her work with Navdanya, Seed Freedom, Slow Food and other organizations around the globe.”

The lecture is at 7 p.m., Thursday, April 17 at Unity Temple on the Plaza. Tickets are $8 before April 1, $15 after April 1, and $5 for students. From 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., Chipotle Mexican Grill, a sponsor of the event, will offer free Sofritas tacos during a reception for attendees.

The conversation with Dr. Shiva will continue at 6:30 p.m. Friday, April 18 during a farm-fresh dinner at Johnson County Community College. Dinner is $50.

“For more than five years, Chipotle has partnered with Cultivate Kansas City to raise awareness of sustainability within the food system, including supporting local and family farms,” said Ben Neis, Chipotle Marketing Strategist for Kansas City. “We’re constantly working to provide more food made with responsibly raised, locally sourced ingredients that are increasingly free of GMOs. As a result, we’re glad to work with Cultivate Kansas City again this year to bring Dr. Shiva and her sustainability message to Kansas City.”

You can read more about Dr. Shiva http://www.cultivatekc.org/pages/urban_grown/dec13/shiva.html

ABOUT CULTIVATE KANSAS CITY
Urban agriculture is fundamental to building an alternative system for our city. Through growing good food, growing new urban farms, and growing stronger communities, Cultivate Kansas City aims to build a healthier, more economically and environmentally sustainable community. Join us to figure out what you can do to grow the change you want to see in our city. For more information about Cultivate Kansas City, visit cultivatekc.org.
Hogs, continued from page 1

use of anaerobic treatment lagoons.” (Note: the 5000-foot setback from residences is the same for 9400 hogs as for 400,000 hogs over 55 pounds.)

• “Seaboard is not required by the Department to include biological treatment.”

When the Sierra Club then cited the applicable state law wherein “…the secretary shall take into consideration different sizes of facilities and other relevant factors,” KDHE responded that the current rule “…does make a distinction between odor control for swine facilities below 1000 animal units and those with 1000 or more animal units.” (Note: Ladder Creek will have 158,400 animal units; one animal unit = 2.5 hogs).

KDHE did add a permit condition that better defines how the lagoon levels should be determined, but at the same time decreased the requirement.

“It’s abundantly clear that Kansas rulemaking never antici-
pated the kind of massive facilities that can be built by any big pork producer that so desires,” said Craig Volland, Chair of the Agriculture Committee of the Kansas Chapter. “The neighbors to these huge operations will surely suffer the consequences of obnoxious odor and, in some cases, dry wells.”

The Chapter is studying its options to further address this deficiency. The Sierra Club’s full comment and KDHE’s response may be accessed here.

*grower pigs up to 70 lbs or 198,000 mature hogs

We Like You, Will You “Like” Us?

By Gail Shafton, Communications Committee

We know you like the Sierra Club or you wouldn’t be a member. And we’re pretty sure you like the work we are doing in Kansas and our local community, too. There are a lot of ways to show us you care about what we do. Volunteering. Donating money. Signing petitions. Now we have new way for you to show us some love, a quick and easy way to help grow and sustain our efforts. All it takes is the time to hit the “Like” button on our Facebook page. Or follow us on Twitter (and re-tweet breaking news from us). Or both!

The Sierra Club is on the forefront of fighting climate change, preserving vanishing species, protecting increasingly scarce water resources, promoting the shift to clean energy, and minimizing environmental damage from agriculture. To accomplish our goals, it is crucial for us to be as visible as possible to you and our community, and to be able to communicate urgent information as quickly as possible. Some of our volunteers and staff are working on new ways to connect to you other than through our traditional newsletter as well new ways to communicate. While newsletters are great, they are infrequent and aren’t very “green”. Today, social media dominates, which is a fancy way of saying that now more people rely on connecting real-time through the Internet.

Our emails are effective, but email doesn’t reach a broad audience. And email addresses change, making it difficult to maintain our connection to you. So we’re expanding our reach by investing in our web site, Facebook and Twitter as our primary ways to reach you, and hopefully engage prospective new members.

If you are on Facebook, please “like” us and invite your friends to like us too. Our Facebook Page is Kansas Sierra Club. Your help with our outreach efforts will help us grow membership. And every time you “share” a Facebook post with your friends, your Friends will see the great work we are all doing together. You can also follow us on Twitter (@SierraclubKS and @Sierraclub). When you retweet our tweets, people who follow you will get the message too!

OK, some of you are probably wondering what in the world this stuff is … you haven’t yet gotten into Facebook or Twitter … but maybe your kids and friends are already there. Many great things are going on in the digital world and it is much less overwhelming than you might think to get involved. We have members who could help you figure out how to find our web page and sign up for Facebook. We are also working on a special program to teach you what to do and make it easy to jump into this new world.

If you are already experienced at this, then just add us to your digital life! We appreciate all you do for your Club and welcome you to join us in this new online community! We encourage you to comment on our posts as well. We value and “Like” your input. Thanks for spreading the word!

Help Us!

We can save money, use less resources, and better protect the environment

IF YOU

• make sure we have your current email
• tell us you want to receive the Planet Kansas via the internet rather than a hard copy
• join Facebook and Twitter; and
• like us on Facebook and Twitter

Let us know at info@Kansas.SierraClub.org
Testimony Before the Senate Natural Resources Committee, March 6, 2014, on HB2550

A bill to repeal Supp75-5673, which created the Kansas Mercury Wet Deposition Monitoring Network

By Craig Volland, QEP, Chair of the Air Quality Committee of the Kansas Chapter Sierra Club

I have followed the mercury pollution issue since 1990 when I attended the first International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant in Gavle, Sweden. Swedish scientists were the first to discover that the mercury they were finding in their fresh water fish and fish-eating birds was drifting up from power plants, waste incinerators, and other heavy industrial sources in Europe. Previously everyone thought the mercury was coming mostly from direct discharges to streams, lakes and estuaries. The level of alarm has only grown since then.

The Sierra Club opposes this bill because Kansas also has a serious problem with subsistence and sport-caught edible fish contaminated with methyl mercury. Complete repeal of the existing statute is contradictory to recent developments.

Prior to 2013, KDHE had advised sensitive populations to restrict consumption of locally caught fish to one meal per week. But as a result of new data showing alarmingly high contamination of some large predator fish, KDHE issued a state-wide advisory in January 2013 advising those sensitive individuals to limit consumption to one meal per month of largemouth and other varieties of bass(1).

The most sensitive population consists of women who are pregnant, may become pregnant, are nursing, and children under twelve years. The fetus in the mother’s womb is the receptor most sensitive to methyl mercury toxicity. Methyl mercury causes birth defects at extremely low concentrations.

KDHE’s December, 2013 Mercury Deposition Monitoring Report showed that wet deposition in near eastern and southeast Kansas was actually higher in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 than in most areas of the US. However, KDHE merely suggests that the monitoring can be diminished because the results are “relatively consistent” at the various sites.

They are using the wrong criteria to judge the need for continued monitoring. They should be asking, why are the values so high in an area that is heavily agricultural and not industrial? Metals-mining has long since been discontinued in the state. The original statute required that KDHE make available the data “specifically to Kansas-based research institutes and scientists for exploration of the impact of mercury on Kansas flora, fauna and human population.” I have not seen any such reports by Kansas scientists. So the purpose of the original statute has not been served.

Kansas does support more mercury monitors than most other states, and we could probably eliminate one or two of the six currently required. For example we know enough to eliminate one of the two monitors in far western Kansas. However the monitors in southeastern Kansas are crucial not only to track the high levels of deposition previously measured there, but also to tie in to monitors maintained by NE Oklahoma Native American tribes who rely on subsistence fishing.

KDHE needs to take the initiative to get the state’s scientists to follow up by thoroughly analyzing the problem. Accordingly we recommend that the bill be amended, not repealed, as follows:

1. Reduce the requirement from six to four monitors;
2. The cost savings will be used to finance a study by Kansas scientists to include:
   (a) an estimate of the dry deposition component in Kansas (Plants absorb mercury which gets washed into lakes and streams as decomposing leaf fall);
   (b) correlation of both wet and dry deposition with the fish contamination database maintained by KDHE;
   (c) assessment of the extent to which the contamination is related to local and regional sources of air pollution (2);
3. KDHE must post for public comment their proposal for changes in the monitoring network, their draft of the research grant solicitation described above, and the final report from the grant.

If the Kansas legislature cares about the health of our newborns, it should maintain its close supervision of our serious mercury contamination problem by carefully amending, rather than repealing the existing statute.

References:
2. KDHE’s Dec. ‘13 report states, “Local mercury contributions can impact local and/or regional deposition especially if it is emitted in a reactive form (eg. Hg+2).” Several sources exist in eastern and southeastern Kansas, including power plants and a cement kiln that burns hazardous waste, known to emit significant amounts of mercury in the reactive form.
Denial, continued from page 5

who think we’re cooling, there’s some who think that the last 16 years have shown a pretty stable climate environment.”
—Rep. Mike Pompeo (R-KS-4th Dist.), C-SPAN Interview, 6/25/13

http://www.c-span.org/video/?c4456999/mike-pompeo-washington-journal

“There’s no question there’s some global warming, but I’m not sure what it means. A lot of this is condescending elitism.” —Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS), Topeka Capital-Journal, 8/24/10

“The only thing you know for sure about the weather in Kansas … is it’s going to change. That’s all we really know about climate too.” —State Sen. Forrest Knox, (R-Altoona)

And let’s not leave out a few representative voices at the national level:

“[Climate change] is almost like witchcraft … In the middle ages, you would attribute adverse weather events to witchcraft.” —CNBC host Joe Kernen (described by Sheryl Crow as a “Neanderthal,” following an interview about her activism on climate change)

Corporate media mogul and puppet-master Rupert Murdoch:

And the leader, spokesman, climate-scientist-in-chief, and all-around whip for the Republican Party:

Carbon emissions “may actually be making things cooler, not warmer.” —Rush Limbaugh

Friends, we’re wasting our time arguing with these people and their followers. In fact, I’d go so far as to say this is exactly what they want us to do—just keep running back and waving more data and white papers and IPCC reports at them, while the Koch brothers buy elections and corporate hog farms consume all the land and water west of Manhattan and KDHE quietly appeals the Kansas Supreme Court’s decision to stop a new coal-fired plant in western Kansas from being built.

They’re immune to facts, to science, to reality. They need to be treated like the carnival acts they are. They’ve cultivated the art of smug. Just spend five minutes watching Sean Hannity, if you can bear it.

But they’re living in a Potemkin village. We know it, and fortunately many others do too.

According to a recent poll, over 90 percent of registered voters in Kansas support developing renewable resources for energy. We need to reach out to them, enlarge our sphere of influence, converse with people who “get it,” which is most of our neighbors and friends.

And the best place to begin is by energizing our own members to become active in their local Sierra Club groups. This is how noisy and obnoxious voices like those above will be silenced. We’ll drown them out. We’ll inundate them. We are the rising waters they should worry about.

Do your part—become active, take your kids on a Sierra Club outing, make a dish for a potluck, attend your local Group’s general meetings and make some new friends.

And do support the Kansas Chapter. One hundred percent of your donation stays right here in Kansas, where we’re working to preserve our precious planet for future generations.

To cite Dr. King once more, “There comes a time when silence is betrayal.” Peace.

“Field Notes from the DD…” is a regular feature of Planet Kansas. To reach Bob, email bob.sommer@kansas.sierraclub.org or call 816-898-1100.

Donate on-line at kansas.sierraclub.org
(click the DONATE link at page top)

Or send checks to:
J. Scott Smith, Treasurer
Sierra Club – Kansas Chapter
2111 Snowbird Dr.
Manhattan, KS 66502
Independent Solar PV Homes Program Committee

We have exciting news! We are forming a committee to implement the Independent Solar Homes Program here in Kansas!

The Independent Solar Homes Program has been developed to help solar companies meet Sierra Club customers. As a result, the Sierra Club receives a finder’s fee and the customer receives a break on the installation of solar on their home.

As a committee member, you would help us find solar companies to contact, review their application and help form a recommendation to the Chapter ExCom for approval. If you would like to help get this program running in Kansas, join the committee.

Also, if you would like to be contacted when a company is selected for program details and a possible installation in your home, let us know.

contact:

Stuart Bolt – stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

*pass this on to those who might be interested!
How to Mine Our Aquifer Without Being Noticed. The hidden pipeline

By Jerold Hubbard

Water is the single most, necessary ingredient for LIFE. The structure within water, the networking within it, the ability of individual water molecules to integrate together to form a characteristic we call wetness, is what allowed life to become possible on Earth. I have seen fresh milk turn sour within days, if not properly refrigerated. But, you dehydrate it, or turn it into powdered milk, and it can keep for decades, if no moisture is allowed into it.

It is no secret that the world is running short of fresh water. The ability of the oceans to produce vapor-distilled water that is carried to land, and thus remove salt from contaminated water, has worked for billions of years. But, recently, because of the number of people on Earth, and their appetites for high end foods such as meat, eggs, and milk, (especially pork), fresh water reserves on Earth for millions of years are becoming polluted and depleted!

So, what should a consuming nation do, if it wants to protect its population from water depletion? Figure out how to mine out another nation’s water by exchanging cash, a product with no real life supporting value (that can be siphoned off by the 1%) for a food product representing tons of fresh water, our number one life supporting resource. What’s the easiest way to do this? Just buy millions of tons of meat from a country that brags about feeding the world!

How does this work? A conservative estimate of how much fresh water it takes to produce grain, which is necessary to finish out industrially raised pork or beef in the USA, is around 1000 tons of fresh water per ton of grain. Now, if the consuming nation wants meat instead of grain exported to them, the cost on the water supply will go up by about 3 times, or even more since water is used in the processing as well as the producing, especially pork or bacon. It’s even worse because of the way the waste is handled and the fact that pigs require diets more similar to humans and less cellulose. Thus for every 1,000 pounds of pork, some 6,000,000 pounds of fresh water, (or about 720,000 gallons) is, in effect, pumped from the producing nation to the receiving nation! Of course this is all done in the exchange for cash, a product which could literally become worthless over night!

The amount of meat that some of the large integrated meat producers export annually is almost mind boggling. But, with this hidden pipe line, No one from the producing Nation (that’s us!), seems to notice or care. Why? Because certain individuals in the producing nation are getting rich and adding a few low-level jobs. So, until a nation decides it’s better take a serious look at this exchange, and gets a solid grip on its long term fresh water reserves….this fresh water pipe line ….will remain hidden!!!

Jerold Hubbard is a wheat farmer who lives in Morton County, Kansas, and whose family survived the dust bowl of the 1930’s.
Sierra Club – Kansas Chapter Celebrates Fortieth Anniversary with Conference

On March 8 at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Topeka, the Kansas Chapter recognized a special event, calling it the “Fortieth Anniversary Conference: Planning the Next Forty!” All Chapter members were invited across the state, and nearly 100 attended. The conference was a gathering of Sierra Club members, leaders, guests, and friends whose purpose was to enhance membership activism and growth; refine our focus on campaigns and activities for the coming year.

Bob Sommer, Chapter Director of Development, opens the event. Bob did a masterful job of organizing the celebration.

A special pre-recorded greeting to the Kansas Chapter was given by Michael Brune, Sierra Club Executive Director.

Dr. Denise Low, Kansas Poet Laureate, 2007-2009, gives Poetic Invocation.

Keynote Address was given by Dr. Karl Brooks, Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7, Administrator.

State of the Kansas Chapter with Yvonne Cather, Chapter Chair (3rd from left) State of the Groups with: Carol Barta, Flint Hills Group Chair; Stuart Bolt, Southwind Group Chair; Craig Lubow, Kanza Group Chair; Gary Anderson, Topeka Group Chair

“Environmental Challenges in Kansas” with Guest Panelists: Political / Legislative: Senator Marci Francisco, Kansas Senate, 2nd District Water & Wildlife; Jim Mason, Kansas Natural Resource Council; Legal & Water: Myrl Duncan, Professor of Environmental Law, Washburn University School of Law
years; and to educate ourselves on the issues. It proved to be a marvelous celebration with presentations by many of our Chapter leaders, a special pre-recorded welcome by National Sierra Club President Michael Brune, and a keynote address by EPA Region 7 Administrator Dr. Karl Brooks.

The content was enthusiastically received by attendees. You can see the list of speakers and the topics covered in the photos and their captions below.

Membership Development and Outreach
Panel discussion, moderated by Robert F. Sommer, Director of Development, who also presented on Planning Great Group General Meetings and a Grants update and opportunities
Introducing the New Kansas Chapter Website and Developing Planet Kansas (writers / editorial / circulation) was Craig Wolfe, Chapter Communications Director
Committee Development & Recruiting ExCom members was Yvonne Cather, Chapter Chair

Couldn’t have done it without our great volunteers, among them Anita Frank (left) and Jeani Anderson

General Session on Committees & Activism: Panel Presentation & Reports by Chapter & Group Committee Chairs. Legislative / Political: Zack Pistora, Legislative Director; Water / Air / CAFOs: Craig Volland, Air Quality & CAFO Chair; Corporate Governance, Legal Action, & Divestment Activism: Yvonne Cather, Chapter Chair & Corporate Governance Chair; (Below) Conservation: Craig Lubow & Duane Schrag, Conservation Co-Chairs
Outings: Dave Kirkbride, Outings Chair

Outings: Dave Kirkbride, Outings Chair.
Conservation: Craig Lubow & Duane Schrag, Conservation Co-Chairs
Sierra Club Wins Key Energy Issues at Statehouse

Lawmakers Protect RPS, and send Net Metering & Energy Efficiency bills to Governor

State legislators have epitomized the true meaning of Kansas, rejecting multiple attempts to repeal our 2009 energy law, the Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS), and supporting our pro-wind, pro-environment policy that requires certain Kansas electric utilities to deploy 20% renewable energy by 2020. For those who might not know, Kansas was named after the Kansa people, and the term “Kansa” translates to “people of the wind,” according to state historians. The Kansas House of Representatives deserves most of the credit, not only because they defeated a bill specifically designed to repeal the RPS, but because they also blocked further attempts to possibly repeal our RPS by concurring on votes on energy-related Senate bills, avoiding conference committees where crooked deal-making could happen. In short, with the wind at their backs, the Kansas House members dealt a huge “blow” to whom I like to call the “Fossil-Fools”, and preserved a policy that has had strong economic impacts for Kansas.

Legislators vote to keep Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS)

Two weeks ago, a Repeal-RPS bill, S Sub for HB 2014, was favorably passed by the Senate on a 25-15 vote. You might recall that last year in 2013, the Senate voted to kill a similar bill on 23-17. The difference this year: major pressure by Senate President Susan Wagle upon State Senators, intense lobbying by Kansas Chamber of Commerce, and expensive TV ads by Americans for Prosperity (a Koch Brothers-funded nonprofit). The following day, the Repeal-RPS legislation carried over to the House of Representatives chamber. After hearing from a number of western Kansas Republicans (many of whom have seen positive local impacts from wind development), the House voted 77-44 against S Sub for HB 2014, thus preserving our RPS goal. In total, 44 Republicans voted on our side, as well as all 33 Democrats. After opting for a parliamentary procedure to reconsider the vote, the House members ended any chance for S Sub for HB 2014 to come back to life.

Here is a list of our legislators and how they voted on the RPS:

Legislators who voted in favor of keeping our 20% goal by 2020 (GOOD):


Legislators who voted to REPEAL the RPS (BAD):


Besides the RPS, the Kansas legislature approved two other energy measures, one on Net Metering and one on Energy Efficiency that Kansas Sierra Club also lobbied for.

Net Metering

Early in the year, Westar energy led an effort amongst three electric utilities to do away with “Net Metering,” a policy that lets energy-generating customers (like those who have installed solar or residential wind turbines) to be able to sell energy back onto the grid. Utilities across the country have launched efforts to diminish net metering policies because their traditional business model is threatened by customers who are generating a lot of their own electricity at home. However, these customers still rely on the utility for backup power and the transmission lines to transfer excess power back onto the grid. So while Kansas Sierra Club thought the investor-owned electric utilities were crossing the line by eliminating the 2009 Net Metering policy completely, we did agree there might be some policy concerns that needed to be straightened out if we hope to grow the amount of Net Metered customers, or home-produced electricity generators, across Kansas. Thus, with the help of some national solar experts, in-state solar companies, and some in-state environmental groups, Kansas signed onto a compromise effort with Westar, KCPL, and Empire utilities, to support a revamped Net Metering policy that keeps the true 1:1 credit system for net metered customers and prompts
our state regulatory authority, the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC), to address the cost impact of Net Metering through a rate case. In our minds, not only did we help keep a good policy on the books, we also paved the way for a more in-depth conversation about rate reform at the KCC in the near future.

Kansas lawmakers passed the Net Metering law, S Sub for HB 2101, on a 112-12 vote in the House, and 39-0 in the Senate. Again, by the House concurring with the Senate version of the bill, the House avoided a conference committee where legislators like Rep. Dennis Hedke and Sen. Susan Wagle could have amended the bill to insert language to repeal the RPS. This bill now goes to Governor Brownback for final approval.

Energy Efficiency Investment Act

Another potential political vehicle for repealing the RPS was the Energy Efficiency Investment Act. S Sub for HB 2482 (formerly SB 374) enables utilities to create programs to provide for energy efficiency, which aims to reduce electricity consumption amongst customers. Currently, utilities can recover their expenses on energy-expanding efforts like building transmission lines or power plants through rate increases on customers, but cannot do so for energy-saving measure like energy efficiency. S Sub for HB 2482 would change the law to include energy-saving efforts, both by electric and natural gas utilities. This bill is important because energy efficiency is not only good for reducing the amount of natural resources needed for energy production, but energy efficiency is one of the few ways to bring down electricity rates in the long run.

The Senate passed S Sub for HB 2482 unanimously 40-0, and the House concurred on a 99-25 vote.

Clean Energy WON with Human Energy!

A large part of our success for protecting the RPS and passing these other energy initiatives was due to the overwhelming public support for clean, renewable energy investment in Kansas. Thousands of Kansans spoke out – through petition, phone calls, lobby days, and public events – to their legislators in favor of clean energy. I want to extend my upmost appreciation to all of you who assisted that effort. True grassroots efforts and public participation in the political process, is the best and perhaps only trump power that we have against the big money and political suppression from the Koch Brothers and the other Fossil Fools. Thank you to the Kansans, who are acting in the true spirit of our state’s name, and supported a policy that furnishes our homeland with energy and business that we can be proud of.

Sincerely,

Your Kansas Sierra Club Lobbyist,
Zack Pistora
Legislative Director
Sierra Club – KS Chapter
zack@kansas.sierraclub.org
785-865-6503
Under Siege—Can Hearts Change In Time?

Eating as Though the Earth Matters column

By Judy Carman, M.A.

Iowa is under siege. As hog farms proliferate over the state, the threat to public health grows along with them. In Ted Genoways’ *onearth* article, “Hog Wild: How Factory Farms are Poisoning Iowa’s Water,” he explains that, while the state inspector staff has been cut by 60 percent, the growing number of farms is producing so much manure that it cannot be contained by the lagoons. So the toxic, antibiotic, chemical, and bacteria-laden manure is being applied as fertilizer to millions of acres. We all know what happens then—it runs right into the rivers and streams threatening life downstream.

Meanwhile, ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, and other dangerous gases are vented (incompletely, of course) from the barns to pollute the air. According to Genoways, Iowa is overrun now with more than 8,500 of these polluting “farms” that produce over 5 billion gallons of liquid manure each year. One of the biggest owners of hog farms is the weirdly named New Fashion Pork. They also own the packing plant in St. Joseph, Missouri, which kills 15,000 pigs every single day. The air and water pollution, cruelty to animals and plant workers, and the sheer unbridled voraciousness of such an operation is thought provoking to say the least—how did we get into such a mess?

This article brought to my mind some farmers who saw what they were doing to the water, air, land, animals, and indeed their own health, and gave up everything they knew in order to stop contributing to such destruction.

Howard Lyman was a fourth generation cattle, pig, and poultry farmer who loved the land, studied agriculture in college, and grew the family ranch and wealth significantly with his knowledge and expertise. The ranch was in Montana, and he farmed it for forty years. Following what he had been taught in school, he used “modern methods” to increase crop production and all the equipment and chemicals it took to keep the profits going.

Howard, like so many of us, loved nature, being outdoors, and appreciated the beauty of the countryside. Yet, from his up close and personal viewpoint, he could see that nature was being devastated by his very actions. After recovering from a life-threatening illness caused in part by his consumption of animal products and his constant contact with agricultural chemicals, he and his wife Robbins and the farmer alone together. Inexplicably, almost business that had brought them so much financial gain. They became possibly the only vegan ex-cattle ranchers in Montana at the time.

Howard went on to work as a lobbyist for the National Farmers’ Union in Washington, D.C. and worked on legislation for the National Organic Standards Act. He has spoken internationally, appeared on Oprah, and wrote the books, *Mad Cowboy* and *No More Bull*.

Howard wrote a chapter in my book *The Missing Peace*. “The question we must ask ourselves as a culture,” he wrote, “is whether we want to embrace the change that must come, or resist it. Are we so attached to the dietary fallacies with which we were raised, so afraid to counter the arbitrary laws of eating …that we cannot alter the course they set us on, even if it leads to our own ruin? Does the prospect of standing apart or encountering ridicule scare us even from saving ourselves?” Of course, he is referring here to the whole gamut of destruction caused by animal agriculture, including human disease as well as the devastation to wildlife, the soil, the air, water, ecosystems, and our own emotional well-being. He longs for “the sweet smell of grain and not the forbidding smell of excrement.”

Another rancher, this one from Michigan, is Harold Brown. Like Howard, he was raised on a farm where rabbits, pigs, dairy cows, and beef cows were grown to be used and slaughtered, and wild animals were hunted. Naturally, he ate a lot of animal flesh, dairy products, and was taught by his family not to get emotionally attached to the animals they were going to kill and eat. Like so many young people today, whether farmers or not, his veins were loaded with cholesterol, and at the age of 18 he had a heart attack. His dad had several heart attacks or not, his veins were loaded with cholesterol, and at the age of 18 he had a heart attack. His dad had several heart attacks and a stroke several years later.

In reaction to his doctor’s warnings, Harold had to change the way he ate. When he discovered that he could reverse heart disease by eating a vegan diet, he made that commitment to his own health. However, by opening up to the philosophy of veganism—which is to do no harm—he began to see animals, not as commodities as he was raised to believe, but as individuals. Harold now writes and speaks in order to encourage people to question what they have been taught about animals and to help save the world from the ravages of animal agriculture.

John Robbins, in his book *The Food Revolution: How Your Diet Can Help Save Your Life and Our World*, describes a profoundly soulful encounter with a pig farmer. Robbins asked to tour the farmer’s pig farm for an article he was writing. Inside the pig barn, he viewed unimaginable suffering, stench, and pollution. The farmer’s wife invited Robbins to dinner, and to his own surprise, he impulsively accepted the invitation, despite his horror at the conditions for the pigs and the damage being done to the environment by the farm.

Expecting only small talk and a quick exit, Robbins was shocked when the farmer suddenly raised his voice causing his wife and children to disappear into other rooms, leaving Robbins and the farmer alone together. Inexplicably, almost
as a confession, the farmer began to tell a story about a pet pig he had as a boy. His father raised pigs for slaughter, but this one turned out to be a friend. The boy often slept in the barn in the summer with the pig by his side, and they swam together in the nearby pond. But one horrible day, his father told him that it was time to kill the pig. If he refused, then he would no longer be his son. So he killed his friend, and kept up the family tradition of raising pigs, no matter the cost to his heart, the land, or the pigs.

Not too long after that, Robbins heard from this fellow about a complete life transformation. Because of that, the farmer and his wife had the courage to give up completely on the only life they knew and start over. They created a pig sanctuary and invited local school children to come and learn about how amazing pigs are, and they support themselves with their organic vegetable farm. Robbins commented in his book, “When I look at many of the things happening in our world, I sometimes fear we won’t make it. But when I remember this man and the power of his spirit, and when I remember that there are many others whose hearts beat to the same quickening pulse, I think we will.”

When we look at animal agriculture, animal rights and environmental activism go hand in hand. While each movement may look at it from a slightly different viewpoint, we all see the same devastation leaking and blowing and carving its way into every ecosystem and into everything that sustains life on our planet.

In the Winter issue of “Planet Kansas,” Michael Brune delivered some great news about solar and wind outcompeting coal and gas. Iowa, he stated, is getting 25% of its electricity from wind now. That’s Iowa, the state that is under siege from pig farms. Which way will we go? He calls the fossil fuel companies zombies because they are “already dead.” But the pig farmers are very much alive and causing every bit as much destruction as the fossil fuel companies do. Brune calls for an end to pessimism, and I couldn’t agree more. The stories told above make it clear that even those making big profits can change. There is so much we can do, and so many people waking up to the need to take personal responsibility and to take immediate grassroots action. As I’ve said before, one of the simplest, quickest, and most far reaching actions we can all take is to boycott animal agriculture and join the millions who have taken the vegan pledge of no harm to ourselves, the earth, and all the beings who share the earth with us.

JoAnn Farb’s Cheezy Sauce (from her getoffgluten.blogspot.com)

Ingredients.
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup raw cashew pieces
- 2 TBS arrowroot powder
- 1/4 cup roasted red pepper pieces (drained)
- 1/4 cup Chickpea Miso
- 3/4 cup Nutritional Yeast Flakes
- 3 TBS Mirin
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder

Instructions:
1. Place the water and cashews into a blender, cover tightly and blend on highest setting possible until all is totally liquified.
2. Add the rest of the ingredients and again blend completely.
3. Transfer contents of the blender to a medium saucepan and bring to boil, stirring nearly constantly (so it doesn’t stick to the bottom) until it thickens -- about 3-4 minutes. Then turn off heat.

Ready for a dip or sauce on pasta or any dish that’s begging for cheese. JoAnn is the author of Get Off Gluten and teaches vegan cooking at the Community Mercantile in Lawrence, KS.

© 2014, Judy Carman, M.A., is author of Peace to All Beings: Veggie Soup for the Chicken’s Soul and co-author of The Missing Peace: The Hidden Power of our Kinship with Animals. and owner of a truck and a car powered by used veggie oil. Her primary websites are circl eofcompassion.org and peace to all beings.com.
Chapter & Group Leaders

Groups are the local body of the Kansas State Chapter

Chapter Executive Committee
Officers, Committee Chairs
*Elected ExCom member; **Appointed ExCom member,
***Group Representative to Chapter, ****Officer/Committee Chair

Yvonne Cather*, Chair, Council Delegate, (316) 522-4741, yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org
Tom Kneil***, Secretary, (316) 744-1016, Chapter Group Rep, thomas.kneil@kansas.sierraclub.org
Scott Smith***, Treasurer, (785) 539-1973, wizard13@cox.net
Stuart Bolt*, ExCom Member, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org
Anita Frank***, Topeka Chapter Group Rep, (785) 273-5305, afrank16@cox.net
David Kirkbride*, Outings Chair, (316) 945-0728, david.kirkbride@kansas.sierraclub.org
Craig Lubow*, Conservation Co-Chair, Global Warming Chair, (913) 299-6620, craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org
Richard Mabion*, Environmental Justice Co-Chair, Education Chair, (913) 481-9920, rmbion@sbcglobal.net
Kent Rowe*, ExCom Member, harkglider@yahoo.com
Ken Schefter***, Chapter Group Rep, (913) 780-6878, purpleroc1@gmail.com
Duane Schrag*, Conservation Co-Chair, (785) 263-4002, schrag.duane@gmail.com
Joe Spease*, Legislative Chair, (913) 492-2862, spease4kc@everestkc.net
Gary Anderson****, PAC Treasurer, (785) 246-3229, gja1963@gmail.com
Elaine Giessel****, Wetlands and Water Quality Co-Chair, (913) 888-8517, elaine.giessel@kansas.sierraclub.org
Bill Griffith****, Energy Chair, (913) 772-8960, bill.griffith@kansas.sierraclub.org
Bob Sommer, Director of Development, 816-898-1100, bobsommer09@gmail.com
Craig Volland****, CAFO Chair, Trade Chair, Agriculture Chair, Air Quality Chair, (913) 788-7336, volland@kansas.sierraclub.org
Craig Wolfe, Webmaster, Newsletter Editor, Communications Director (913) 299-4443, info@kansas.sierraclub.org

Flint Hills Group (Manhattan Area)
Carol Barta*, Chair, Newsletter Editor, Program Chair, (785) 410-8608, snowsage54@hotmail.com
Scott Smith*, Treasurer, Chapter Group Rep, (785) 539-1973, wizard13@cox.net

Kanza Group (Kansas City)
Craig Lubow*, Chair, Conservation Co-Chair, (913) 299-6620, craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org
Ken Schefter*, Vice Chair, Assistant Treasurer, Chapter Group Rep, (913)780-6878, purpleroc1@gmail.com

Spring - 2014

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General public is welcome to attend General Meetings

Kanza Group (Kansas City)
April 12, 7:00 pm
Sierra Club Annual Fundraiser/Silent Auction
7:00 pm - Join us for a fun evening of bargain hunting, with local wine, beer, and light refreshments. Antarctic photographer and expedition leader Jonathan Chester will present outstanding photos and talk about conditions and changes at the bottom of the earth.
Where - Thompson Barn, 11184 Lackman Road, Lenexa
Contact - Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, info@kansas.sierraclub.org

Kanza Group (Kansas City)
May 13, 6:30 pm
Powershift. Students from POWERSHIFT
6:30 pm - Come early, and we will have goodies, along with good conversation followed by our program.
7:00 pm - Powershift. Students from POWERSHIFT -- leading the fight on campuses to solve the climate crisis and build a clean, just and thriving economy.
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)
June 10, 6:30 pm
Population & Sustainability
6:30 pm - Come early, and we will have goodies, along with good conversation followed by our program.
7:00 pm - Craig Lubow, Kanza Chair, will present a program on Population. The program will focus on strategies for reducing global population and the relationship of population to sustainability and climate change. Craig will also explore the relationship of economic justice issues and population.
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

Southwind Group (Wichita)
April 11, 6:30 pm.
The Future of Wichita’s Water
Joseph T. Pajor, Deputy Director Department of Public Works & Utilities City of Wichita will present the options the City has on future water supplies.
Where - Great Plains Nature Center, 29th Street North & Woodlawn
Contact - Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Southwind Group (Wichita)
May 9, 6:30 pm.
Sierra Club Grant Winners
Dave Kirkbride, past Chair for the Southwind Group, will introduce the members to 2 winners of the Sierra Club Education Grants. The winners will give a program on what they are doing with their grants.
There is a social hour that begins at 6:30 pm. Salad, pizza and pop will be available.
Where - Great Plains Nature Center, 29th Street North & Woodlawn
Contact - Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Topeka Group
April 22, 6:30 pm
Topeka Environmental Grant Winner
6:30 pm - “Meet and Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Scott Schwarz, a high school teacher at Hope Street Academy in Topeka was a recipient of a Sierra Club Environmental grant in 2013. His environmental science class students participate in designing a model wind turbine for the KidWind competition at KSU each year. Scott’s class has won the competition for the past three years and have just competed this year so come find out how they did. We hope to have some students with Scott share their model. We are holding this meeting at the school to accommodate their projects for easier display.
Where - Hope Street Academy, Second Flr. Room 209, 1900 S. Hope St., Topeka KS
Questions - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@gmail.com

Topeka Group
May 27, 6:30 pm
6:30 pm - “Meet, Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Brig. General Christopher King from Ft. Leavenworth will share information about climate change and the military. Gen. King has participated on a panel where he has shared how serious the military is in addressing the world security aspects related to changing climate. The US military also continues to develop and use renewable energy ideas around the world.
Where - Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, Marvin Auditorium, 101C, 1515 SW 10th Ave., Topeka
Questions - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@gmail.com

Topeka Group
June 24, 6:30 pm
Kimberly Gencur-Svaty with The Wind Coalition.
6:30 pm - “Meet and Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Kimberly Gencur-Svaty, Public Policy Director for Kansas of The Wind Coalition will present. The Wind Coalition is a non-profit association formed to encourage the development of the vast wind energy resources of the south central US. The Wind Coalition's members include developers, owners and operators of wind farms, turbine and component part manufacturers, law and engineering firms and public interest advocates.
Where - Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, Marvin Auditorium 101C, 1515 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, KS
Questions - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@gmail.com

Spring - 2014
General public is welcome to participate

Below is the combined list of all outings by the Kansas Chapter and Groups. 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://Kansas.SierraClub.org/Calendar

**Apr 1. 7 pm. Topeka Chasing Ice Documentary with Director Rieber KIPL**
Chasing Ice documentary will be shown at 7 PM on April 1 at First Congregational Church. This is sponsored by Kansas Interfaith Power & Light and Topeka Sierra Club. After the film KIPL Director Rabbi Moti Rieber will lead discussion. Where: First Congregational Church, 1701 SW Collins Ave., Topeka. Topeka. Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@gmail.com

**Apr 12. 9:30 am. Farmers Expo - KC Food Circle**
Eat Local and Organic at the 16th Annual Farmers Expo Saturday April 12, 2014. Penn Valley Community College Gym. 3201 SW Trafficway, KCMO. 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM. Meet organic farmers who can supply high quality organic fruits and veggies and free range meats for the coming season. Learn how you can make a difference with your food selections. Organic seedlings for an early start on your garden. Pick up a free copy of the 2014 Directory of Local Organic and Free Range Food Producers. Free Admission & Free Parking!! The event is co-sponsored by the Sierra Club. click date for more info. Kanza. Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, info@kansas.sierraclub.org

**Apr 12. 10 am. Prairie Village Earth Fair**
Prairie Village Earth Fair 2014 (13th Annual) “Celebrating Sustainability – Are You In?” April 12, 2014 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Shawnee Mission East High School 7500 Mission Rd. Prairie Village, KS 66208 Sponsored by the Prairie Village Environmental and Recycling Committee and Shawnee Mission East High School click on calendar date for details. Kanza. Elaine Giessel, (913) 888-8517, elaine.giessel@kansas.sierraclub.org

**Apr 17. 7 pm. Vandana Shiva lecture on Food Democracy (17th); other events with Cultivate KC (18th)**
Cultivating Diversity, Freedom and Hope --- Dr. Vandana Shiva is a leading proponent of community food security, organic farming, seed saving and women's involvement in agriculture. She has raised awareness about the risks of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). click on the date for more details on this event, co-sponsored by Sierra Club. Kanza. Ken Schefter, 913-710-6080, purpleroc1@gmail.com

**Apr 19. 1 pm. Topeka Green Fair 2014**
7th Annual Green Fair at the Topeka Shawnee County Public Library from 1 PM to 4PM. This is always a fun event with lots of exhibits and tables by organizations that educate and inform. Our Sierra Club will have a table at the event to pass out information. Please contact Bill Cutler if you can help at 785-379-9756 or spudspa@aol.com . Topeka. Bill Cutler, 785-379-9756, spudspa@aol.com

**Apr 19. 9 am. Topeka Earth Day at the Zoo**
Earth Day at the Topeka Zoo will be held from 9 AM to 3 PM. There will be many activities and the Topeka Group will have a table there to give out information about our Sierra Club and environmental activities. Come celebrate the day and help us greet the public. If you can help, please contact Paul Post at 785-354-1972 or paulpost@paulpost.com Should be a fun day and they expect about 2000 people to attend. Topeka. Paul Post, (785) 354-1972, paulpost@paulpost.com

**Apr 19. 9:30 am. Southwind - Earth Fest VI**
Earth Fest VI will begin at 9:30 am. Not a Sierra Club Event. Sponsored by Earth Spirit Kansas. The event is at Herman Hill Park, 101 West Pawnee. The event is free and open to the public. The Sierra Club has had a long-standing tradition of having a booth at this event. sierraclub.org. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

**Apr 26. 7:30 pm. Topeka Highway Cleanup**
Topeka Sierra Club highway cleanup is this Saturday, April 26, 7:30 AM, for our section of I-70 from Wanamaker to Urish Road. This is one of our community service projects. We will meet at the Hyatt Place parking lot 6th and Wanamaker. Bring gloves and wear sturdy shoes/boots plus consider...
ear protectors or radio with headphones if the traffic noise bothers you. Vests, water and trash bags will be furnished. For those that want to join the Get Down and Get Dirty event at Gage Park from Noon on with a free lunch, T-shirts and prizes, you can. Let Gary Anderson know (785-246-3229 or 785-256-3223 (c)) if you can help us. Topeka. Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@gmail.com

Apr 26. 12 pm. KC Whole Foods Earth Day Celebration

Apr 26. 9 am - noon. Southwind - Arkansas River Trash Roundup
Mark your calendars for the 13th Annual Arkansas River Trash Roundup! Meet at Lawrence Dumont Stadium along with 700 of your closest friends to clean up the Arkansas River from 9am to noon on Saturday, April 26. Check-in starts at 8:30. Why clean up the river? By removing trash from the river, you are beautifying our city – just in time for River Fest. You are also improving the habitat of the animals who live in and near the River. Cleaning up the River in Wichita impacts everyone downstream from Derby all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. Check-in for the 13th Annual Arkansas River Trash Roundup is at 8:30am at Lawrence Dumont Stadium. There you can pick up trash bags and gloves. Wear sturdy shoes and clothes that can get dirty. After you fill a few bags, enjoy a post-clean up cookout with Cargill and Ducks Unlimited back at Lawrence Dumont Stadium. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

May 17. 12 pm. Outings Planning Potluck & Meeting
Outings Planning & Potluck meeting at Eileen’s Noon: Potluck 1 pm: Recent & future outings discussion 2 pm: Preview 6/7 “Walk for Wilderness” at Discovery Center. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, eileen4250@sbcglobal.net

June 13. 6:30 pm. Southwind’s Annual Poluck Picnic
Join us at the south shelter in Chisholm Creek Park. Bring your favorite covered dish and table service. The picnic starts at 6:30 pm. The Club will supply the entre. Where Chisholm Creek Park, 3228 N. Oliver, Wichita. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

June 14. 9 am - 3 pm. Southwind - Great Plains Nature Center’s Walk With Wildlife
Walk with Wildlife starts at 9:00 am. Learn about the flora and fauna of the area by observing wildlife in Chisholm Creek Park. This is not a Sierra Club event. Where - Great Plains Nature Center, 6232 E. 29th St. N., Wichita. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org
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 21. Outings page 22, and Committee Meetings page 23. For the latest update on events, go to www.kansas.sierraclub.org/EventsSearch.htm.

Out. Apr 1. 7 pm. Topeka Chasing Ice Documentary with Director Rieber KIPL. Topeka. Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; glanderson1963@gmail.com

CM. Apr6. 6 pm. Southwind's Executive Committee Meeting. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

CM. Apr 8. 6:30 pm. Southwind’s Conservation Committee Meeting, Southwind. Yvonne Cather, (316) 204-8920, yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org

Out. Apr 12. 9:30 am. Farmers Expo - KC Food Circle. Kanza. Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, info@kansas.sierraclub.org

Out. Apr 12. 10 am. Prairie Village Earth Fair. Kanza. Elaine Giessel, (913) 888-8517, elaine.giessel@kansas.sierraclub.org

GM. Apr 12. 7 pm. Kanza Group Annual Celebration / Silent Auction. Kanza. Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, info@kansas.sierraclub.org

GM. Apr 12. 6:30 pm. 2014 Sierra Club Annual Fundraiser/Silent Auction. Kanza. Craig Wolfe, (913) 299-4443, info@kansas.sierraclub.org

Out. Apr 17. 7 pm. Vandana Shiva lecture on Food Democracy (17th); other events with Cultivate KC (18th). Kanza. Ken Schefter, 913-710-6080, purpleroc1@gmail.com

Out. Apr 19. 1 pm. Topeka Green Fair 2014. Topeka. Bill Cutler, 785-379-9776, spudsap@aol.com

Out. Apr 19. 9 am. Topeka Earth Day at the Zoo. Topeka. Paul Post, (785) 354-1972, paulpost@paulpost.com

Out. Apr 19. 9:30 am. Southwind - Earth Fest VI. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

GM. Apr 22. 6:30 pm. Topeka Environmental Grant Scott Schwarz HS Wind Turbine Competition Winner. Topeka. Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; glanderson1963@gmail.com

Out. Apr 26. 7:30 pm. Topeka Highway Cleanup. Topeka. Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; glanderson1963@gmail.com

Out. Apr 26. 9 am - noon. Southwind - Arkansas River Trash Roundup. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Out. Apr 26. 12 pm. KC Whole Foods Earth Day Celebration. Kanza. Elaine Giessel, (913) 888-8517, elaine.giessel@kansas.sierraclub.org

CM. May 4. 6 pm. Southwind’s Executive Committee Meeting. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

CM. May 10. 9 am. Kansas Chapter ExCom Meeting. Chapter. Yvonne Cather, (316) 204-8920, yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org

GM. May 13. 6:30 pm. Kanza General Meeting : Powershift. Kanza. Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org


GM. May 9. 6:30 pm. Southwind - Sierra Club Grant Winners, Part 2. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

GM. May 27. 6: 30 pm. Topeka Brig. Gen. King on the Military, Security and Climate Change. Topeka. Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; glanderson1963@gmail.com

CM. June 1. 6 pm. Southwind’s Executive Committee Meeting. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

GM. June 10. 6:30 pm. Kanza Gen Mgr – Population & Sustainability. Kanza. Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org

Out. June 13. 6:30 pm. Southwind’s Annual Poluck Picnic. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org


GM. June 24. 6:30 pm. Topeka Kimberly Gencur-Svaty with The Wind Coalition. Topeka. Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; glanderson1963@gmail.com